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The role of governance and enforcement in traffic fatalities

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Objective: The present study investigates the effects of the gross national income, the Worldwide Governance Indicators and national traffic law enforcement on the estimated road traffic fatality rate. **Method:** The study was conducted with the aggregated data of gross national income (GNI), the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) and traffic law enforcement. The data was prepared by integrating country-level data of the GNI, the six dimensions (i.e., voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption) of the WGI and five national traffic law enforcements (speed, drink-driving, motorcycle helmet, seat-belt and child restraint). Countries without gross national income value or, at least one the Worldwide Governance Indicator or traffic law enforcement score were excluded from the study. The final dataset included 167 countries. **Results:** Governance indicators and traffic law enforcements were positively correlated with each other except the correlation between drink-driving enforcement and voice and accountability. The GNI and all dimensions of governance indicators and traffic law enforcement were negatively correlated with the fatality rate. The regression analyses showed that, after controlling for the GNI, higher government effectiveness was associated with decreased fatality rate. **Conclusions:** The results of the present study showed that government effectiveness plays a crucial role in road safety. Countries with higher government effectiveness scores have lower fatality rates. High government effectiveness could be interpreted as the indicator of effective road safety interventions and policy formulation and implementation