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THE URBAN BUS EXPERIENCE

STEPHEN STRADLING

TRANSPORT RESEARCH INSTITUTE, EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

s.stradling@napier.ac.uk

Like and dislike

Respondents were asked to consider a list of 68 items and indicate which were, for them, 'Things that I dislike or things that discourage me from using the bus in Edinburgh'.

In addition open-ended responses were invited on, *inter alia*, 'What do you like and dislike about travelling by bus in Edinburgh?'

Dislikes league table (top 11)

	%
Drunk people put me off travelling by bus at night	45
I get annoyed when the bus is late	39
The need to have the exact fare	39
The behaviour of other passengers	38
The drivers often brake too harshly	37
It's difficult to predict how long the journey will take	35
Feeling unsafe travelling at night	32
Buses and bus stops are often vandalised	32
Not sure if I will get to my destination at the right time	31
I can't use the same ticket on different bus company's buses	30
People using mobile phones	30

8 factors, showing mean endorsement of items loading > .32

Personal Safety	'Feeling unsafe travelling at night'	27%
Independence	'I prefer to walk/cycle'	25%
Access to bus & desired destination	'No direct route'	19%
Unwanted arousal	'The buses are too crowded'	18%
Cost	'The fares are too expensive'	16%
Automobile autonomy	'I feel more in control when I drive'	14%
Disability & discomfort	'Not enough hand rails inside the bus'	7%
Self-image	'Travelling by bus does not create the right impression'	3%

Influence of gender, age band, household income band and frequency of bus use on factor scores for bus users

(differences at $p < .05$ shown)

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Personal Safety	F > M	25-34 Hi	Lo > Hi	F > I
Independence		Y > O	Lo > Hi	I > F
Access/Service provision	F > M	35-54 Hi	Hi > Lo	I > F
Unwanted arousal				F > I
Cost	M > F	65+ Lo	Lo > Hi	
Automobile autonomy		35-54 Hi		I > F
Disabilities & discomfort*	F > M	65+ Hi	Lo > Hi	
Image				I > F

*registered disabled higher on this factor but otherwise no different

SELF-IMAGE

- 1% Travelling by bus does not create the right impression
- 2% My clothes/footwear are often not appropriate for bus travel
- 1% Don't like the image of buses
- 5% I don't feel in control when I use the bus
- 5% I feel uncomfortable sitting next to strangers
- 6% I prefer to take a taxi
- 4% Lack of privacy

'Dislike the hassle of the bus and the look/fashion of getting the bus.'
[F, 22, main mode: car]

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Image				I > F

DISABILITY & DISCOMFORT

- 6% Difficulty because of my lack of mobility
- 10% Difficulty getting on and off buses
- 10% There are not enough hand rails inside the bus
- 9% Having to ask people to move to let me out when it is my stop
- 3% Other health reasons
- 4% It's embarrassing walking along the aisle looking for a seat
- 1% Difficulties because of my visual impairment

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Disabilities & discomfort	F > M	65 + Hi	Lo > Hi	

AUTOMOBILE AUTONOMY

21% I prefer to drive

4% Others rely on me to give them a lift

13% I feel more in control when I drive

9% I need the car at work

7% Driving is cheaper than taking the bus

28% I often have too much to carry

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Automobile autonomy		35-54 Hi		I > F

COST

15% The fares are too expensive

13% The fares are not good value for money

4% I can't afford the bus fares

7% Driving is cheaper than taking the bus

39% The need to have the exact fare

'I strongly dislike the fact that in Edinburgh you have to have the exact fare – especially as I often don't and therefore end up losing 20p or walking.' [M, 25, main mode: walk]

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Cost	M > F	65 + Lo	Lo > Hi	

INDEPENDENCE

26% I prefer to walk

19% Most things are within walking distance

7% I prefer to cycle

39% The need to have the exact fare

*'It is convenient for me because I am young and able-bodied and not usually in a rush. **If I don't feel like waiting** I'll either walk or take a taxi.'* [F, 29, main modes: cycle, walk]

*'I like getting the bus when I am not in a hurry and can take to my nearest destination without needing to change. **I do not like being restricted to timetables and routes** and prefer fresh air and so I far prefer cycling to any other form of transport around town.'* [M, 41, main modes: car, cycle, walk]

*'I cycle a lot as **I get too fed up waiting** for buses; and it's cheaper.'* [F, 38, main modes: cycle, walk]

Gender

Age

Income

Freq

Independence

Y > O

Lo > Hi

I > F

ACCESS. Convenience of route, scheduling and service provision.

- 19% No direct route
- 12% Not enough flexibility surrounding bus use
- 31% Not sure if I will get to my destination at the right time
- 16% There is a bus service but I have to change buses
- 18% It takes too long
- 14% The bus service is too infrequent
- 35% It's difficult to predict how long the journey will take
- 11% Inconvenient
 - 8% No bus service available
- 10% The walk before or after catching the bus is too long
- 25% Often too cold to stand and wait
 - 9% Too much pre-planning involved
- 39% I get annoyed when the bus is late
- 10% Too difficult to find information about the buses I could use

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Access/Service provision	F > M	35-54 Hi	Hi > Lo	I > F

PERSONAL SAFETY

24% Feeling unsafe while waiting for buses

32% Feeling unsafe travelling at night

15% Feeling unsafe travelling on buses

24% Feeling unsafe if I have to change buses in unfamiliar places

38% The behaviour of other passengers

45% Drunk people put me off travelling by bus at night

32% Buses and bus stops are often vandalised

4% The bus often travels through areas that I don't like

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Personal Safety	F > M	25-34 Hi	Lo > Hi	F > I

'I don't like travelling at night, because I'm a woman and there always seems to be rowdy, drunk people which scare me.' [F, 45, main mode: bus]

'I don't like loud, noisy and sometimes aggressive groups of youths or drunks.' [F, 82, main mode: bus]

'Upstairs at the back are always intimidating youths.' [F, 22, main mode: walk]

'Neds sitting on the top deck smoking, spitting and swearing.' [M, 25, main mode: walk]

'Dislike the infrequency of services and anxiety about travelling/waiting at night.' [F, 43, main mode: car]

'I would like to travel to and from Leith in the evening, but I don't because the direct buses are infrequent and I am fearful of the bus stops and of drunks.' [F, 56, main mode: bus, walk]

'I would never travel by bus to outlying areas of the city at night – not enough security.' [F, 59, main mode: walk]

'Dislike the way bus stops become scruffy and hence these feel vulnerable at night.' [F, 53, main modes: bus, car]

Contra: bus travel as social behaviour

'Like to relax and people watch.' [F, 28, main mode: car]

'I like travelling by bus because it's social and easy.' [F, 29, main modes: cycle, walk]

'Like: friendly way of travelling.' [F, 32, main mode: bus]

'I enjoy the experience of travelling by bus and have met a few nice people on buses.' [F, 40, main modes: bus, walk]

'I enjoy travelling by bus in Edinburgh, because you can see what is going on and sometimes you can get into conversation with other passengers.' [F, 58, main mode: bus]

'I enjoy travelling by bus. I usually have a conversation with other people while waiting for buses.' [F, 65, main modes: bus, passenger in car]

'I meet friends and neighbours on the bus and it's nice to catch up on gossip while travelling.' [F, 82, main mode: bus]

UNWANTED AROUSAL when travelling. The 'journey experience'.

20% The seats are too cramped

17% The buses are too crowded

14% The buses are dirty

16% Other people taking up too much space

37% The drivers often brake too harshly

7% Many of the buses look old and shabby

5% Too noisy

26% It's uncomfortable in extreme weather (hot, cold, wet, snow)

26% People smoking on the bus

19% The bus drivers often drive past the stop without stopping

30% People using mobile phones

11% The bus drivers are often rude

11% The drivers are not very helpful if you ask them for information

	Gender	Age	Income	Freq
Unwanted arousal			F > I	

Intrusions and interruptions to a hassle-free bus journey

'I hate the way drivers accelerate and brake too hard making it difficult to move through the bus.' [M, 25, main modes: bus, walk]

'.. and when buses are not ventilated and are full of condensation. I do not like when people sneeze/cough without covering their nose/mouth with a hanky.' [F, 25, main mode: bus, walk]

'People sit upstairs and smoke. I really hate this, to the extent that I now usually take my car, park miles away and walk the rest.' [F, 30, main mode: car]

'Bus seats are often too close together – no leg-room!' [F, 27, main modes: bus, walk]

'I don't like when people practically sit on top of you or when the bus is crowded people insist on keeping back packs on and bashing everyone with them as they struggle down the aisle.' [F, 52, main mode: car]

'I dislike mobile phones on the bus. You get all the persons business.' [F, 75, main modes: bus, walk]

'I get very angry when passengers play personal stereos so loudly that they disturb everyone. I get annoyed by inconsiderate passengers who talk very loudly and pester me.' [F, 25, main modes: bus, walk]

Ideal bus journey experience Being transported while switched off.

Smooth, tranquil, undisturbed, relaxed, absorbed, engaged with the moment yet 'elsewhere', and pleasurable without being ecstatic. It is a resting state, a neutral gear, a mildly positively valenced state.

'I like getting on, reading for a while, and then arriving at my destination.' [F, 27, main modes: bus, walk]

'I like not having to think /concentrate when sitting on a bus.' [F, 36, main mode: car]

'If I'm alone I enjoy bus travel as I can switch off and just look out the window. I don't use buses when I'm with my children as it's just too much hassle.' [F, 36, main mode: car]

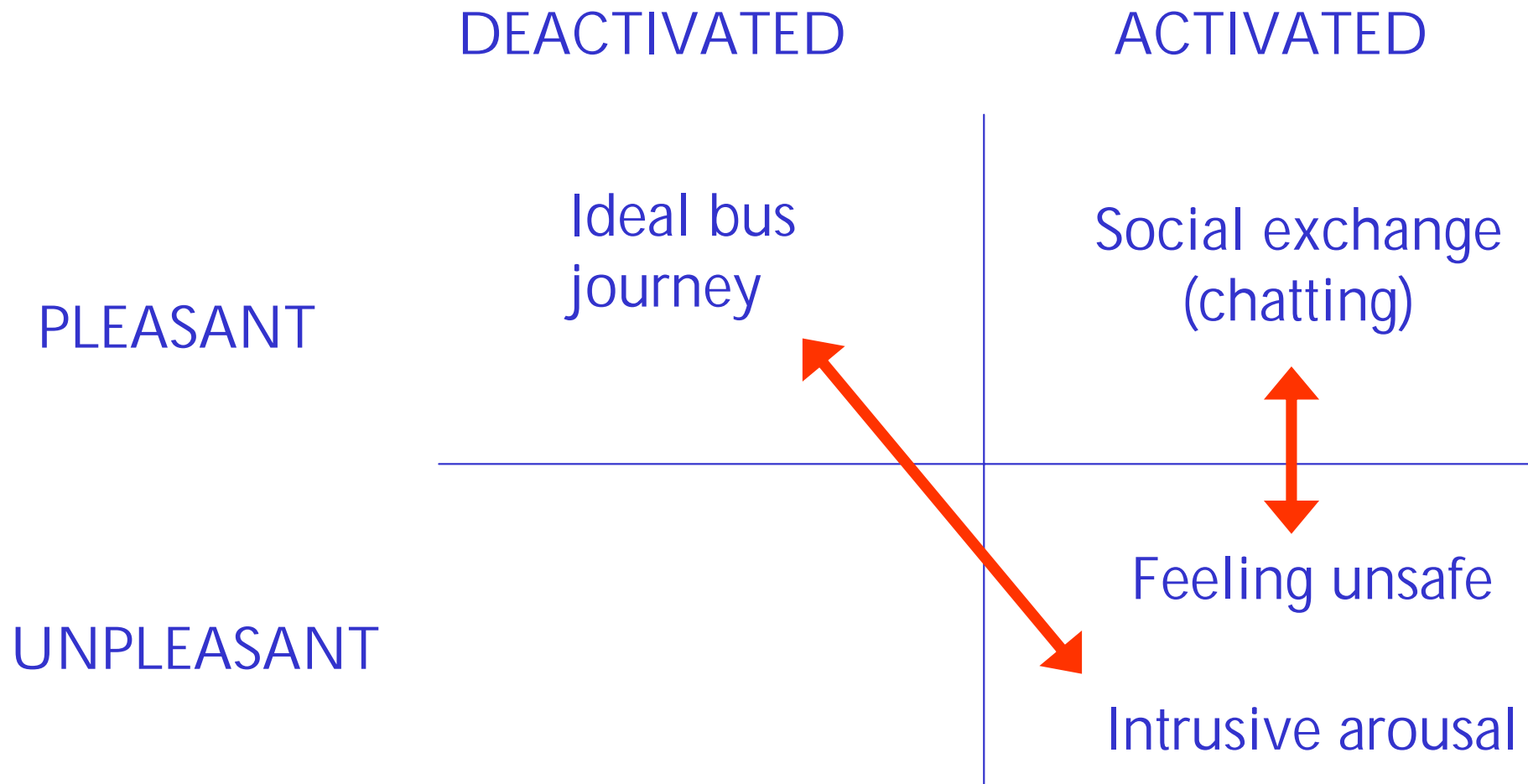
'Like no stress. Sitting upstairs and watching the view/the people.' [F, 57, main mode: car]

'I like sitting back watching the world go by as I travel in the bus and feel safer than in a car.' [F, 73, main modes: bus, car, walk]

Not all bus travellers desire such a state. Some would rather be stimulated:

'I dislike a long boring journey. Would be better if there was a radio.' [F, 18, main mode: bus]

James Russell's typology of affective states and the urban bus journey experience



'General dislike of public transport as have to travel with general public.'
[F, 26, main mode: walk]

There are (at least) 8 reasons why (some) people dislike travelling by bus in town.

Endorsement varies with person characteristics.

There is a strong affective component to (urban bus) travel.

The ideal bus journey experience involves the absence of unwanted intrusive arousal.

There is a tension between approaching (chatting) and avoiding (unsafe).

There is a tension between exchange space and movement space (Engwicht).