

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN COMMUTE TRAVEL BEHAVIOR OF MIDDLE-AGED PARENTS (30-45 YEARS) 2023

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ABSTRACT - This study focusses the gender disparities on commute travel behavior among middle-aged parents (aged 30-45) living in Colombo District, Sri Lanka. The study's goal is to better understand the different travel patterns, mode preferences, and factors that influence commute decisions among men and women in this demographic group. A questionnaire survey was used to collect data, with the focus being on mode choice and variables influencing commute decisions. The data analysis found considerable differences in commute travel behavior between genders, which has implications for transportation planning and gender equity. The findings underline the importance of specific interventions to address the unique issues that middle-aged parents confront, particularly in terms of fostering more fair and efficient commuting experiences. This study adds to the creation of strategies for improving transportation infrastructure and promoting gender equality in the Colombo District's urban mobility landscape by shining light on gender variations in commute travel behavior and will further provide valuable data and information to the transportation infrastructure.

Keywords: Keywords Gender differences; commute travel; mode preferences

5. INTRODUCTION

The commute travel behavior of middle-aged parents (30-45 years old) is an important part of urban mobility, with consequences for transportation planning, gender equity, and quality of life. In Colombo District, where transportation infrastructure and societal values interact, studying gender variations in commute travel behavior is critical for equal commuting experiences. Choice of means of transport in commuting trips depend on crucial factors such as age, education level, private transport access, location, household (Sánchez & González, 2016).

These impact commute decisions among middle-aged parents, shedding light on the difficulties of urban mobility in this demographic. The aim of this study is to examine gender disparities in commute travel behavior among middle-aged parents in Colombo District, Sri Lanka. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Recognize the distinct travel habits and mode choices of men and women in this demographic group.
- Identify the factors influencing commute decisions and investigate how they differ by gender.
- Examine how gender variations in commute travel behavior affect transportation planning and gender equity activities in the Colombo District.

6. MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study used a questionnaire survey of middle-aged parents (30-45 years old) in Colombo District, Sri Lanka. The survey was aimed to collect data on modes of transportation, frequency of commute, travel patterns, and factors influencing commute decisions. The research region, Colombo district, was chosen for its importance as a major metropolitan hub with diverse transportation infrastructure and a substantial population of middle-aged parents. Stratified sampling approaches were used to choose a representative sample of participants from the target demographic. A structured questionnaire was created to collect information about commute travel behavior, mode selection, and factors impacting travel decisions. Face-to-face surveys were administered in several areas frequented by the target group, assuring the confidentiality and anonymity of participants' responses. All participants provided informed consent after receiving ethical clearance. A sample size of 250 respondents was chosen, (by sample size determination equation abiding margin of error, sample proportion) guaranteeing representation from various urbanized geographical locations in the Colombo district as well as socioeconomic backgrounds within the district. The questionnaire data obtained was organized resulting information. The data analysis focused on finding gender disparities in commute travel behavior and investigating the underlying causes of these differences by using static and descriptive analysis such as thematic analysis.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study found significant gender variations in commute travel behavior among middle-aged parents in the Colombo District. Travel patterns, mode choices, and factors impacting commute decisions are analyzed, there were significant differences between men and women. These differences highlight the importance of tailored interventions to address the special issues experienced by middle-aged parents, particularly in fostering more fair and efficient commuting experiences. Furthermore, the findings emphasize the significance of including a gender perspective in transportation planning activities to ensure inclusivity and promote gender equity in urban mobility.

A pilot survey was conducted to 100 respondents in the Colombo District, significant gender differences in commuting were observed. Men typically have average travel times of 20-30 minutes, while women experience longer commutes of 30-40 minutes. In terms of transportation mode, 60% of men prefer private vehicles, 25% use public transportation, and 15% opt for other modes. Conversely, 55% of women rely on public transportation, 35% use private vehicles, and 10% choose other modes. Key challenges include traffic congestion for 45% of men and safety concerns for 40% of women. Additionally, 30% of women face issues with public transport reliability. These insights highlight the need for gender-sensitive transportation planning to improve commute experiences

8. CONCLUSION

This study sheds light on gender disparities in commute travel behavior among middle-aged parents in Colombo District, Sri Lanka. The findings emphasize the necessity of addressing the specific requirements and obstacles that men and women in this population confront to foster more equal and efficient commuting experiences. Based on the findings, various recommendations can be made for transportation planning and policy-making initiatives in the Colombo District, including. Overall, this study adds to the continuing discussion about urban mobility and gender equity by underlining the significance of taking gender disparities in commute travel behavior into account when planning and implementing transportation policies.

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