

# “Regulating my anxiety worsens the safety of my driving”: The Synergistic Influence of Spatial Anxiety and Self-Regulation on Driving Behavior

Wednesday, September 25, 2024 11:10 AM (10 minutes)

Spatial Anxiety (SA) can be defined as the fear and apprehension experienced during tasks that require spatial thinking and may negatively impact the execution of daily actions. Although it has been explored in several research fields, limited research has explored the effects of SA on specific driving behaviours. In the current study, it was hypothesised that the severity of SA affects risky driving behaviours, and that this relationship is mediated by the driver's self-regulation abilities. Self-reported SA symptoms, driving self-regulation abilities, and risky driving behaviours (i.e., errors, violations, and lapses) were examined in 838 Italian drivers. Data were analysed through linear regressions and path analysis models, controlling for sociodemographic variables. The results showed the negative effects of SA on driving errors and lapses. As hypothesised, a driver's self-regulation abilities mediated the influence of SA on driving lapses, but not on errors nor violations. These findings suggest that the inclination to self-regulate the SA experienced while driving contribute to increase the occurrence of driving lapses. Showing specific pathways through which SA impacts risky driving, these results provide valuable insights for the development of 'driver-focused' road safety interventions and suggesting the implementation of training programs aimed to optimized drivers' self-regulation skills.

**If you're submitting a poster, would you be interested in giving a blitz talk?**

No

**If you're submitting a symposium talk, what's the symposium title?**

**If you're submitting a symposium, or a talk that is part of a symposium, is this a junior symposium?**

No

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