

Correlates of walking and cycling to work: baseline results from the Commuting and Health in Cambridge study

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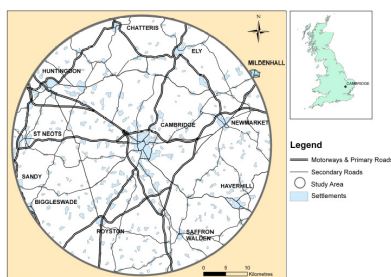
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Purpose

- Environmental perceptions and psychological factors appear to be correlates of walking and cycling behaviour. We assessed these associations using baseline data from a quasi-experimental cohort study of the effects of major transport infrastructural developments in Cambridge, UK.

Methods

- Participants over the age of 16, who work within Cambridge and who live in or around Cambridge responded to invitations to participate (n=1164).



- During 2009, all participants completed questionnaires which assessed physical activity over the last 4 weeks and travel modes and times spent travelling to and from work over the last week. Participants also provided information on their perceptions of the commute journey and psychological measures of car use, including perceived behavioural control (PBC), attitudes, habits and intentions for using the car.



- According to their questionnaire responses, participants were classified into categories according to time spent walking for commuting and cycling for commuting.

Future work

- Participants will be followed up each year for the following two years to assess the effect of changes to the environment on travel behaviour, physical activity and health. Further information about the study is available at:

<http://www.mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk/Research/Studies/Commuting/>

Results

- 28.7% of people reported walking to or from work, whereas 52% reported cycling to or from work, which was most common amongst those living 3-5km from work (Figure 1).

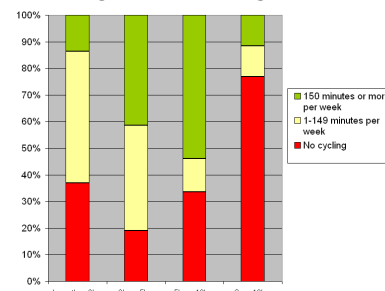


Figure 1: Engagement in cycling to or from work according to the distance between home and work

- Correlates of walking and cycling were different, whereby more of the personal factors were associated with cycling than walking (Table 1). These associations were predominantly observed in the sub-group with access to a car.

	Walking	Cycling
Personal factors	Female No driving licence	Male Degree education Normal weight At least 1 child No car Lives within 5km of work
Psychological factors	No car Lives within 3km of work	Negative attitudes towards car use At least 1 child No car Lives within 5km of work
Environmental perceptions	Positive attitudes towards car use Low PBC for car use Weak habits for car use	Convenient cycling routes
	Pleasant to walk Convenient public transport Higher traffic levels	

Table 1: Correlates of walking and cycling to work

Conclusions

- Personal, psychological and environmental factors are associated with walking and cycling. Environmental or psychological interventions to encourage walking and cycling may be most effective in those with access to a car.