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HOW COMMUTE MODE CHOICES CAN CONTROL STRESS LEVELS

This research integrates perspectives from transportation and psychology research by focusing on the relations between commuting stress, commuting mode choice, and consequences of such choice for commuters' health, travel safety, and work performance. To fill the gaps in the transportation and psychology literatures, the project addresses two key research questions:

- 1) Under what circumstances workers experiencing commuting stress are more likely to commute via car vs. public transit vs. bicycle vs. on foot?
- 2) What are the different implications of choosing different commuting modes for commuters' mental and physical health?

This project analyzes two existing datasets—the 2011 Oregon Household Activity Survey and the data from one-week daily diary surveys—to address the aforementioned research questions. Results from these analyses will inform an upcoming study where both research questions will be examined simultaneously in a more rigorous way. This work will establish reliable instruments of commuting stress and examine the distribution of commuting stress across socio-demographic groups and geographic areas, particularly focusing on low income and minority populations with limited commuting options. Findings from this research should shed light on possible intervention opportunities that help commuting workers to cope with various sources of life stress while making more informed decision on travel mode choice. Commuting workers, their employers, and transportation agencies and planners could all take part in these interventions which stand to benefit commuter/employee productivity and well-being, as well as performance and safety of the transportation system.

This research explores how commuting workers can improve their stress levels and get the most out of the transportation system through making informed travel mode choices that will benefit their job performance as well as their overall well-being.

PROJECT TITLE
How Do Stressed Workers Make Travel Mode Choices That Are Good For Their Health, Safety, and Productivity? (#2017-995)

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