# TRANSPORT SCHEDULING SYSTEM IN SUK PAHANG USING HEURISTIC METHOD

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### ABSTRACT

Transport Scheduling System in SUK Pahang is a system design using Heuristic Method (HM). The system was built to enhance the schedule options by giving fair equalizer in using the resources such as drivers and transports. Personnel scheduling problems deal with the issue of assigning drivers and vehicles to shifts in a certain time period for the journey, such that several regulations are satisfied and preferences of the drivers and vehicles are taken into account, level of service is maximized [1]. The scheduling system will be based on mathematical programming for optimization. As we know, HM has been variously presented in many kinds of form such as filtering, criteria, production rules, and procedure [3]. In this scheduling system, filtering, procedures, and criteria which base on the constraints will be used using HM.

Keywords- scheduling system, heuristic, transportation, timetabling



### ABSTRAK

Pengangkutan Sistem Penjadualan di SUK Pahang adalah reka bentuk sistem yang menggunakan Kaedah Heuristik (HM). Sistem ini dibina untuk meningkatkan pilihan jadual dengan memberi gol penyamaan saksama dalam menggunakan sumbersumber seperti pemandu dan pengangkutan. Masalah kakitangan penjadualan berurusan dengan isu memberikan pemandu dan kenderaan kepada peralihan dalam tempoh masa tertentu bagi perjalanan, bahawa beberapa peraturan berpuas hati dan keutamaan pemandu dan kenderaan diambil kira, tahap perkhidmatan Sistem penjadualan akan berdasarkan pengaturcaraan dimaksimumkan [1]. matematik untuk pengoptimuman. Seperti yang kita tahu, HM telah pelbagai dipersembahkan dalam pelbagai bentuk seperti penapisan, kriteria, kaedah-kaedah pengeluaran, dan prosedur [3]. Dalam sistem penjadualan ini, penapisan, prosedur, dan kriteria yang berdasarkan kekangan akan digunakan menggunakan HM.





## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	TITLE	i
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABTRAK	vi vii xii xiii
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	
	LIST OF TABLES	
	LIST OF FIGURES	
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	XV
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xvi
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Problem Statement	3
	1.3 Objectives	3
	1.4 Project Scope	4
	1.5 Thesis Organization	5
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	6
-	2.1 Introduction	6
	2.2 Background	7
	2.2 Artificial Intelligence Techniques Review	8
	2.3.1 Heuristic Method	8
	2.3.1 Heuristic Michillou	0
	2.3.1.1 Dasie Concept	フ

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2.3.1.2	Algor	ithm	9
2.3.1.3	Varia	ble Selection Criterion	10
2.3.1.4	Value	e Selection Criterion	11
2.3.1.5	Decis	ion Guider	11
2.3.2 Genet	ic Algo	orithm	12
2.3.2.1	Opera	ators	12
2.3	.2.1.1	Reproduction	13
2.3	.2.1.2	Crossover	13
2.3	.2.1.3	Mutation	13
2.3.2.2	Pseud	lo-code of Genetic Algorithm	14
2.3.3 Partic	le Swar	m Optimization	15
2.3.3.1	Origin	nal Version of Particle Swarm	15
	Optin	nization	
2.3.3.2	Origi	nal Version PSO Algorithm	16
2.3.3.3	Inertia	a Weight	17
2.3.3.4	Fully	Informed Particle Swarm	18
2.3.3.5	Popul	ation Topology	18
2.3.3.6	Partic	cle Swarm Optimization Pseudo-	20
	code		
2.3.4 Revie	w on C	urrent System	21
2.3.4.1	A Fuz	zzy Solution Approach for the	21
	Roste	ring Planning Problem	
2.3.4.2	A Nev	w Nonlinear Stochastic Staff	22
	Sched	luling Model	
2.3.4.3	Appli	cation of Fuzzy Knowledge on	23
	Bus C	perations under Uncertainty	
2.3.4.4	Using	Particle Swarm Optimization	23
	to Det	termine the Visit Times in	
	Comm	nunity Nurse Timetabling	
2.3.4.5	A Dis	crete Particle Swarm	24
	Optin	nization Algorithm for the No-	
	wait F	Flowshop Scheduling Problem	
2.3.4.6	Timet	able Scheduling using Particle	24

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Swarm Optimization

	2.3.4.7	The examination timetabling problem	25
		at Universiti Malaysia Pahang:	
		Comparison of a constructive	
		heuristic with an existing software	
		solution	
	2.3.4.8	Hybrid variable neighbourhood	25
		approaches to university exam	
		timetabling	
	2.3.4.9	Adaptive automated construction of	26
		hybrid heuristics for exam timetabling	
		and graph colouring problems	
	2.3.5 Comp	arison of A.I. Techniques	27
2.4	Methodology		28
	2.4.1 Brief S	Study on Waterfall Methodology	28
	2.4.2 Brief S	Study on Agile Methodology	29
	2.4.3 Brief S	Study on Rapid Application	30
	Develo	opment (RAD) Methodology	
	2.4.4 Compa	arison of Waterfall, Agile, and RAD	32
	Metho	dology	
2.5	Conclusion		34
MET	THODOLOGY		35
3.1	Introduction		35
3.2	Modified Rap	id Application Development	36
	3.2.1 Planni	ng	37
	3.2.2 Iterativ	ve Development	37
	3.2.3 Design	1	38
	3.2.3.1	System Design	38
	3.2.3.2	Interface Design	42
	3.2.3.3	Database Design	43
	3.2.	3.3.1 admin Table	45
	3.2.	3.3.2 driver Table	45

3

Created with



		3.2.3.3.3	vehicle Table	46
		3.2.3.3.4	trip Table	46
		3.2.3.3.5	trip_bkp Table	47
		3.2.3.3.6	trip_btm Table	47
		3.2.3.3.7	trip_msp Table	48
		3.2.3.3.8	trip_color	49
		3.2.3.3.9	fit_bkp_driver Table	49
		3.2.3.3.10	fit_btm_driver Table	50
		3.2.3.3.11	fit_msp_driver Table	50
		3.2.3.3.12	fit_bkp_vehicle Table	51
		3.2.3.3.13	fit_btm_vehicle Table	51
		3.2.3.3.14	fit_msp_vehicle Table	51
	3.2.4	Develop		52
		3.2.4.1 Cons	straints and Problem Solving	52
		3.2.4.2 Exa Heu	mple of Pseudo-code of the ristic method	56
	3.2.5	Testing		57
	3.2.6	Deploy		57
3.3	Softw	are and Hardw	vare	57
	3.3.1	Software Re	quirements	58
	3.3.2	Hardware R	equirements	59
				(0)
				6U
4.1	Introd	uction	tion	60
4.2	Syster	n Implementa	ition	60
	4.2.1	Connection		01
	4.2.2	Transmost S	lo Daladase	01 (2
	4.2.3	Transport Sc	a Succession of Source Stream Continuing System in SUK Panang	02
		using Partici	e Swarm Optimization s	
	4 2 4	Interface	- 4	
	4.2.4	Coding Stru	cture	00
		4.2.4.1 Veri	incation	66 67
		4.2.4.2 11me	istic Algorithm Engine	0/
		4.2.4.3 Heur	istic Algorithm Engine	69
			Created with	

4



		4.2.4.3.1	No resource clash	69
		4.2.4.3.2	Working hours of the	71
			day before the	
			schedule trip	
		4.2.4.3.3	Working hours of the	73
			day after	
			the schedule trip	
		4.2.4.3.4	Time gap	74
			consideration	
		4.2.4.3.5	Getting fitness from	76
			resource	
4.3	Conclusion			77
DIS	CUSSION AND	CONCLUSI	ON	78
5.1	Introduction			78
5.2	Result Analysis			79
5.3	System Testing			79
5.4	Future Work			79
5.5	Conclusion			80
REI	FERENCES			81
API	PENDIX A			83
API	PENDIX B			86
API	PENDIX C			88
API	PENDIX D			92

5

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## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Comparison of AI techniques	27
2.2	Comparison of methodologies	33
3.1	Data Dictionary of admin Table	45
3.2	Data Dictionary of driver Table	45
3.3	Data Dictionary of vehicle Table	46
3.4	Data Dictionary of trip Table	46
3.5	Data Dictionary of trip_bkp Table	47
3.6	Data Dictionary of trip_btm Table	48
3.7	Data Dictionary of trip_msp Table	48
3.8	Data Dictionary of trip_color Table	49
3.9	Data Dictionary of fit_bkp_driver Table	49
3.10	Data Dictionary of fit_btm_driver Table	50
3.11	Data Dictionary of fit_msp_driver Table	50
3.12	Data Dictionary of fit_bkp_vehicle Table	51
3.13	Data Dictionary of fit_btm_vehicle Table	51
3.14	Data Dictionary of fit_msp_vehicle Table	52
3.15	List of software used in the system	58
3.16	List of hardware used in the system	59

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## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
NO.		
2.1	Interactive algorithm of the heuristic method	10
2.2	Simple pseudo-code of Genetic Algorithm	14
2.3	Particle Swarm Optimization pseudo-code	20
2.4	Rapid Application Development Model (Karenjoy	30
	toletol, 28 June 2011)	
3.1	Rapid Application Development Model (Modified)	36
3.2	Flow chart of the Heuristic schedule generator	39
3.3	Use case diagram of Transportation Scheduling System	40
	in SUK Pahang	
3.4	Sequence diagram of Transportation Scheduling	41
	System in SUK Pahang for generating a schedule	
3.5	Interface of Majlis Sukan Pahang department's	42
	timetable	
3.6	Database model diagram	44
3.7	Timetable to occupy the trip with driver and vehicle	53
3.8	Example of a pseudo-code of a heuristic method (Pearl,	56
	2012)	
4.1	SQL Command to connect the database cb09042	61
4.2	SQL command include function connection from	62
	database to web page	
4.3	Login page for Transport Scheduling System	62
4.4	Timetable view for Majlis Sukan Pahang department	63
4.5	Schedule new trip for the specified departments	63
4.6	Trip list for the 3 categories of department	64

Created with



4.7	Page edit or delete driver	64
4.8	Edit a driver's data	65
4.9	Add new driver	65
4.10	Search driver to view their timetable	66
4.11	Sample verification before data was post to the pso()	67
	function	
4.12	Sample table row for the time 1.00 that loops from	68
	Monday to Sunday	
4.13	Prevent driver from clashing by giving fitness points	70
4.14	Fitness update for the 'previous day' working hours	71
4.15	Fitness update for the 'day after' working hours	73
4.16	Fitness updates on time gap of previous and after	75
	schedule time belt	
4.17	Selection for the best resources	76



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HR	-	Heuristic Method
GA	-	Genetic Algorithm
PSO	-	Particle Swarm Optimization



## LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
А	Project Gantt Chart	83
В	Hierarchy Chart for Interface Design	86
С	Rules and constraints for Transport Scheduling	88
	System in SUK Pahang using Particle Swarm	
	Optimization	
D	System testing	92



**CHAPTER 1** 

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Transport Scheduling System in SUK Pahang using Heuristic Method is a system to ease the user management on their transportation schedule. The origin method that the user used was in a manual way whereby they record each data by themselves in a notebook. This system was proposed to enhance the managing skill of the user and to save time by using the system. Transport Scheduling System in SUK Pahang was mean for giving the best way in making schedule for the transport and personnel using heuristic method, which leads to impressive deal of managing the transportation scheduling trip.

For this thesis, we will discuss about the personnel shift scheduling with vehicle for SUK using heuristic method. Personnel scheduling problems deal with the issue of assigning employees to shifts in a certain time period for the journey such that several regulations are satisfied and preferences of the employees are taken



into account, level of service is maximized [1]. Nurse rostering using fuzzy logic which is also a similar kind of system, were also been studied for the understanding and references for the constraints. Similar to driver, a nurse should work throughout the week, and are often required to work weekends, even on official holidays. As for a business of bus operating companies, the schedule were demanded to be more logical and fair which will be based on mathematical programming for optimization [2]. The concept of a heuristic has been, and continues to be, the central in an artificial intelligence is too well known to require documentation. In an heuristic artificial intelligence solving, be it the program, rule, piece of knowledge, it gives out a practical solution whereby it can be used in problem solving, guaranteed on supplying solution, and evolutionary optimized results.

Heuristic has been variously presented in the form of proverbs, maxims, hints, suggestions, advice, principles, rules of thumb, criteria, production rules, programs, procedures, option filters and others [3]. Timetabling is a form of scheduling where the task is to assign activities to available slots in resources respecting on some defined constraints. Eventually, the activity is described by the duration, while picking available resources to do the job without breaking the hard constraints.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The transportation scheduling table was usually done manually by user and data has been recorded in paper. Hence data recorded manually might sometimes lose by accident. In addition, during making a schedule for the transport, it takes some time to make a proper schedule due to afraid of time clashing. Also for task allocation for the drivers and vehicles, sometimes it is not fair to utilizing the available source.

The timeslot will be in a week of seven days. All days will be filled with drivers and their transports, with each driver have their own constraint and will satisfy them. Soft constraints such as each driver must not work too long and working hours on previous and the day after will be considered, while depending on the time they travel. The hard constraints will be the schedule must not clash by the same driver and the same vehicle.

As a result, the problem statement should be question on:

- How to decide the soft constraints and hard constraints.
- How to make fair timetable in selection of resource.

#### 1.3 Objectives

- I. To study the way of scheduling a timetable for the travelling of SUK Pahang by using heuristic method.
- II. To design a simple and usable system.
- III. Develop a prototype to schedule the solution for a given case study.



## 1.4 Project Scope

The project scope is for SUK staff to manage their transportation more effectively by enable user to make schedule more systematic. User will be able to identify the transportation status and schedule time for the entire week. The new schedule will be added once there is travelling request and it will auto-generate and available vehicle with driver based on the highest fitness.

The algorithm use for the artificial intelligence is heuristic method. Constraints will be determined by drivers, location, and vehicles. Constraints will have a given penalty points where the lesser the penalty, the higher the fitness level of the scheduling result. The scope will limit to the area of Peninsular Malaysia's main city. The pattern will only focus on single destination and a one day trip without staying. The scheduling system also limit SUK Pahang's department into 3 categories, which are "Bahagian Khidmat Pengurusan", "Bahagian Teknologi Maklumat", and "Majlis Sukan Pahang".



## 1.5 Thesis Organization

This thesis consists of five chapters, and each chapter has its own specific content. Chapter one includes the starting point of the thesis, which is introduction, problem statement, objectives, and project scope of the project.

Chapter two evaluates the research for the project. The literature review will be proceeding with research of the techniques that will be used in the development and studies about the scheduling of the current system.

Chapter three will discuss about the methodology of the working progress. It sums up the work load for the entire project and elaborates the framework of the project.

Chapter four is the implementation of the project where layouts will be reviewed. Chapter five, the last chapter discuss about the discussion and conclusion of the system.



5



**CHAPTER 2** 

## LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews about the knowledge and understanding of the project background. Different literature with different techniques will be reviewed, as they all have one objective which is optimization on scheduling timetable. Of course, the main technique will be more focus on details which is the heuristic method.



## 2.2 Background

Scheduling for personnel is one issue that had been a problem statement for all company who needed staff scheduling. In a transportation scheduling, drivers and vehicles were to include as the main domain factors as to make an optimum timetable. Scheduling has become an issue because of the constraint for drivers despite to satisfy their working hours and other constraints while getting a suitable time belt. Both constraints of the drivers and vehicles should be considered wisely to develop a more optimum schedule.

Driver's constraint will be included as the working hours, where the working hours should not over work. As for the vehicles, the consideration on how many passengers will be included to the travel to get the suitable vehicle and also the working hours. As mentioned that the project was basically set on some of the area of Peninsular Malaysia. As a result, the two factors which affect the constraints and rule will be:

- Driver
- Vehicle

Finally, in order to satisfy both the workers and the vehicle while giving a more perfect timetable, there were several techniques being studied which are the heuristic method, genetic algorithm, and particle swarm optimization. All these techniques were introduced and recommended in implementing into this system, but the final decision was using heuristic method as the technique to be used, just to prove that heuristic method can schedule timetable.



#### 2.3 Artificial Intelligence Techniques

Artificial intelligence is the intelligence where the computer generates the knowledge and gives out an output of results which is logical. For this scheduling system, there will be three types of artificial intelligence techniques to be reviewed which are heuristic method, genetic algorithm, and particle swarm optimization.

#### 2.3.1 Heuristic Method

A finite constraint satisfaction problem consists of a set of variable associated with finite domains and a set of constraints restricting the values that the variables can simultaneously take [4]. The heuristic method (HM) tends to solve solutions to a constraints satisfaction problem as an assignment of a value from its domain to every variable, in such way that every constraint should be satisfied.

The interactive behaviour of the algorithm requested to solve the result should be clear. While building the solution shall be step by step and that can present a result at any time. A frequent requirement is to have a sound solution or subsolution even during the search. In such a solution some variables can still be unattached, but all constraints over attached variables have to be satisfied. It means that there is no violated constraint during the search.

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#### 2.3.1.1 Basic Concept

The algorithm should provide some fractional solution at each step. This fractional solution should be good enough in respect to satisfaction of soft constraints and it must be sound (all required constraints are satisfied). The activity of the algorithm is which means two kind: the difference between the solutions provided by the algorithm in two consecutive steps should be minimal, and the solution process can be interfering by user. The algorithm must be able to start from modifying solution, make it sound and continue in extending the partial solution to a complete solution.

There are two basic approaches how to solve problems defined by means of constraints: backtracking based search that extends a partial sound solution to a complete solution, and local search that decreases the number of violations in a complete solution [5]. Idea of local search is provided at each step, the difference of the solution is in accordance with the requirements of us that there is a solution of some relatively small successive steps. However, the provided solutions are not sound. On the other side, it is not easy to add interactive behaviour into backtracking based search but it can provide a partial sound solution at each step. In particular, it does not support external changes of the partial solution and the difference between two consecutive solutions can be large after a long backtrack.

### 2.3.1.2 Algorithm

There are two kinds of structure which are: a set of variables that are not attached, and a partial sound solution. Each iteration for the algorithm tries to evolve the partial solution into complete one. The algorithm starts with an empty partial/fractional solution, and then it goes repeatedly from one partial sound solution to the other sound variable. This ends until the maximum number of iterations is reached or the variables are assigned.



```
procedure solve (unassigned, solution, max iter)
 // unassigned is a list of un-assigned variables
 // solution is a partial solution (empty at the beginning)
        e.g. a list (variable, assigned value)
 11
     iterations=0;
     while unassigned non empty & iterations<max iter
           & non user interruption do
            iterations ++;
            variable = selectVariable(unassigned, solution);
            unassigned -= variable;
            value = selectValue(variable, solution);
            unassigned += assign(solution, variable, value)
               // assign the variable and return violated variables
     end while;
     return solution;
end solve
```

Figure 2.1: Interactive algorithm of the heuristic method

At first, the algorithm passes through an un-assigned variable and chooses its value. The selection of the value can be made by evaluation from each domain via heuristic function operating over the current fractional solution. Finally, when the best fitness is selected the loops will then end.

### 2.3.1.3 Variable Selection Criterion

As mentioned from the algorithm phase, the current algorithm requires a function that selects an unassigned variable to be assigned in the current iteration step. The problem is same to what is a variable selection criterion in constraint programming. There are several guidelines how to select a variable. In local search based the variable participating in the largest number of violations is usually selected first. While the first-fail principle is often used in backtracking based algorithms.

Due to complexity of computing the heuristic value it could be rather expensive in some cases although it is possible to select the worst variable among all unassigned variables. Therefore selection of a subset from unassigned variables randomly and then chooses the worst variable from this subset would be the best Created with



decision. The results will not be much worse and we can select the variable much faster.

#### 2.3.1.4 Value Selection Criterion

After selecting the variable finding a value to be assigned should be the next step. Value selection in a constraint programming is to select the best-fitness value So, we are looking for a value, which is most preferred for the variable and also which causes the least trouble. It means that we need to find a value with minimum potential conflictions with other variables.

To stop cycling, randomise the value selection procedure will be used to get the final result. For an example, the selection for the final stage has five best values for the variable; the final result will be chosen one of them randomly. Or, it is possible to select a set of values as the heuristic evaluation for the worst value is maximally twice as large as the heuristic evaluation of the best value (lower value means better value). Again, the value is selected randomly from this group. This second rule inhibits randomness if there is a single very good value.

### 2.3.1.5 Decision Guider

To prove the decision guider is the primary function of heuristics, the first thing is the element of choice is always present when the heuristics are discussed. Besides that, the heuristics as a group should not consistently influence any other elements of constraints problem solver. The use of heuristic always counts on the existence of a decision mechanism and the effect is to lead this mechanism to one path as opposed to others. In short, heuristic method decides on where to go to search for a better result.



