

“What is the impact of walkability infrastructure on the quality of life in cities?”

Introduction:

Overtime, good road connection has become a morphological layer for urban designers. To help cities to grow and create (at the time) the best layout possible. However, since then residents have been opting to drive instead of walk or cycle. Which has been proven to have negative environmental effects as well as negative mental and physical health effects. Therefore, cities are needing to redesign and adapt to creating a walkable city. Many research studies investigate what these negative effects are and how to implement the new walkable infrastructure. Without, developing their studies further to determine what the actual impact of this is. Therefore, this research investigate the impact of the new walkable infrastructure in cities on urban residents. Specifically, students who are new to the area where they study.

Literature Review:

Walkability:

In depth research defines that walkability combines a complex understanding that involves many different contributions from several areas, such as design layout, safety, connections and distance.

Quality of life:

There are many defining factors that contribute to creating good quality of life. In depth research explains that good quality of life involves, good mobility, job security, cleanliness and good health. The research believes that urban planners, designers and decision makers must all work together to help try and achieve good quality of life.

Benefits of walking:

Understanding why people walk can help in understanding the benefits that walking can bring physically, mentally and environmentally. Most people either walk for leisure or to get to a destination. Mental health benefits include: positive thinking, reduce in stress and an increase in self esteem. Physical benefits include: reduce in blood pressure, fitness and weight loss

Quality of life and walkability:

Through increasing walkability, pedestrians will feel safer and more connected to the area that they live in. Resulting in higher quality of life. Overtime reliance on cars will decrease and the need for walking will increase. Boosting the positive impacts of walking.

Urban Design responses to walkability:

- Density
- Connections
- Pleasurability
- Design

Walking benefits for students:

Walking for students includes all the mental and physical health benefits that can be reaped through walking. Additionally, for students walking can help retention of information, productivity, improved sleep and motivation.

Aims and Objectives:

Aim:

Investigate the impact of walkability infrastructure in cities on urban residents. Specifically, students who are new to the area where they study.

Objectives:

- 1) Understand the general benefits of walking in urban areas
- 2) Investigate the development of new infrastructure related to walkability in Oxford
- 3) To understand if the new walkability Infrastructure has improved or worsened the quality of life for students since implementation
- 4) What improvements need to be made to improve walkability to aid students.

Research Structure and Ethics

There are six chapters within this research project that help to underpin the aim of this research.

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Literature review
- Chapter 3: Methodology
- Chapter 4: Case Study Analysis
- Chapter 5: Results
- Chapter 6: Conclusions And Recommendations

Ethics:

When creating questionnaire and interview questions, I made sure to approach these questions ethically and professionally. Before I set out, I made sure to complete the Oxford Brookes Ethics E1 form to confirm that my questions were appropriate to the nature of the research. Evidence of this is set out within my appendix. Since the completion of the form, the risk of ethical implications is regarded low and approachable.

Methodology

Within the primary research, interviews and questionnaires will be conducted to help underpin the aim of this research. The Questionnaire will aim to have 30 participants. The interviews will be conducted on 4 different participants. Below are examples of questions that will be conducted. The questionnaire will be analysed through quantitative data. Whereas the interview questions will be analysed qualitatively.

Objectives	Methods	Questions	Assessment
1 and 2	Literature review and background research	N/A	N/A
3 and 4	Questionnaire	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How long have you lived in the area for? 2. Do you walk/cycle or bus? 3. What university year are you? 4. Do you walk more then you did before the infrastructure was implemented? 5. Do you physically feel better after walking? 	Theoretical Framework

4.	Interview:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you feel your views have changed since the infrastructure was implemented, to now? 2. Have your feelings changed towards different modes of transportation changed since the implementation of the walkability infrastructure? 3. Did you feel that you were aware of the implementation before it was put into place? 4. How has the need to walk effected your day to day life? 5. Do you feel more motivated to study since having the need to walk? 	Theoretical Framework
----	------------	---	-----------------------

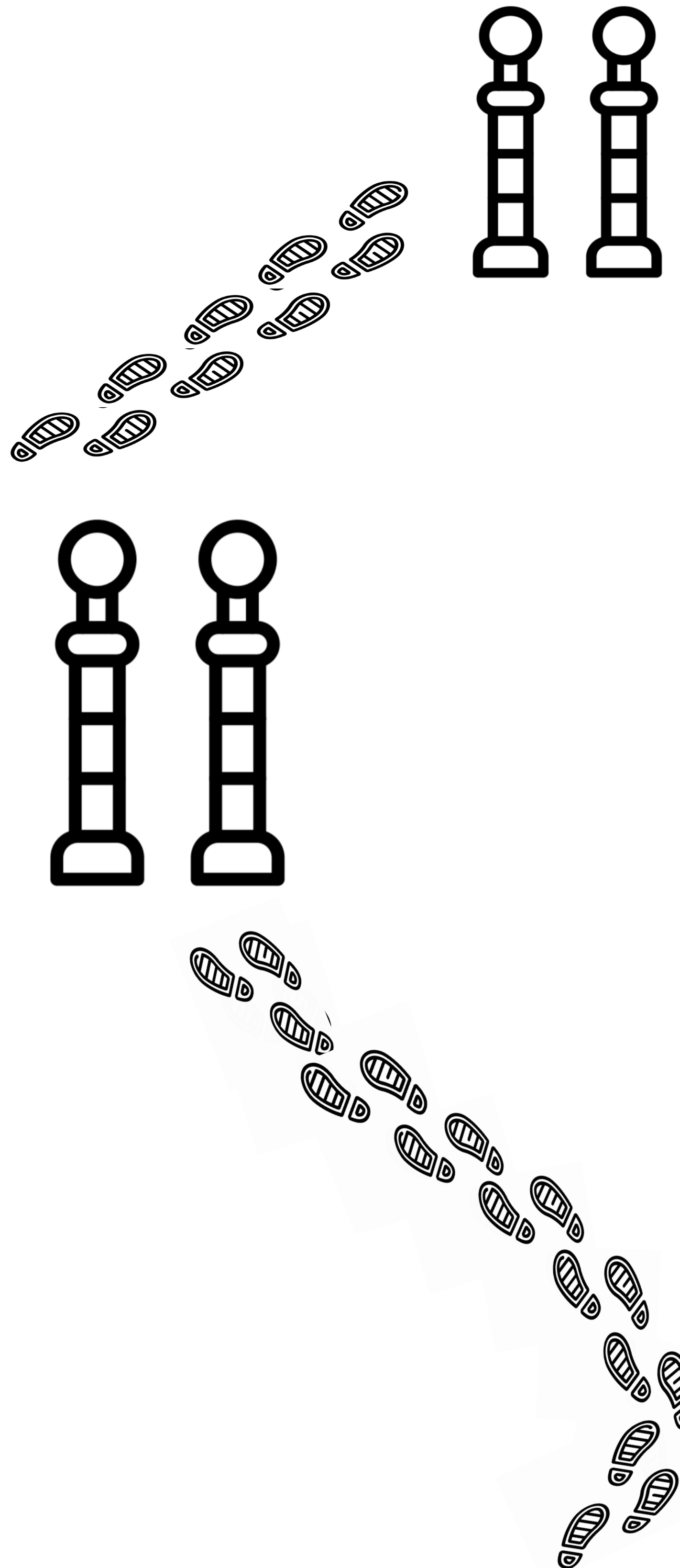
Method	Rationale
Questionnaire: I have created a set of 11 questions. That consist of Yes, No and Maybe answers. To be able to access the data quantitatively.	The rationale behind this method of research is to understand the consensus regarding the walkability infrastructure in Oxford.
Interview: I have created a 14 in depth questions to ask within my conducted interviews. I will access my results qualitatively against my analytical framework.	The aim of this method is to be able to get a deeper level of understanding of the effects on quality of life for students within Oxford since the implementation of the walkable infrastructure.

Results

Currently, the questionnaire and interview stages of the research project are still being undertaken. However the expected results are that safety (within Oxford) need improving to create a more pleasurable walking environment. To help urge residents and students to want to walk. The expectation also includes that students have adapted to living with this new infrastructure and are now reaping the benefits that walking offers. That the dependency of private cars is now being shifted to walking, cycling and public transport. Finally, the expectation is that the impact on quality of life for students has been increased.

Conclusions

To conclude, This research project, is imperative to understanding how the need to shift from car dependency to walking effects the quality of life on urban residents and students. This research investigates how this has been received and what the true impact is. Through this research obvious recommendations have become apparent. Safety and the implementation process need improving to aid quality of life further. However, additional research should be conducted to explore this further.



Framework

Themes/Principles	Indicators
Connectivity 	Density Walk/Cycle/Bus Walking Time
Safety 	Day Time Night-time Walk/Cycle/Bus
Well-being 	Physical Health Mental Health Exercise Positive Or Negative Outlook

