

Activity report 2007 August

Name of IRG:

Culturally sensitive pedestrian-centric philosophy to advancement of urban form in East Asia (IRG-05-2005)

Leading research members:

Dr Upali Vandebona, The University of New South Wales, Australia

Professor Hiroshi Tsukaguchi, Ritsumeikan University, Japan

Professor Hun-Young Jung, Pusan National University, Korea

Activities of 2007:

1. Collaborative work

The team continued to develop further contacts with researchers who have interests in the cultural theme and pedestrian transport focus of this IRG. It has been heartening to notice involvement of many researchers in associated research fields. However, the challenge remains to convince some researchers about the importance and feasibility of a qualitative concept such as the theme of cultural sensitivity in maintenance and development of pedestrian facilities. Some progress have been made in this direction by work carried out by team members in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan to establish a scientific approach to dealing with qualitative nature of the theme of this research group. A paper has been prepared (briefly described later in this report) to demonstrate a plausible modeling framework to handle these issues in a scientifically acceptable manner.

2. Field surveys and analysis

A substantial achievement of the research team this year has been the completion of the analysis of data from field surveys performed in Japan and Taiwan to investigate pedestrian culture. The project began with a large scale survey conducted in Japan to obtain comparative information about the mental image toward walking and feelings about walking in daily life from residents of cities in different parts of the country. This survey had a large geographical coverage as the survey was conducted in 10 cities in Japan. These 10 cities were: Sapporo, Sendai, Tokyo, Nagano, Kanazawa, Kyoto, Osaka, Hiroshima, Matsuyama, and Fukuoka. The selection of cities, sample sizes and the survey administration process in general has already been documented in a paper submitted to the EASTS-2007 conference. Analysis of data has shown there is a general willingness to walk in all cities of Japan, but there are differences in preferences related to route characteristics. Comparison tools such as pair-analysis have been successfully applied to derive meaningful and useful conclusions during this project work.

Professor Hiroshi Tsukaguchi has devoted a substantial amount of time and effort to coordinate the two projects in Taiwan and Japan. Field work in Japan was conducted by research students in Ritsumeikan University.

A team lead by Professor Kuang-Yih YEH at National Cheng Kung University has greatly enhanced the value of the comparative study by conducting a follow-up survey in Tainan, in Taiwan. The comparison has shown that although there are similarities in attitudes towards walking as a transport activity, there are significant differences in preferences between the two counties. The team plans to further explore these findings and make proposals that can be useful to stakeholders such as the community groups, various levels of government and private service providers involved in development of pedestrian infrastructures.

It is now planned to repeat the field survey process in two other cities in Taiwan in this autumn. Cities of Kaohsiung and Chiai would be included in this survey to enhance the comparative study. Professor Yeh (National Cheng Kung University) will lead this research work with the assistance of the PhD candidate Mr. Hsia.

3. Monitoring recent developments in related fields

Team members have kept abreast with developments in other regions of the world related to interests of this IRG, with the intention of preparing a database of recent research works around the world. It has been noted that researchers in other regions have looked at ethnicity and gender in studies investigating cultural issues of pedestrians in Europe and Africa respectively.

4. EASTS conference participation

Members of the IRG group has submitted a paper to the EASTS conference. The paper has been accepted to the Journal as well. Two papers are listed in the theme of this IRG in a session in 25th September. The conference would provide a meeting venue for members of the IRG scattered in different parts of the region, to discuss ideas and plans for next six months.

5. Information for IRG website

Information material to be placed on the IRG webpage of the EASTS website is currently being collated.

6. New members and associates:

Names of researchers who have provided support and contribution are listed below:

Professor Kuang-Yih Yeh - National Cheng Kung University
Associate Professor Keiichi Ogawa - Ritsumeikan University
Hao-Ching Hsia (PhD. Candidate) - National Cheng-Kung University
Shinji Sugihara - Chuo Consultants Co. Ltd., Osaka, Japan
Dr. Kardi Teknomo, Hertha Firnberg Fellow, Austria
Iderlina Mateo-Babiano, Bandung, Indonesia

As mentioned earlier, Professor Kuang-Yih Yeh has made a substantial contribution to research outcomes of this IRG during last 12 months.

Also, an invaluable contribution has been made by numerous research students who assisted in field work and data analysis.

Annual report of activities prepared by

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