

GENDER VS VEHICLE TYPE AND ITS EFFECT ON THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

What are the vehicle preferences driven between Men and Women at the University of Bath?
How does this affect the transport industry as a whole?

The world of the automobile industry has been known to be a male-dominated sector, with more men seen to be comfortable driving any type of vehicle than females. Women were perceived by the society to prefer riding in the passenger seats while having their male counterparts drive them. Over the years we have seen females confidently going behind the wheels of several types of vehicles.

According to an article written by Sage-Advices, female drivers in the UK increased from 68% in 2015 to 70% in 2018. (Sage-Advices, 2021). This statistic shows a considerable number of female drivers in the UK. Still, the overall likelihood that these female drivers drive vehicles other than their private cars is significantly less than 50 percent. That shows a gender divide in the distinct categories of vehicles driven in the UK.

Studies have shown that there are different preferences in vehicle selection between men and women. Women tend to prioritize the safety, practicality, design, and comfort of vehicles while men tend to go for vehicles with higher performance than comfort. (Hardcastle, 2006). Does this translate to why females do not drive heavy commercial cars like buses, trucks, or vans?

Commercial cars are mostly driven by men in the transport industry for several reasons like gender stereotypes, gender discrimination, work-life balance, sexual harassment, etc. (Vrio Europe, n.d.). Drivers of commercial and freight vehicles i.e. (Buses, Taxis, Vans, Lorries, and Trucks) are mostly men with few females, although the transport sector suffered from driver shortage over the past year due to Covid-19. I believe if the issues of gender stereotypes and discrimination can be addressed in the transport industry, the transport industry can improve its vacancy by attracting females to fill the positions while creating a conducive environment for women to thrive thereby increasing driver retention in the industry. Females can significantly play a key role in the transport industry.

Therefore, given my motivation above I would conduct research that will explore the current distribution of female drivers to male drivers at the University of Bath and the types of vehicles they drive. And how this distribution can inform further research and analysis to improve the transport industry in the UK.

The features I would be exploring when collecting my data for the analysis are 'Date, Time, Direction of Traffic, Vehicle types, Occupancy of Vehicle and my additional data is "Drivers Gender".'

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