Motivated by the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, this study explores transport-based social exclusion (TBSE) based on a comparative analysis between Japan and Bangladesh, aiming to derive useful insights into inclusive urban policy, with respect to those disadvantageous areas and population groups. It is difficult to measure social exclusion directly because of its social features. This research challenges the measurement by making use of the concept of well-being, which has been widely studied, and argues that TBSE occurs when transport disadvantages lead to a decline of individual’s well-being.

The thesis consists of eight chapters, where identification of TBSE, links between transport disadvantage and TBSE, influence of social exclusion (SE) on future life and migration choices; and the links between travel behavior, well-being and health-related quality of life are mainly examined. All the analyses are conducted in association with the living (built) environment.

This study contributes to literature significantly in terms of capturing TSE from the life-oriented perspective in a comprehensive way across the whole thesis. This is the first study in the urban/transport policy literature, to apply the time perspective theory, associated with migration choices, and to apply the life-oriented approach to the SE study. Considering the explanations of framework and methodologies that have been employed, this section will describe the main contents of each chapter and the connections between them.

In Chapter 1, the fundamental aspects behind the transport-based social exclusion theories are discussed, as well as the motivation and main research questions arisen, where the importance of transport systems and urban planning and their influence on social exclusion and deterioration or enhancement of the citizens’ quality of life is highlighted.

In Chapter 2, a literature review covering some of the most fundamental theories behind transport disadvantage and social exclusion is conducted. In addition, relevant information regarding the different societal and geographical backgrounds related to the different survey locations is provided in that chapter.

Chapter 3 describes the process and the main features for collecting the data that were employed in the empirical studies, and the most important descriptive analysis and aggregate results for understanding in full perspective the research background and objectives. After that, the main body dissertation is divided into four chapters.

Chapter 4 explores the identification of transport disadvantage conditions in the context of a developing country (Bangladesh) based on variables that were chosen and adapted from the
existing literature on transport-based social exclusion. Factor analysis techniques are utilized to identify the main underlying factors behind the evaluated aspects, as well as their similitudes and differences with respect to the existing theory.

Chapter 5 focuses on the negative impacts of transport disadvantage on well-being that arise from the operation and use (or lack of use) of transport systems, travel behavior patterns and social interactions in the living environment. The data that were used for elaboration of these chapters were obtained from a field survey. The survey was conducted between March and May 2015 in the three main Bangladeshi cities (Dhaka, Khulna and Chittagong).

Chapter 6 focuses in future life choices of young people in selected areas of Hiroshima prefecture. More specifically, we surveyed high school students in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of high school between May and September 2016. Some locations were selected in depopulating areas of Hiroshima prefecture. Japanese society is currently facing serious issues related to population decline in specific areas, attributable mostly to internal migration and aging population. In consideration of this, in this chapter the implications of situations of transport disadvantage and social exclusion on future life choice are examined.

Chapter 7 deals with the links between the built environment, travel behavior and Health-Related Quality of Life (QOL) in Japanese urban areas. Data from a survey on Health-Related QOL conducted in 20 Japanese cities in 2010 were used for the analysis of this chapter. The interactions between built environment and travel behavior, the generation of non-motorized trips and their positive and negative contributions to well-being are examined in detail in this chapter. In a second section of this chapter, we examine the influence of parks and green urban areas on health-related QOL. Based on different travel behavior patterns, specific groups at higher risk of social exclusion were identified.

Finally, Chapter 8 recalls and summarizes the main findings and conclusions from all the chapters of this dissertation, describes the limitations of the study, policy recommendations oriented toward more inclusive urban environments and the planning of transport systems that enhance people's quality of life and well-being. Policy implications, limitations and future research directions are also discussed in this section.

The incorporation of well-being and life-oriented approach aspects to the characterization of transport-based social exclusion provides new methodological insights into the identification of vulnerable groups, in terms of their higher risks of social exclusion due to exposure to conditions of transport disadvantage. Discussions on the implications of existing and potential transport-based social exclusion issues are also provided in this dissertation, in consideration of specific problems associated with each survey location: efforts to alleviate poverty and unplanned urban expansion in Bangladesh, depopulation in rural areas of Japan, and rural-to-urban migration and aging population in Japan.

Remark: The summary of the dissertation should be written on A4-size pages and should not exceed 4,000 Japanese characters. When written in English, it should not exceed 1,500 words.