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Stakeholder segmentation: different views inside the carriers group

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Abstract

The use of multi-actor multi-criteria methodologies is widely accepted to evaluate city logistics policies and measures. We have applied this procedure to the proposal of implementation of two alternative measures in a fresh food market in the Seville city center, after gathering all the relevant data from a survey passed to the retailers working in the premises. After perceiving that the quantitative results did not provide an appropriate representation of the existing scenario, we segmented the carrier stakeholder group into two smaller independent groups, obtaining more homogeneous results in the quantitative analysis and a better representation of reality. The segmentation of stakeholder groups appears then as an interesting requirement for this type of analysis to better serve as a decision-making tool for policy implementations.

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1. Introduction: evaluation techniques for city logistics projects

The evaluation, either ex-ante or ex-post, of city logistics implementations requires to take into account the opinions and perceptions of many different stakeholders. After all, implementing any urban freight initiative is linked to an alteration of the balance of urban space and/or economic resources among the different groups competing for it: drivers, residents, shop owners, pedestrians, transit system operators, local administrators, etc. Thus, when seeking to determine whether the outcome of a city logistics policy is likely to be positive, negative or indifferent it is necessary to evaluate all the different points of view belonging to the different stakeholder groups.

The multi-actor procedure for evaluating city logistics policies was first introduced by Taniguchi and Tamagawa (2005), limiting the scope to five main stakeholder groups: carriers, shippers, residents, administrators and urban

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expressway operators. This multi-actor approach was further developed with the formulation of the multi-actor multi-criteria analysis (MAMCA) methodology (Macharis, 2009). This procedure is based on an evaluation matrix where a multi-criteria analysis is formulated independently for each stakeholder group, thus accounting for the fact that different groups will usually have a different view on the evaluated initiatives. The evaluation objectives, and also the weight for the different objectives and evaluation criteria, are therefore different for each stakeholder group.

This multi-actor approach is widespread today as the most appropriate procedure to evaluate city logistics policies. However, little is written about the homogeneity or heterogeneity of those stakeholder groups. When logistics operators assign a 0.55 priority to public transport initiatives in a Flemish strategic experiment (Macharis et al, 2010) or carriers show a 25% support to the increase of load/unload bays in Rome (Stathopoulos et al, 2012), what does it mean? What information can be hidden behind those figures? Should stakeholder groups be further broken down into homogeneous categories, in order to better represent their evaluation process?

We did not have these questions in mind when we undertook the work that is presented here. Our objective was to determine whether certain urban freight initiatives could contribute to alleviate the daily delivery process at a fresh food market in the city of Seville, in Spain. However, the evaluation questionnaire that we passed on to the retailers working in the market led us to further investigations on the reasons behind the results obtained, and this in turn provided some interesting insights on the clear segmentation shown in some cases within these stakeholder groups. The following sections present the case study that we are referring to, the proposed solutions and the survey results, followed by the in-depth analysis of the existing scenario and the conclusions that we were able to draw from it.

2. Description of the case study

We conducted our case study at the Feria Fresh Food Market (see Figure 1), located within the historical center of the city of Seville, a 700,000 population town in the South of Spain. A traditional type of premises in Spain, these markets consist of large buildings containing multiple stalls belonging to independent retailers who sell mostly fresh food, including fish, meat, fruit and vegetables. This grouping of retailers in one single building, usually located in traditional areas of the city, raises multiple freight delivery issues, normally concerned with accessibility and parking.

As Figure 2 shows, the Feria Market is accessible by road only from one side, which is where the curbside load zones serving the premises are located, while the other three sides correspond to pedestrian areas. There exist a total three load zones to serve the market, including one right in front of it with capacity for five vehicles plus two additional zones in the nearby area for seven and three vehicles respectively. Part of the market's load zone is reserved during the afternoon hours for the local waste collection company.

The market consists mainly of fresh meat, fish and fruit and vegetables stalls, but it also contains a large variety of other types of shops selling products like fresh pasta, canned food, drinks, ice-cream or sushi. Table 1 shows the distribution of commercial activities in the market. In the case of the Feria Market, the efficiency and reliability of deliveries, as well as the availability of parking space is a concern for both carriers and receivers. The narrow streets in the area, the access time windows and the delivery frequencies imposed by supply chain considerations are the main transport-related worries for these stakeholder groups.

Table 1. Distribution of commercial stalls in the Feria Market.

Type of commerce	No of stalls
Meat	5
Pork products	2
Fruit and vegetables	10
Fish	8
Chicken	3
Others	17

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