A crack in the automobility regime? Exploring the opportunities and challenges for sustainable urban mobility policy implementation in São Paulo, Brazil.

Tarcisio Barbosa Pinhate

MSc in Environmental Management student
University of Auckland
São Paulo: overview

▷ Home to 11.3 million people.
▷ 21 million people in the metropolitan region.
▷ Rapid urban growth from the 1950s.
▷ Economic powerhouse of Brazil.
▷ GDP was 189 billion NZD in 2011 (Fecomercio).
Urban mobility in São Paulo

▷ Historical car-based urban growth.

▷ 6 million automobiles in the city (Detran).

▷ Heavy traffic congestion, with an average commute time of 2 hours in 2016.

▷ Traffic causes a 65 billion NZD drain on the economy per year (Haddad & Vieira, 2015).

▷ Shared governance structure.

Source: Johnny De Franco, Sigmapress, Estadão Conteúdo.
Modal Share 2012

Adapted from Pesquisa Origem-Destino (Metro SP, 2012).

- Walking: 31%
- Bus: 22%
- Car: 28%
- Other: 6%
- Metro: 7%
- Motorcycle: 2%
- Bicycle: 1%
- Train: 3%

GHG emissions in São Paulo (2003-2009)

Energy 82%

Waste 16%

AFOLU <1%

IPPU 2%

Fuel Combustion Subsector (2009)

Transport, 75.0%

Transformation Industry, 19.8%

Electricity Generation, 5.2%

Source: Prefeitura de São Paulo, 2013

Source: Instituto Ekos Brasil and Geoklock Consultoria, 2013
Master Plan and Urban Mobility Plan

▷ 2012 National Urban Mobility Law – calls for sustainable urban development and social control.

▷ 2014 Strategic Master Plan – guiding urban development for the next 20 years.

▷ 2015 Urban Mobility Plan – guiding the urban mobility system for the next 15 years.
Methodology

▷ Aim: To analyse the sustainable urban mobility policies implemented in São Paulo in accordance with the city’s Strategic Master Plan and Urban Mobility Plan.

▷ Research adopts a qualitative approach.

▷ 17 semi-structured interviews with 20 participants

▷ Thematic interview analysis.

▷ Use of secondary data sources.
Sustainable Urban Mobility

Four actions required to achieve sustainable mobility (Banister, 2008):
1. Reduce the need to travel – substitution;
2. Reduce levels of car use – modal shift;
3. Land-use policy measures – distance reduction;
4. Technological innovation – efficiency increase.

“Transport planning must involve the people” (Banister, 2008, p. 75).

“There must be a willingness to change” (p. 79).
Socio-technical transitions to sustainability

- Transitions: shifts from one regime to another
- Why socio-technical?

The Multilevel Perspective (MLP) Framework
1. Niche: locus for innovation development;
2. Regime: practices and rules stabilizing the system;
3. Landscape: exogenous context.

Four characteristics of the MLP:
1. Co-evolutionary and systemic process (Geels, 2012);
2. Actor-based approach;
3. Stability and change;
4. Complex Dynamics.
Implementation of sustainable urban mobility policies

▷ Institutional capacity:
  1. problem of fit;
  2. horizontal coordination;
  3. human and financial resources.

▷ Urban political economy factors:
  1. local framing;
  2. leadership.

▷ Trigger events and windows of opportunity.
Understanding Policy Windows


▷ Three separate processes:
   1. Problems;
   2. Process;
   3. Politics.

▷ Streams come together forming a policy window.

▷ Critical role of policy entrepreneurs in linking streams.
June 2013 Protests

▷ City government announced 0,20c fare hikes;
▷ Expensive and low quality public transport;
▷ Groups take to the streets protesting the measure;
▷ Violent police repression;
▷ Demonstrations gain force and spread nationally;
▷ Fare hike rejected.

Source: Terra

Source: Estadão Conteúdo
The policy window in São Paulo

▷ New administration elected in 2012;
▷ Mayor’s commitment with cycling advocates;
▷ Sustainable urban mobility in the agenda;
▷ Protests provided momentum for policy;
▷ Political will and leadership.
Policies implemented

▷ CMTT - space for civil society participation;
▷ 2015 Urban Mobility Plan;
▷ Bus lanes and bus corridors;
▷ 400km cycling network by 2016;
▷ Mobilab – innovation in transit management;
▷ Speed limits reduction;
▷ Metro and train network expansion;
▷ Paulista Aberta.

Source: Ciro Amado, Flickr
Source: Luiz Cláudio Barbosa, Estadão Conteúdo
Transition to sustainable mobility in São Paulo

▷ Local framing for policy implementation: urban mobility problems.
▷ Momentum for sustainable urban mobility in the city.
▷ Alternative regimes to automobility have gained space.
▷ Spaces for civil society participation have been opened.
▷ Political will and demonstrations were fundamental.
▷ Key role of sustainable mobility advocacy groups.
The privilege of the car is now being contested and this is socially accepted
Transition to sustainable mobility in São Paulo

▷ There has been a ‘crack’ in automobility, but this regime is still dominant.

▷ Regime is reinforced by social and governance factors:
  1. Car ownership association with status;
  2. Fragmented governance structure.

▷ Institutional capacity difficulties.

▷ Concern with new city government elected in 2016.

▷ São Paulo as an example for other Brazilian cities.
Recommendations for future research

▷ Integrating São Paulo’s metropolitan region.
▷ Integrating the urban mobility governance structure in the city.
▷ Policy change with newly-elected city government.
▷ More research analyzing socio-technical transitions in Brazilian cities.
Thanks!

Tarcisio Barbosa Pinhate

MSc in Environmental Management student
University of Auckland

tpin901@aucklanduni.ac.nz