This is the author's version of a work that was submitted/accepted for publication in the following source:


This file was downloaded from: http://eprints.qut.edu.au/75308/

© Copyright 2014 The Author(s)

Notice: Changes introduced as a result of publishing processes such as copy-editing and formatting may not be reflected in this document. For a definitive version of this work, please refer to the published source:
A comparison of factors influencing perceived risk by French and Australian cyclists and drivers

Chaurand, N., Griffin, W., Haworth, N. & Delhomme, P.

Keywords: Perceived risk, subjective risk, cyclists, drivers, cross-cultural comparisons

Differences in the levels of risk perceived by cyclists and car drivers may contribute to the dangers in their interactions. Levels of perceived risk have been shown to vary according to personal and environmental factors and between countries. Cycling rates in France are higher than in Australia, particularly among women. This study investigated whether cultural differences between France and Australia are reflected in perceived risks for experienced adult cyclists and drivers in the two countries. In online surveys, regular cyclists (France 336, Australia 444) and drivers (France 92, Australia 151) were asked to rate the level of risk in six situations: failure to yield; going through a red light; not signalling when turning; swerving; tail-gating; and not checking traffic.

The effects of type of interacting vehicle and participant type on perceived risk were similar in France and Australia. However, the influence of responsibility for the risky behaviour differed according to participant type, type of situation and nationality. When the bicycle rider committed the road rule violation, Australian cyclists and drivers gave higher risk ratings than French cyclists and drivers.

In both countries, cyclists rated themselves significantly higher than drivers on the perceived control and overconfidence subscales of the perceived skill measure. The French cyclists rated themselves higher than Australian cyclists on these scales, which could be responsible for overall lower perceived risk levels when interacting with a bike. Australian cyclists rated themselves significantly lower than drivers on the incompetence subscale but French cyclists rated themselves higher than drivers. In both countries incompetence scores were positively related to levels of perceived risk.

Weekly time was associated with perceived risk in Australia but not in France. Frequency of traffic violations was not associated with perceived risk in either country.

In conclusion, levels of perceived risk differed between drivers and cyclists in both countries and were influenced by type of interacting vehicle, experience and perceived skill. However, some differences between the results from the two countries merit further investigation to shed light on potential improvements in safety and cycling participation.