

Algorithm morality: The impact of autonomous vehicles' accidents on driver responsibilities, guilt, and well-being

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) based autonomous vehicles (AVs) are the ultimate step in the automobile industry. Despite promising to improve many aspects of our life, such as well-being and safety, AVs will have to face dramatic situations such as accidents resulting in the death of the victims. This raises questions about the morality of algorithms car or user responsibilities, guilt, and well-being as research on these subjects is scarce. Therefore, we contribute to theoretical knowledge by developing a conceptual model that integrates user responsibilities, guilt, and well-being to better understand the consequences of those dramatic accident situations. We realize two studies in Germany: one online, the other is a field experiment using an virtual reality based AV simulator. Our results show a negative indirect impact of the accident victim's death on responsibilities, guilt, and the well-being of the driver.

Subject Areas: *Cognition, Consumer Behaviour, New Product Development and Launch*

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