

The roads one must walk down: Commute and depression for Beijing's residents

Dr Wang Xize | Assistant Professor | National University of Singapore

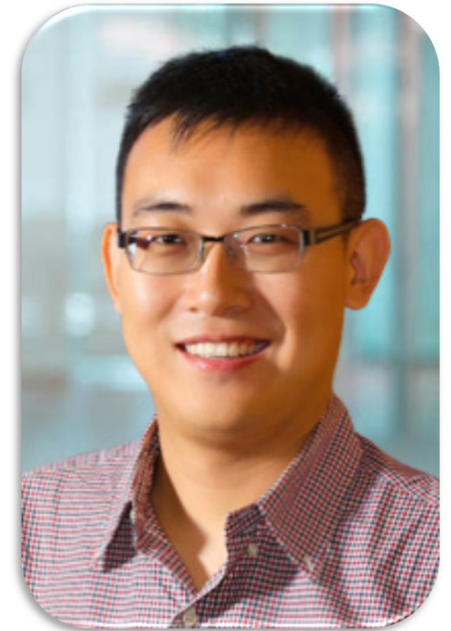
Synopsis

As a vital aspect of individual's quality of life, mental health has been included as an important component of the [U.N. Sustainable Development Goals](#). This study focuses on a specific aspect of mental health: depression, and examines its relationship with commute patterns. Using survey data from 1,528 residents in Beijing, China, we find that every 10 additional minutes of commute time is associated with 1.1% higher probability of depression. We test for the mechanisms of the commute-depression link and find that commute is associated with depression as a direct stressor rather than triggering higher work stress. When decomposing commute time into mode-specific time, we found that time on mopeds/motorcycles has the strongest association with depression. Moreover, the commute-depression associations are stronger for older workers and blue-collar workers. Hence, policies that could reduce commute time, encourage work from home, improve job-housing balance or increase motorcyclists' safety would help promote mental health.

Speaker's Biography

Dr. Xize WANG is an assistant professor at the Department of Real Estate of National University of Singapore (NUS). He works interdisciplinary in the fields of public policy, urban planning, public health and transportation. His current work focus on (1) the impact of urban built environment on people's mental health and well-being, as well as (2) how individuals and policy makers can best mitigate the negative health impacts of the incoming global challenges (e.g. climate change and aging).

Prior to NUS, he has been a postdoctoral scholar at University of California, Berkeley. He received a Ph.D. in Urban Planning & Development at University of Southern California, a Master in Urban & Regional Planning at University of Minnesota, and a B.E. in Urban Planning and a B.A. in Economics in 2010 at Peking University.



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Online Seminar (via Zoom)

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