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D I G E S T

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Women and
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Source: Alonso-Almedia, M. (2019)
Carsharing: Another gender issue?
Drivers of carsharing usage among
women and relationship to perceived
value. *Travel Behaviour and Society*,
17:36-45
Available [here](#)

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Women's perceptions of carsharing



A study explored women's motivations for using carsharing clubs and peer-to-peer carsharing. Trust, utility and safety were among the issues that affected women's willingness to carshare. The study concludes that operators of carsharing services should do more to meet the needs of women.

Europe accounts for 50% of the world carsharing market with further growth expected. Surprisingly, carsharing is growing in urban areas with good public transport, cycling facilities and mobility choices. An analysis of carsharing choices (i.e. car sharing clubs and peer-to-peer carsharing) found that sociodemographic variables, including gender, play an important role with the take up of carsharing being greater among men than women.

Women are underrepresented in the population of carsharers, which implies that the rise in carsharing is increasing the gender gap in mobility. However, analyses of carsharing business models suggest that carsharing has great potential among women and that women could become a large segment of the carsharing market.

There are a number of reasons why women could obtain value from using carsharing services. For example, the annual distance travelled by female drivers tend to be lower than that of men. Carsharing is considered to be more effective for a travel range between 15,000 and 18,000 kilometres/year. Finally, women tend to be more concerned about sustainability issues, which suggests they may be attracted to carsharing due to lower polluting emissions.

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Contact:

European Commission
Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy
Email: EU-TRIMIS@ec.europa.eu

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The study examined women's motivations for using a carsharing service. A survey of 228 women was undertaken to explore car clubs and peer-to-peer carsharing, analysing the carsharing business model and personal motivations.

Results suggest that women's decisions about carsharing are based on their feelings about the platform and personal value they perceive in the service. As in traditional commerce, positive feelings and market advantages are important factors in the decision of women to subscribe to a carsharing service.

Carsharing is perceived to offer high benefits in terms of mobility choices. However, trust is a prerequisite for services trying to build a strong identity and high re-use of service. Trust is usually based on repeated positive experience in a service. Women feel carsharing platforms are transparent and secure because all subscribers are identified: everyone knows who everyone is. The opportunity to travel more sustainably is also attracting women to carsharing.

Personal security plays an important role in women's travel decisions and more attention should be given these concerns by authorities, city transport planners and operators. Women and men have unequal mobility opportunities, which constrain women's social opportunities. Due to this, trust in the platform is important, especially peer-to-peer. Carsharing platforms should develop mechanisms to build trust with users, especially women, regarding trip safety. In peer-to-peer carsharing, formal rules of behaviour, transparent technology and other factors such as insurance can be predictors of trust.

Judgements of utility are based on service attributes such as availability of cars nearby, the ability to organise a trip at the last minute and the price of the service.

The study suggests that, from a practical perspective, operators of carsharing services should analyse the specific requirements of women and the purposes for which they are using carsharing services and pay attention to the day-to-day behaviour of customers.

This is important to promote carsharing to women, who increase their use of such services when they perceive value.

The study concludes by highlighting that instrumental and emotional motivations drive women's use of carsharing services. Women's everyday use of carsharing services may increase as they perceive that such services offer greater utility, and economic and environmental benefits.