Exploring the links between commuting & wellbeing: the ‘boat factor’

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Transport activities impact both people’s external quality of life (such as work/family life, social interactions and physical health) and internal psychological functioning (including creative thinking, productivity, good interpersonal relationships and resilience) (Reardon and Abdallah, 2013). The main objective of this research is to explore the links between transport and wellbeing (Stenius et al., 2011).

Conventional transportation brings negative effects, such as air pollution, congestion, road accident, and noise (Reardon and Abdallah, 2015). It calls for an immense shift in mode transport as a solution, where riverboat commuting is safe, comfortable, and sustainable (Underwood et al., 2005). The second objective is to analyse how to promote inland waterway transport (IWT) to make the life experience of commuters better or worse overall.

We measure travel satisfaction through various tools through five transport modes (driver/passenger, surface public transport modes, river boat transport, walking and cycling). We have built a survey comprising travel habits, social demographics, travel attitudes, and transport and wellbeing based on literatures (e.g. L. H. Li et al., 2014; Mahoney, 2015). We intend to capture different aspects of wellbeing, such as subjective/objective, experiential/evaluative, and hedonic/teleological (Mahoney, 2015). We are going to measure people’s objective data (stress level) indicated by muscle tension and blood vessels) by using the stress relief product, StressDots. We will also use people’s subjective wellbeing (perception) of travel mode choice, and create a scale related to travel satisfaction. We expect to see how wellbeing indicators influence people’s travelling choices, and public acceptance as a solution. River boat commuting is a safe, comfortable, and sustainable concept (Underwood et al., 2005).

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