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Perceptions of public transport travel time and its effect on choice-sets among car drivers

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Abstract

Car drivers' perceptions of the quality of alternative travel modes have been identified including these alternatives in their choice sets. The present study investigated the accuracy of drivers' perceptions of public transport (PT) travel time and the potential effect of these choice sets. A sample of car drivers was intercepted on the main corridors to Amsterdam, Netherlands, using video recognition of license plates, and was sent a questionnaire asking other questions) whether they could have made the specific trip by PT and their estimated door-to-door travel time by PT. Objective travel times were obtained from route-planning software. Questionnaires (31%) were returned. About 10 percent did not report PT travel time for largely car drivers who did not perceive PT as an alternative. The mean ratio of perceived by PT to reported travel time by car was 1 : 2.3. About half the difference was due to differences in perceptions, and the ratio reported depended strongly on their PT use. Analysis of association between choice set and characteristics of traveler and trip showed that if perceived PT travel times were more accurate a substantial number of car drivers would include PT in their choice sets and changes in behavior might be much smaller.

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