
The idea of travel demand management (TDM) is to influence people's travel behaviour so as to reduce congestion (and other deleterious side-effects of our mobility culture). In essence this means persuading people to travel less or differently, and as such politicians, fearing they will lose votes, have generally been rather wary of embracing TDM approaches. In the UK at least, the best known TDM scheme to have been introduced is London's Congestion Charge – which, despite a successful launch, remains the only one of its kind after proposals to set up similar schemes in Manchester and Edinburgh were rejected following public rejection in referendums – but as this book makes clear, the TDM 'toolkit' actually contains very much more than road user charging. A whole range of techniques exists, including economic measures (such as congestion charging, public transport subsidy and tradable permits), land use planning (e.g. car free developments and park and ride), traveller information (a good example of this is the 'Smart Measures' study carried out by the British Government), ICT use (teleworking and e-shopping) and administrative measures (e.g. alternative working patterns and parking controls).

Ison and Rye have put together a book that contains 12 chapters on several of these aspects, including an editors' introduction that provides a clear summary of what follows, and a chapter on Travel Plans that substitutes for a conclusion on the basis that while such plans are not 'a TDM instrument in themselves...[they provide] a suitable way of bringing together some of the wider considerations that need to be addressed in planning and implementing TDM measures (p. 233). The editors have also secured contributions from an impressive array of authors from five countries – the UK, France, Canada, the USA and Australia – that include some of the most prominent names in their respective fields. Generally speaking the book is written and illustrated in such a way as to be accessible to its intended audience of university and professional constituencies. From a geographer's point of view, attention is paid to issues of scale and distributional effects as well as the more technical issues associated with TDM implementation.

A helpful table on the first page of the introduction summarises fully 14 different TDM measures available to policy makers (and later the chapter makes reference to 44 such measures), but an unfortunate effect of the table is straight away to identify what is not in the book as much as what is. Ison and Rye note that the chapters 'range across the menu of TDM measures' and also emphasise that the impacts of these measures are demonstrated 'at the global level (for example, fuel taxes or public transport subsidisation)... [and] at the local level (on-campus parking)' (p. 11), and largely justify the book's coverage on the basis of a desire to deal with emerging topics or those otherwise neglected in the literature. This, of course, is fine, but at the same time slightly more attention might have been paid to the overall balance of the book – as it stands, it is rather economics-orientated and there are at least a couple of curious omissions. To illustrate, a conclusion would definitely have been useful, and the chapter on the impacts of congestion charging on land use and local economic development does not really broaden out to consider the relationship between planning/development and TDM from both directions.

That said, those chapters that are included are detailed and offer a range of examples to complement their arguments and explanations. To varying extents the authors address the editors' concerns of highlighting barriers to implementation and how these might be overcome, although in terms of the latter the focus is generally more on what can be done rather than how; not much is said about ways in which the politics of implementing TDMs might be negotiated. This is a shame because the implementation of TDM measures, already pressing given the failure of 'traditional' policies to tackle congestion in many places, takes on even more significance in difficult economic times when planned infrastructure improvements are cancelled or postponed. Phil Goodwin has made the point that recessions offer opportunities as well as threats, and in transport locking in positive changes in travel behaviour that will result in long term reductions in congestion and associated pollution can only be for the good, especially given that it is possible – as Lyons et al.'s chapter reaffirms – to decouple economic and transport growth.

This is a good book that will be of much use to those who want to learn about TDM measures and some of the key issues surrounding their implementation. It will help sharpen the arguments of policy officers and civil servants in pushing for TDM, although whether this in itself is enough to bring about its more widespread introduction is far from clear.

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The eruption of Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland this April stranded hundreds of thousands of passengers all over Europe and elsewhere in the world, but also offered a rare opportunity to reflect on the relatively uninterrupted provision and growth of air transport service around the world. The sheer scale of this industry, as suggested by the massive travel and logistic chaos that ensued, highlight the centrality of this industry to the global economy. International Business Travel in the Global Economy provides an up-to-date account of the current state of business-related air travel, as well as the industry's important historical trends and the broader sociological context under which such changes took place.

Business travel accounts for a disproportionately large share of revenue and profit to transport service providers, and is therefore an important topic. However, few studies on international travels focus squarely on business travellers because these individuals are inherently difficult to identify: they do not always travel in business cabins (p. 79) and it is increasingly difficult to quantify the duration and function of business trips as travellers build in extra time to allow for flight delays or for other leisure activities (p. 69). Scholars of transport studies, especially air transport specialists, geographers, sociologists, and to a lesser extent, marketers
of products and services to international business travellers, would find this volume both informative and insightful. Entrepreneurs of new airline ventures, especially those in increasing numbers in the deregulated market within the European Union (Fan, 2010), should also take a read of the volume.

After providing a broad overview in Chapter 1, the edited volume is organized into three parts. Part 1 compiles the latest and historical statistics on the provision of scheduled air transport from the perspectives of international business travellers as a collective breed, and provides a stylized overview of the air transport industry. Part 2 describes the sociological context within which changes described in Part 1 took place, and to many scholars of transport geography, this section can indeed be enlightening as well as refreshing. Part 3 focuses on the business travel decisions, constraints and alternatives from the perspective of an individual business traveller.

In Part 1 of the volume, Chapters 2–5 provides key statistics on several major trends in international business air travel. For instance, Table 2.8 (p. 22) shows how the transatlantic airfares of first and economy-class cabins diverged in real terms in the past 50 years, with first-class fares growing five times over these years while economy fares declining to less than half of its value. While business-class cabins were not installed until 1978 (p. 13), business-class fares in 2008 were in fact 50% higher than first-class fares 50 years ago in real term – underscoring the economic importance of air transport services to international business travellers.

Beyond the mere contemporary and historical statistics on international business travel, Part 2 explores the reasons for business people to travel amidst a growing prevalence of video- and tele-conferencing, as well as the broader sociological changes in which the increase in international business air travels is embedded. Chapter 6 qualitatively introduces the increased reasons for business travels in the context of multi-national enterprises, and these are supported by statistics from in-depth case studies in Chapters 7 and 8. Moreover, Chapter 7 provides a sociological explanation on both the divergence of airfares in different cabins over the years and the increased business-related international travel. Reflecting on the US experience, Chapter 7 notes how employment can be divided into three broad categories: routine production work, in-person services, and symbolic-analytic services ('knowledge brokering, also referred to as the creative class'). While globalization poses a threat to the first two categories of employment in developed countries, it vastly increases the demand for international travel by symbolic analysts. Chapter 8 discusses some of the corporate mobility policies faced by business travellers.

In Part 3, Chapters 9–12 examine the rational for business travels at the individual level, vis-à-vis leisure travel. For instance, Table 9.3 shows how for Singapore, business travellers comprise only 25% of all international visitors, but account for 35% of all visitor expenditure. Chapters 10 and 11 use several in-depth industry studies to examine the choices and communication alternatives for international business travellers, while Chapter 12 focuses on the advent of video conferencing as a valid substitute for at least some business trips, possibly suppressing some of the recent growth of air travel in at least one Nordic country.

Overall, the overriding strength of the edited volume is its collection of statistics on international business travellers, and how the growth in international business travel both contributes to increased globalization and is in turn accentuated by the latter. While each chapter is written independently of one another, the reported results are internally consistent. Two notable areas that are not well covered is the specific travel choice behaviour exhibited by international business travellers, and corporate travel policies that shape the behaviour of these travellers. The importance of schedule convenience in choosing specific flights for business travels has led airlines over the years to increase both the number of non-stop service and the frequency of service to key destinations (e.g., Brueckner and Flores-Fillol, 2007), yet little is presented on this. The recent renaissance of rail travel, especially in high-speed inter-city rail, has reportedly led to a significant decline in air travellers on certain city pairs (e.g., Park and Ha, 2006). Then as now, corporate travel policies remain a prime determinant of how often and how business travellers decide on their flight options. Recognizing this, all major airlines and many recognized hotels offer deep discounts to companies with frequent business travellers – a discussion on the current state of the inner working of these incentives would be enormously insightful for managers of international business travels.

References


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