

Correlates of Modes of Transportation to Work among Working Adults in Ernakulam District, Kerala

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Abstract : Transportation and urban planning is the least recognised area for physical activity promotion in India, unlike developed regions. Identifying the preferred transportation modalities and factors associated with it is essential to address these lacunae. The objective of the study was to assess the prevalence of modes of transportation to work, and its correlates among working adults in Ernakulam District, Kerala. A cross sectional study was conducted among 350 working individuals in the age group of 18-60 years, selected through multi-staged stratified random sampling in Ernakulam district of Kerala. The inclusion criteria were working individuals 18-60 years, workplace at a distance of more than 1 km from the home and who worked five or more days a week. Pregnant women/women on maternity leave and drivers (taxi drivers, autorickshaw drivers, and lorry drivers) were excluded. An interview schedule was used to capture the modes of transportation namely, public, private and active transportation, socio demographic details, travel behaviour, anthropometric measurements and health status. Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of them used private transportation to work, while active commuters were only 6.6 percent. The correlates identified for active commuting compared to other modes were low socio-economic status (OR=0.22, CI=0.5-0.85) and presence of a driving license (OR=4.95, CI= 1.59-15.45). The correlates identified for public transportation compared to private transportation were female gender (OR= 17.79, CI= 6.26-50.31), low income (OR=0.33, CI= 0.11-0.93), being unmarried (OR=5.19, CI=1.46-8.37), presence of no or only one private vehicle in the house (OR=4.23, CI=1.24-20.54) and presence of convenient public transportation facility to workplace (OR=3.97, CI= 1.66-9.47). The association between body mass index (BMI) and public transportation were explored and found that public transport users had lesser BMI than private commuters (OR=2.30, CI=1.23-4.29). Policies that encourage active and public transportation needs to be introduced such as discouraging private vehicle through taxes, introduction of convenient and safe public transportation facility, walking/cycling paths, and paid parking facility.

Keywords : active transportation, correlates, India, public transportation, transportation modes

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