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16. Abstract

This study was designed to investigate whether there is an increased risk of traffic crashes in the U.S. for out-of-state drivers—those drivers whose driver license was not issued by the state in which they were involved in a crash. Two analyses were performed. In the first analysis, we examined the percentages of out-of-state drivers among those involved in fatal crashes using the data from the Fatal Analysis Reporting System (FARS). In the second analysis, we correlated these percentages with the states' fatality rates per distance driven. Both analyses used the data for 2008.

There are two main findings of this study. First, there is wide variability across the 50 U.S. states in the percentage of all drivers involved in fatal crashes who were out-of-state drivers, with a minimum of 5.0% in California and a maximum of 41.2% in Wyoming. Second, there is a positive correlation between this percentage and the corresponding fatality rate per distance driven. This later finding is consistent with the hypothesis that unfamiliarity with the road increases the likelihood of a traffic crash.

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