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Aggression on the Road as a Function of Stress, Coping Strategies and Driver Style

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ABSTRACT

According to Lazarus and Folkman's [1] transactional cognitive model, people differ in their sensitivity and vulnerability to stressful events. Using questionnaire and observational techniques, the model was tested as a possible explanation for aggressive driving behavior. Responses from 226 drivers who were also observed driving their cars provided evidence for a link between stress and aggressive driving as well as between problem-solving strategy as a coping device in stressful situations and hostile behaviors. In addition, analysis showed that, in general, the more years of driving experience a driver has, the more likely he/she is to respond with instrumental rather than hostile aggression. Besides support for the theoretical model, some of the practical applications as they related to highway safety and the prevention of traffic accidents were presented.

KEYWORDS

Driving Stress, Aggressive Driving, Problem-Solving Strategy, Hostile Strategy, Instrumental Strategy

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