Abstract

In recent years, many Western European urban public transport systems have undergone major reorganisation, including London (1985), Madrid (1985), Manchester (1986), Zurich (1990), Antwerp (1991), Copenhagen (1991), Athens (1992, 1993), Gothenburg (1993) and Hamburg (1996). Other cities are also about to implement reorganisations in their public transport systems.

Despite this, and with the exception of the British case, relatively little attention has been paid in the literature to the determinants and effects of these changes. Nevertheless, economics has benefited from individual contributions from people involved in these reorganisations. The aim of this thesis is to address two main weaknesses in the existing literature on the organisation of urban public transport.

Firstly, there is a distinct shortage of studies integrating different experiences in terms of forms of organisation and their important features. Hence, emphasis in this thesis is placed on examining structural changes in urban public transport, using a broad typology of organisations, and to explore related changes in the conduct and performance of public transport systems.

A second weakness of the literature is the lack of detailed evaluations of the link between forms of organisation and the performance of transport operators. The evaluation of this link is carried out making use of case studies of Metro de Madrid and London Underground.

The key objective of this thesis is to explore the existence of a link between organisation of the urban public transport markets and the performance of transport operators. The empirical analysis supports the hypothesis that reorganisations induce changes in performance levels. Additionally, in the cases of Metro de Madrid and London Underground, efficiency and effectiveness values emerge as positively correlated which is contrary to evidence presented in previous work.