



# Cycling behaviour in car-dominant societies: a survey of the UK population

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## Introduction

We investigated whether socio-cultural norms have an adverse effect on behavioural levels of cycling in the UK. The findings suggest that the UK is an example of a culturally 'car-dominant' society. As social marketers, we have worked with professional agencies to design communications that sought to create more positive cultural norms.

## Methods

The authors commissioned a large UK based market research agency, YouGov, to generate a stratified random sample of 3,885 nationally representative people in GB aged 16-64. These were interviewed by means of an online questionnaire.

## Results

Principal components analysis revealed the presence of 7 retained components explaining a total of 55% of the variance. Cronbach Alphas for these factors were generally reasonable, ranging from .811 to .663. The factors were given names that reflected the nature of the scale items. These were: 'car vs cycling', 'disposition to cycle', 'cycling role models', 'cycling is normal and cool', 'motoring myths', 'self image and cycling', and 'cyclist user image'.

## Discussion

The UK's car dominance has created some attitude clusters which coalesce to form anti-cycling cultures amongst some non-cyclists. These can lead to in-group and out-group effects. There were also positive signals of new, pro-cycling cultures emerging. Social marketing communications were commissioned accordingly.



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