

Transportation Planning and Technology

Editorial

Universities' Transport Study Group UK Annual Conference 2016

This issue of *Transportation Planning and Technology* consists of six selected papers drawn from the 48th Annual Universities' Transport Study Group Conference, held in Bristol and hosted by the University of the West of England and the University of Bristol in January 2016. The UTSG Conference is for transport academics and researchers from UK and Irish universities and is 'designed to discuss research needs, research in progress and to give research students the opportunity to present papers on their work' (www.utsg.net). Eight six delegates attended the conference, presenting 68 papers across 30 plenary and parallel sessions, and the authors of those were invited to have their papers considered for inclusion in this special issue. Those papers submitted were subject to a rigorous review process in the usual manner.

As with previous special issues the papers reveal the range of academic research within the UTSG community, with differing research approaches and areas of study. The field of transport studies embraces a wide range of disciplinary perspectives and this is reflected in the papers in this issue.

The paper by Omar Alotaibi and Dimitris Potoglou evaluates whether the transport measures currently in place in Riyadh City, Saudi Arabia in order to reduce congestion and car dependency are robust enough to encourage public transport patronage. A study involving seventeen semi-structured interviews was undertaken with local stakeholders including transport experts and representatives of Riyadh City authorities. The study has found that current transport policy is supply driven in that infrastructure is provided to match the growth in private vehicle ownership. There is however support for the use of TDM measures alongside public transport improvements.

Camporeale, Caggiani, Fonzone and Ottomanelli seek to quantify the impacts of horizontal and vertical equity in transit route planning. In this situation equity refers to a fair sharing of costs or resources, horizontal equity concerns distribution among individuals or groups with the same necessities and vertical equity should be considered in situations with different levels of need. An approach to the planning and design of public transport routes is proposed, one that meets the requirements of communities seeking to foster equitable accessibility.

The paper by Grote, Williams, Preston and Kemp studies local government authority (LGA) attitudes in the UK to road traffic CO₂ emissions modelling. LGAs play an important role in seeking to address road traffic CO₂ emissions and as part of this there is a need to embrace emissions modelling so as to quantify the impact of transport interventions. It is not clear as to the approach taken by LGAs and as such Grote et al report the results of a survey undertaken to assess the situation. The results indicate that most LGA EMs use traffic variable inputs (predominantly traffic flow and traffic average speed), with this approach being the best fit for LGA resources.

The paper by Musselwhite investigates the assessment of computer-based training packages to improve the safety of older people's driver behaviour. The study involves the examination of police records in Wales (STATS19 database) and suggests that older drivers are over represented in collisions when turning across traffic and those where there is a failure to look properly, to judge the other vehicle or person's path and performing a poor manoeuvre. The suggestion is that this is the result of changes in attention, cognitive overload, processing speed, perceptual speed, working memory, task switching and eyesight associated with ageing. The paper concludes that training using computer-based packages can improve the cognitive and physiological issues associated with age.

Potoglou and Arslangulova investigate the factors influencing active travel to primary and secondary schools in Wales. The study, based on 4,206 primary school children (4-12 years of age) and 3,203 adolescents (12-19 years of age) reveal, not surprisingly, that living less than one mile from the school, parents' frequency of walking and cycling and residing in an

urban area are positively associated with active travel to both primary and secondary schools. In addition the children's age, mother's unavailability and home ownership are negatively associated with active travel to primary school. Gender differences however were only identified with respect to secondary-school trips with female adolescents being less likely to walk to school than males. 'Beyond-the-school' active-travel campaigns and intervention programmes aimed at involving parents in encouraging walking and cycling to school were seen to be important.

Seriani, Fujiyama and Holloway explore the pedestrian level of interaction on platform conflict areas at metro stations by real-scale laboratory experiments. This paper explores a new method classifying the interaction between passengers boarding and alighting based on laboratory experiments under controlled conditions at two stations operated by London Underground.

Finally the paper by Shi, Blainey and Hounsell utilise GIS in order to assess the potential for centralised planning of bus networks. The paper states that the current regulatory and planning environment means that road-based public transport in UK urban areas, with the exception of London, is planned on a piecemeal basis with there often being a conflict between the needs and priorities of operators, passengers and planners. As such a number of local authorities are considering adopting an alternative regulatory environment based on quality contracts, with a shift towards centralised service planning. This paper describes the development of a methodology which seeks to ensure that a centralised service planning will lead to a situation which provides a better balance between the interests of the different stakeholders, based on Southampton as a case study.

Overall, these papers reflect the breadth of transport research being undertaken at UTSG institutions, and the community looks forward to the 49th Annual Conference, to be hosted by Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland in January 2016.

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