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Travel patterns, regarding different activities: work, studies, household responsibilities and leisure

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Abstract

This study provides a descriptive analysis of the relationship between mobility and gender through unravel the complex relationships between gender roles at home (household responsibilities), leisure and the labor market (employment status). Specifically we study both the average number of journeys by different daily activities and the distances and average time spent on them. Thus, the spatio-temporal patterns of these activities allow us to identify different socio demographic variables that may help explain the relative differences in the behavior of journeys to different activities.

The results highlight that, women perform more trips than men regardless of the reason. Moreover, the difference between the number of trips by gender is greater when the reason for the trip is about household responsibility. Regarding the influence of socio-demographic variables the study reveals that in general, the reason why men and women travel greater distances is due to work. One interesting result is that employed women travel considerably shorter distances to work than do men even though they spend similar commute time. This suggests that, the journey to work may reflect the magnitude of immobility that women face in their everyday lives.

On the other hand, the socio-demographic characteristics analyzed (size and population density, household income, etc...) condition mainly women's travel patterns..

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1. Introduction

The Time-Use Studies provide information on what people have done and how to divide their time, demonstrating that patterns of structuring daily time vary in relation to variables such as social group membership, age, gender, employment status or household income. It is definitely the gender variable that prints the major differences. In fact, Time Use Survey 2009-2010 of the Spanish National Institute of Statistics INE (2010) reveals significant gender inequalities in the use of time, mainly manifested in activities such as "Work" and "Home and Family". This fact is discussed extensively in papers on Time Use as Carrasco and Dominguez (2003) and Rivas (2013).

Just as men and women make a different use of their time in activities such as "Work" and "Home & Family", we can see there are different travel patterns in which gender is one of the variables that major differences prints. Indeed, authors such as Hanson and Hanson (1980) and Niemeier and Morita (1996) state that women tend to spend more time involved in family and domestic obligations, so despite finding work, they have to reconcile their work and family life, which may result in women in general will perform shorter trips. Thus, authors like Madden (1981), Hanson and Johnston (1985), Wachs (1987), Gordon, Kumar, and Richardson (1989), Hanson and Pratt (1990), Rosenbloom and Burns (1993), Blumen (1994), Hjorthol (1998), McGuckin and Nakamoto (2005) suggest that women who work have shorter trips, opting to work near their homes, even if it means sacrificing their own career and their opportunities for occupational advancement.

The main aim in this research is to verify the existence of gender differences in daily mobility and the influence of their socio-demographic circumstances in choosing destinations, by analyzing distances and time spent on trips. Thus, the most knowledge of travel patterns in our current society will assist us to improve more efficient mobility and also more sustainable.

2. Methodology

This study is part of a larger research project focused on exploring ideas, attitudes and motivations of women and men around different aspects of mobility (travel purposes, travel times, distances and modal choice, ...).

The methodology of this paper, is based on an essentially descriptive approach, and is aimed at collecting data on the different travel patterns that are useful for implantation of sustainable transport policies based on adequate knowledge of reality, for it, we have analyzed micro-data from the Social Survey 2011: mobility in the urban regions of Andalusia by the Institute of Statistics and Cartography of Andalusia IECA (2013).

This survey took place in November 2011 although the micro-data were not published until March 2013. The target population of this survey is the family houses in urban regions of Andalusia and people aged over 16 residing in them. Finally the sample size was over 5,767 households and 17190 displacements.

The sample design was made by a three-stage cluster model. The expected relative error for all urban areas was 1.5% for a confidence level of 95.5%, under the assumption of maximum indetermination ($p = q = 50\%$) and a design effect 2.

The micro-data analysis has been performed using the SPSS statistical package (V15.0) to identify the main socio-demographic variables which can affect the different male and female mobility.

3. Mobility and gender

The average number of trips per person performed on a weekday is 3.57 IECA (2013), being 3.66 for women and 3.48 for men. We can see that the difference in the ratio of trips / person by gender is 4.97%, reflecting a greater number of journeys by women.

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