



Cycling - healthy and environmentally friendly - but still not my cup of tea? - Children's attitudes towards cycling

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Cycling offers a multitude of benefits: it's healthy, eco-friendly, and cost-effective. Yet, children and young people are increasingly missing out on opportunities for daily physical activity. Instead of walking or biking, they're often chauffeured to childcare and school in cars. This underscores the urgent need to make active mobility options more appealing to the younger generation.

While research on adults reveals a strong connection between their cycling frequency and their perception of biking, there's far less data on the attitudes of adolescents. The question arises: how do children and young people themselves view cycling? To what extent do they recognize the advantages of cycling and does it influence their intentions and mobility choices?

A study conducted in three urban schools (Vienna, Korneuburg) examined the mobility-related attitudes of 12 to 14-year-olds. Attitudes, in this context, encompass a range of factors, including practical and emotional aspects. Initial findings reveal that children attribute significant health and environmental benefits to cycling. However, their intention to cycle is heavily influenced by factors like convenience and image. Affective attitudes, such as how enjoyable or tedious they find biking, also play a crucial role. In these aspects, cycling outperforms walking or using public transport.

The subjective norm, which reflects the perceived social pressure regarding cycling, appears to be pivotal among this age group. Furthermore, children who are physically active or aspire to be so are more likely to (intend to) cycle. Those who wish to cycle are also more likely to report satisfaction with their overall health. Positive correlations between well-being and bicycle usage are evident, though the causal direction isn't conclusive.

These findings provide valuable insights to identify arguments and information that should be emphasized to promote cycling among young people. This study is part of the *TRA:WELL* - Transport & Wellbeing project.