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ECO ATTITUDES AND CHALLENGES OF YOUTH TOWARDS URBAN MOBILITY

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ABSTRACT

To identify critical issues and opportunities to improve the sustainability of urban transport systems, this academic student paper explores the attitudes of youth and the broader public – citizens, about urban mobility and traffic. Based on information gathered from an extensive poll, the report provides a detailed analysis of how the general population views public transportation, other forms of mobility including walking and bicycling, and the effects of traffic on the environment. The results highlight significant differences between younger and older people's viewpoints, especially regarding mobility-related safety, accessibility, and environmental factors. The study emphasizes the urgent need for better infrastructure to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians, as well as the significance of raising awareness about the use of sustainable transportation options. The results and suggestions encourage the creation of strategies and action measures that actively involve the next generation in decision-making, which will improve the mobility standard of living in urban areas.

Keywords: urban mobility, sustainable development, survey, youth

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly growing urban environments, mobility plays a crucial role in the sustainable development of cities. Urban mobility affects the dynamics of citizens' daily lives and significantly impacts the economic, social, and environmental aspects of urban areas. Developing effective traffic systems and promoting alternative modes of transportation, such as public transport, cycling, and walking, have become essential priorities for creating sustainable urban spaces. With the increasing population in urban areas, higher traffic density, and widespread use of private vehicles, challenges arise that demand integrated solutions to ensure seamless movement, reduce air pollution, and enhance road safety. Simultaneously, greater attention must be paid to the attitudes and needs of young people, who are active users of traffic infrastructure and have specific demands regarding mobility.

Indeed, one of the greatest challenges modern urban environments face is providing adequate solutions for urban mobility. The lack of infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users creates serious problems for citizens' daily movement. Furthermore, the exclusion of young people from decision-making processes concerning traffic and mobility often leads to neglecting their specific needs and perspectives. Urban mobility also has a significant environmental impact, particularly through the emission of harmful gases from motor vehicles and air pollution, which affect the quality of life for citizens. Here, the role of young people is crucial in promoting alternative, environmentally friendly modes of transportation.

METHODOLOGY

Type of Research

To examine citizens' attitudes towards urban mobility and acquire a nuanced understanding of their needs, experiences, and challenges, a mixed-methods research approach was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The primary data collection tool was a structured survey, which facilitated the systematic and comprehensive analysis of a large sample of respondents. The survey design encompassed a diverse range of mobility-related topics, including preferred modes of transportation, obstacles to utilizing public transit, walking, or cycling, and perceptions of the environmental consequences of traffic. Questions were carefully crafted to ensure clarity and accessibility, while also providing respondents with the flexibility to express their views comprehensively. The surveys were disseminated through online platforms to maximize accessibility and inclusivity, reaching participants across varied geographic locations.

To further enrich the findings and gain deeper insights into the motivations behind mobility choices, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of participants. These interviews provided a qualitative depth, offering perspectives on specific challenges and attitudes that could not be fully captured through quantitative survey data. The integration of this mixed-methods approach enhanced the robustness and validity of the research, addressing the multifaceted nature of urban mobility and the diverse aspects of citizen engagement.

Target Group

The target group for this research encompasses all citizens aged 14 to 77 who actively participate in urban traffic, utilizing various modes of transportation.

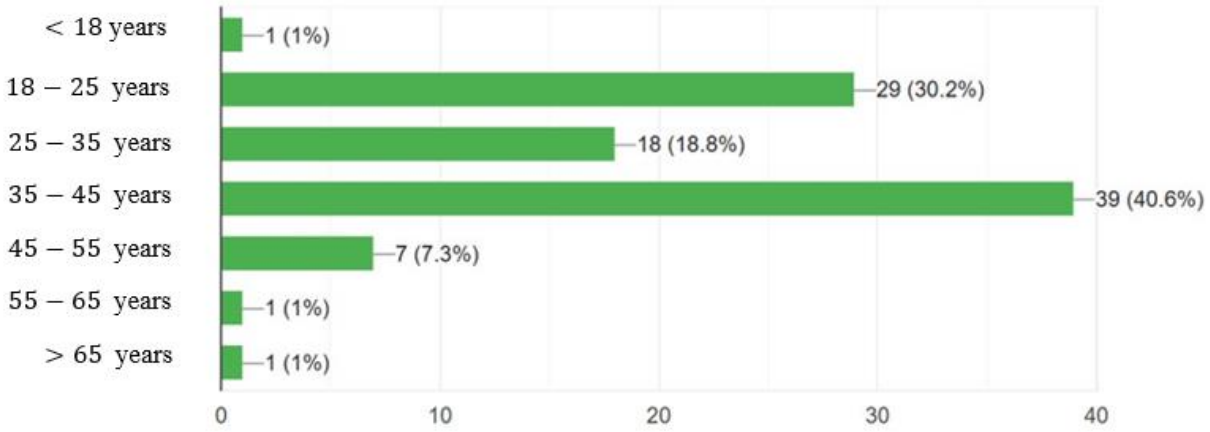

Figure 2.2.1 Age group of respondents

The selection of respondents was made based on specific criteria: age (Figure 2.2.1), place of residence, as well as daily transportation habits and the status of the respondents (Figure 2.2.2).

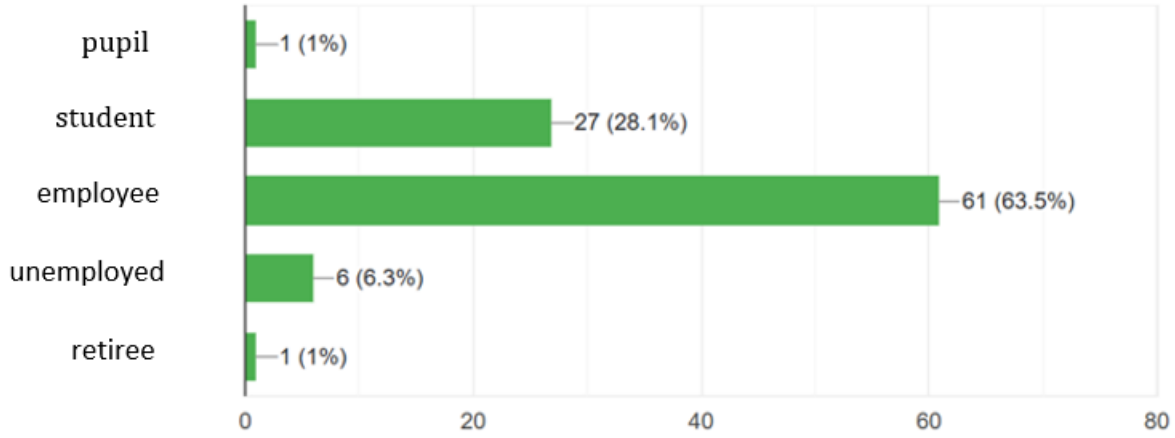

Figure 2.2.2 Respondent status

To assess the impact of urban and rural characteristics on mobility, several municipalities were included (Figure 2.2.3), considering aspects such as their geographic location within the country, population size, development of road infrastructure, connectivity to other urban centers, and other relevant factors.

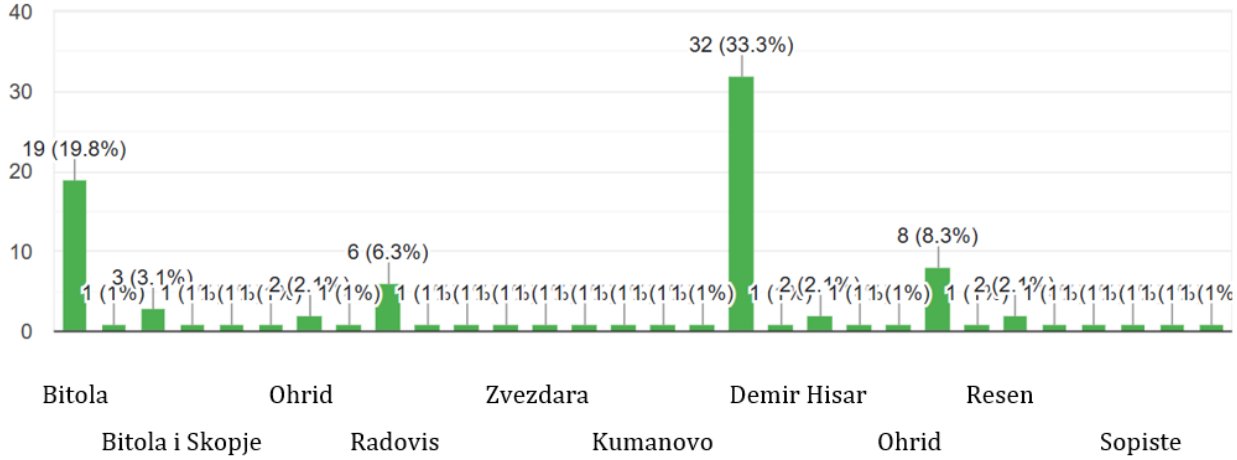

Figure 2.2.3 Map of municipalities included in the survey

The surveyed group of approximately 100 citizens, as the target group, enabled a precise investigation of the citizens' attitudes from various municipalities, resulting in relevant and representative data that reflect their perception of the challenges in urban mobility.

ANALYSIS OF CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARD URBAN MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

General Attitudes

Citizens' attitudes towards existing transportation solutions reflect their daily experiences, expectations, and perceptions of the future of urban mobility.

The results show that 46.9% of people commute to work by private car as drivers, indicating a high reliance on private vehicles for daily activities. Walking is the second most common mode of transport, with 20.8%, followed by public transportation at 18.8%, and electric scooters at 7.3%. This distribution highlights the diverse habits in choosing transportation for commuting to work.

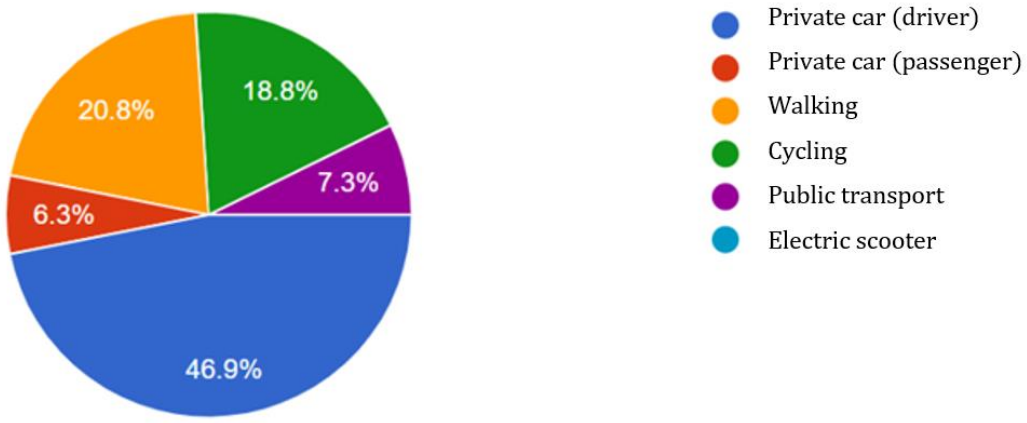

Figure 3.1.1 Percentage representation of the choice of transport mode for commuting to work

When it comes to recreational activities, the majority of people, specifically 42.7%, choose to use bicycles, indicating a preference for physical activity in recreation. Private cars account for 26%, while walking is chosen by 24%, with other modes of transport, such as public

transport and electric scooters, being less represented. These data suggest potential for the development of policies promoting active mobility and reducing reliance on private vehicles.

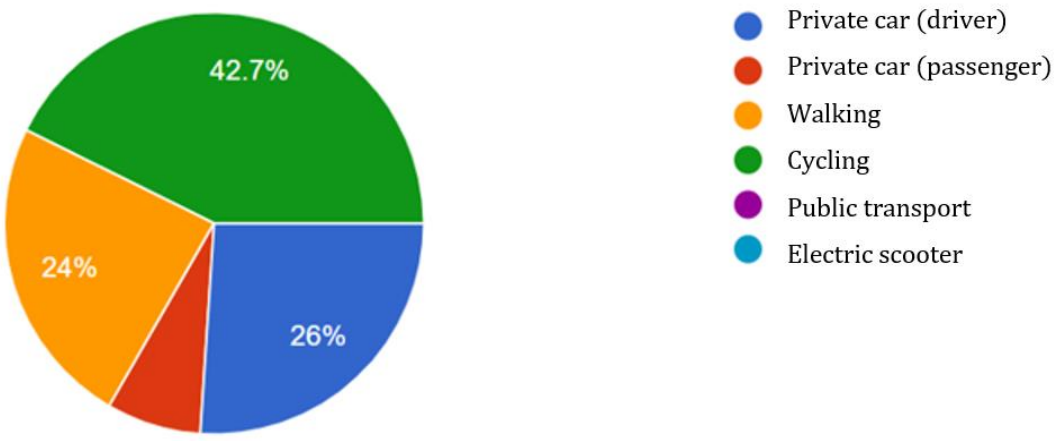

Figure 3.1.2 Percentage representation of the choice of transport mode for recreational travel

The duration of use of various transport modes varies significantly among categories. The majority of respondents using public transport do so for less than 15 minutes daily, indicating short travel times by public transport. The same applies to bicycle users, while walking times are equally distributed between 15-30 minutes and 30-45 minutes. Private vehicles are used evenly across all time intervals.

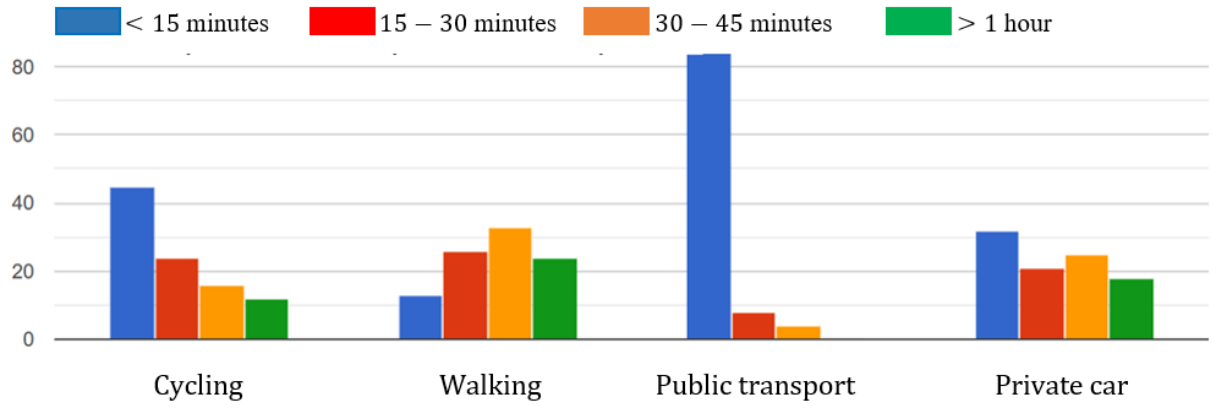

Figure 3.1.3 Display of time intervals for using different modes of transport

According to the collected data, citizens generally express a high level of dissatisfaction with public transport, particularly regarding the punctuality and efficiency of the vehicles. A significant number of respondents feel that the existing public transport system fails to meet their needs for fast and reliable transportation, with frequent comments about bus delays.

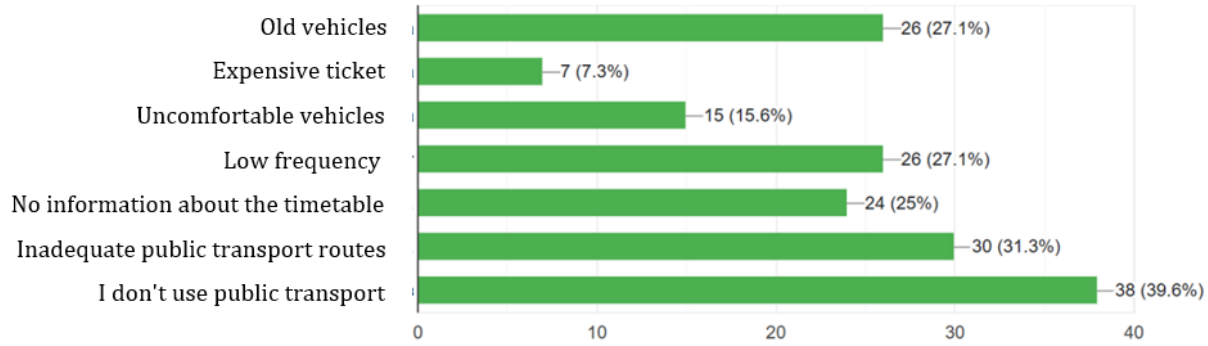

Figure 3.1.4 Percentage representation of citizens' opinions on the shortcomings of public transport

Underdeveloped cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, the occupation of pedestrian zones by motor vehicles due to illegal parking, and inadequate solutions for integrating alternative transport modes are some of the main reasons highlighted by respondents for actively using bicycles and walking as alternative modes of transport. A significant percentage of respondents -71.9% - point to the lack of bicycle lanes as a major issue.

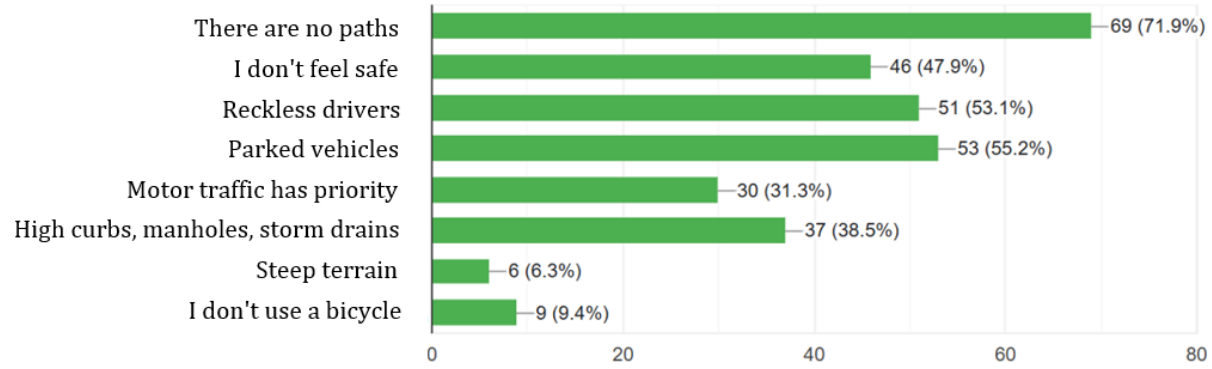

Figure 3.1.5 Percentage representation of citizens' opinions on the shortcomings of using bicycles as a mode of transport

For pedestrians, the biggest issues are parked vehicles and inadequate pedestrian infrastructure. As shown in the graph below, 52.1% to 60.4% of surveyed citizens believe that sidewalks are in poor condition, unsafe, and obstructed by parked vehicles.

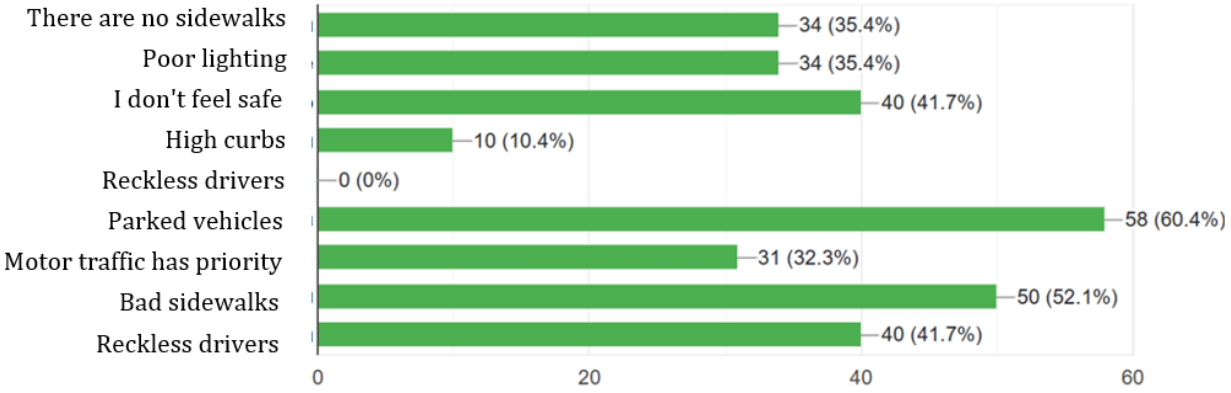

Figure 3.1.6 Percentage representation of citizens' opinions on the shortcomings of walking as a mode of transport

Citizens often view traffic problems as one of the biggest challenges to quality of life in urban areas. Traffic congestion, frequent delays in public transport, and the lack of safe

pedestrian and bicycle paths directly affect people's daily activities, including time spent commuting and their overall satisfaction with life in cities. A significant number of respondents, 42.7%, believe that traffic is a major factor contributing to increased air pollution, further leading to negative health consequences.

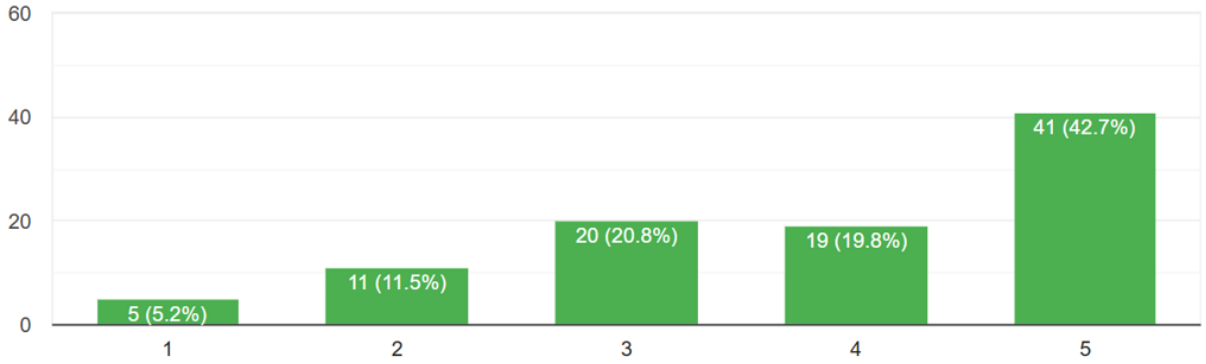

Figure 3.1.7 Representation of citizens' opinions on the impact of traffic on air pollution

The majority, 34.4%, agree that traffic-induced noise significantly affects the quality of life for residents. Additionally, the remaining respondents agree that noise affects life quality, albeit to a lesser extent.

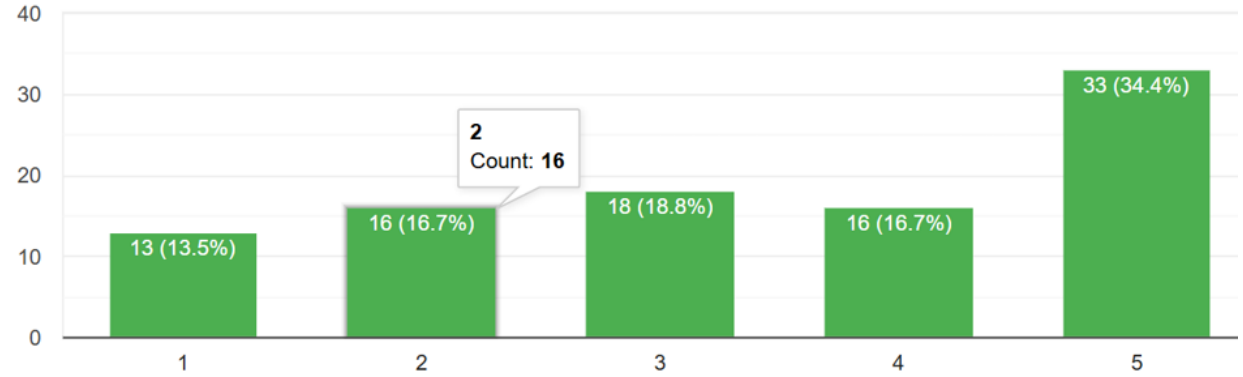

Figure 3.1.8 Representation of citizens' opinions on the impact of noise on quality of life

In response to the question, "Can our choice of transport mode influence the improvement of air quality in the area where we live?", 68.8% fully agree that choosing a transport mode, particularly sustainable transport options, can improve air quality in urban environments.

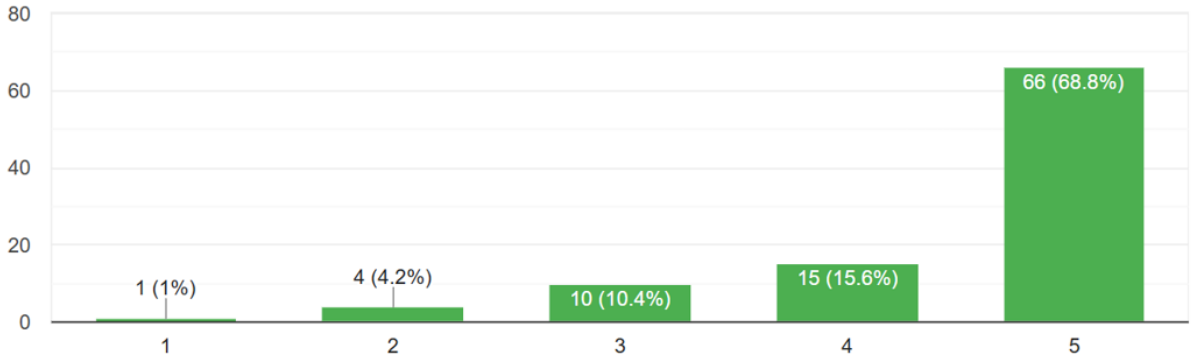

Figure 3.1.9 Representation of citizens' opinions on the impact of travel mode choice on improving air quality

CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Findings

The paper reveals citizens' perspectives on urban mobility and traffic. According to the survey results, citizens show a preference for alternative forms of mobility such as walking, cycling, and electric scooters (42% of respondents state they use walking, cycling, or electric scooters for commuting to work/school), while 53.1% of respondents opt for private cars when traveling to the central urban area. These findings indicate that while awareness of alternative modes of transport is growing among citizens, the use of motor vehicles remains a priority. The inadequate infrastructure and issues with public transport are highlighted as major problems, with respondents identifying the lack of bicycle and pedestrian paths as the primary reason for not using alternative transport, which negatively impacts their safety and overall quality of life.

Recommendations for improvement

To improve urban mobility and address citizens' needs, it is essential to implement specific and sustainable measures. Citizens propose enhancing public transport by introducing more frequent and better-organized bus routes, as well as creating additional intermodal transport hubs to facilitate easy transfers between different transport modes. Furthermore, there is a need for greater investment in cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. Bicycle and pedestrian paths should be separated from motor traffic to reduce the risk of traffic accidents and encourage the use of these more environmentally friendly transport options. Additionally, they recommend increasing investments in electric infrastructure and initiatives for subsidizing the purchase of electric scooters and bicycles. Promoting sustainable mobility through public campaigns and educational programs is also considered an important step in raising awareness about the environmental and health impacts of traffic.

Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study have direct implications for policies and strategies related to urban mobility. The preferences of citizens for sustainable forms of transport can be leveraged to plan and improve infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, as well as to promote electric scooters and other alternative modes of transport. At the same time, the negative perceptions of citizens regarding the safety and accessibility of public transport indicate a need for improvements in public transport systems and a focus on increasing road safety, especially for vulnerable categories. Additionally, 32.4% of respondents believe that their mode of travel has a direct impact on air quality, highlighting the need for environmentally oriented traffic policies that reduce pollution from motor vehicles.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research is required to examine the views of a wider demographic, focusing on variations in opinions based on age, economic status, and educational background. Additionally, continuous monitoring of public attitudes is advisable, along with the evaluation of the outcomes of new initiatives and projects within the realm of urban mobility.

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