

Cross-Cultural Exploration of Daily Travel Satisfaction and Its Relationship with Health and Well-Being - Prof. Şerife Yılmaz

Introduction

Daily travel experiences significantly impact individuals' well-being, influencing stress, mood, and overall health (De Vos & Witlox, 2017). Travel satisfaction, defined as the cognitive and emotional evaluation of travel experiences, has been linked to transportation choices, subjective well-being, and long-term life satisfaction (De Vos et al., 2013; Ettema et al., 2010). Prior studies suggest that travel satisfaction is shaped by trip characteristics, travel mode, and within-trip subjective experiences (Lim et al., 2024). However, there is limited understanding of how cultural differences influence these relationships. While active travel modes, such as walking and cycling, are associated with higher travel satisfaction and improved health outcomes (De Vos et al., 2019), the role of cultural norms, infrastructure, and mobility-related values in shaping these experiences remains underexplored. This study aims to address this gap by examining how daily travel satisfaction relates to health and well-being in diverse cultural settings.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, cross-cultural approach using semi-structured interviews. Participants from different countries will be selected to ensure diversity in transportation infrastructures and commuting cultures. Researchers in each region will conduct interviews in local languages to enhance cultural sensitivity and accuracy.

The conceptual framework is based on the travel mode choice cycle, which posits that attitudes, desires, and travel satisfaction interact dynamically to shape future transportation behaviors (De Vos, Singleton, & Gärling, 2022). Key interview topics include:

1. Modes of Transport: Daily transport choices and influencing factors.
2. Travel Satisfaction: Subjective evaluations of commuting, including comfort, convenience, and stress (De Vos & Witlox, 2017).
3. Health and Well-being: The impact of daily commuting on physical and mental health (Lim et al., 2024).
4. Cultural Influence: The role of cultural norms and infrastructure in shaping travel experiences (De Vos et al., 2017).

Participants will be purposively sampled to ensure representation from urban and rural areas, various age groups, genders, and socio-economic backgrounds. Thematic analysis will be used to identify patterns and cultural variations in travel satisfaction and well-being.

Expected Results

Findings are expected to reveal how travel satisfaction varies across cultures and transportation modes. Previous studies indicate that positive travel experiences enhance subjective well-being and shape long-term attitudes toward transportation (De Vos et al.,

2019). Additionally, cultural differences in mobility norms may influence how individuals perceive and cope with daily commuting stress (Lim et al., 2024). This study will provide insights into the role of infrastructure, accessibility, and personal preferences in shaping travel satisfaction and well-being.

Discussion

This study contributes to transportation psychology by highlighting the cultural dimensions of travel satisfaction. Existing research suggests that frequent exposure to positive commuting experiences can reinforce mode preferences and travel behaviors (De Vos & Witlox, 2017). However, travel-related stressors, such as congestion, lack of infrastructure, and safety concerns, may disproportionately affect individuals depending on cultural and socio-economic contexts (De Vos et al., 2017). Understanding these variations can inform transportation policies aimed at improving travel satisfaction and promoting well-being across different populations.

Conclusion

By exploring cross-cultural differences in daily travel satisfaction and its relationship with health, this study aims to bridge existing gaps in transport psychology and public health research. Findings will provide actionable recommendations for urban planners and policymakers to design culturally responsive mobility solutions that enhance well-being.

References

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