This study evaluates how different aspects of travel socialization during childhood and adolescence contribute to the explanation of travel mode choice in young adulthood. In an online survey with 2612 students who had access to a car, three different socialization aspects were measured retrospectively: communication with parents about the environmental impact of travel mode choice at the participants’ age of 15, the symbolic-affective importance of driving and acquisition of a driver’s license at the age of 18, and finally multi-mobility in the peer group at the age of 18. It was expected that socialization constructs would have a direct effect on social and personal norm as well as on car use habit and an indirect effect on car use, mediated by norms, habit and intention. Structural equation modelling showed a significant impact of all socialization constructs on either norms or car use habit or both. Moreover, the postulated mediator effect could be confirmed. The paper encourages widening the perspective of transport studies by aspects of socialization, which have been neglected in former research on adults mobility behaviour.

Keyword: Habits, Transport behaviour, Conservation-ecological behaviour, Social norm, Personal norm, Travel socialization