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The effects of traffic congestion on Auckland commuters: An examination into the consequences and solutions of commuting stress for organizations.

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Abstract

Auckland's roadways are choked for up to two and a half hours every morning as employees commute to their jobs. Car ownership figures reported for Auckland are high in international comparison, the number of private cars is rising faster than the population. A quasi experimental field study was conducted on 33 Auckland commuters, as a pilot, to assess the effects of traffic congestion on state stress and job performance, using the State Driver Stress Inventory and peer and self assessments. A direct link between traffic congestion and job performance has not been studied before, however previous research posits to a relationship between traffic congestion and task performance. This study expands on previous work by including average speed and number of obstacles in its definition of the independent variable impedance.

It was found that commuting by any mode of transport is regarded as stressful for some individuals. Heavily impeded participants had poorer peer ratings of performance. The State Driver Stress Inventory, travel logs, and behaviour bases observation scales received further validation and were found to be appropriate for New Zealand samples. Ways of minimising the impact of traffic congestion on commuters in the region are suggested. Limitations of the study and projected future investigations are discussed.

Acknowledgments

This thesis has proved to be a huge eye opener into the realm of research. At times it has been unbelievably frustrating while at others completely satisfying. Watching the first person complete the questionnaire that I had thought about and agonised over, even dreamed about for so long was an exciting experience that I will not forget.

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