

Assignment 1 - Research Project - Jayden Bond

by Jayden-Sean Bond

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Assignment 1 – Research Proposal

Module: Research Methods & Field Study Experience

Module Code: BMTP5011

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Introduction

Rail travel is vital to the tourism and events sector because it opens the target market to more people able to attend events or visit destinations. As stated in the Journal of Transport Geography (2023), transport infrastructure and regional connectivity are important drivers for long-term economic growth and within the tourism/events sector can further improve upon the accessibility and attractiveness of destinations. This statement is then further supported by the **Good!**s of Kaul (1985) as he stated, "transport plays an important role in the successful creation and development of new attractions as well as the healthy growth of existing ones." When a country has access to proper infrastructure like a rail network it allows for growth economically and the ability for more cultural exchange and community.



Rail travel has also shown to have further relevance over time as more people choose to travel via rail, this is shown in the report by the European Union (2016) where it states that within 10 years the **Interesting!** rail demand had increased by 61.8 billion passenger kilometers, the equivalent of a 1.6% per annum average growth. Additionally, in not only the UK but also other states like Austria and Sweden the demand was shown to be growing at rates of at least 2.5% per year, higher than the average. These figures clearly show the demand for rail travel and how it still remains relevant and is an industry which could be capitalized on further and potentially expanded.

This paper will include further methods of how data could be gathered and shown to further note the importance of the rail industry, with a focus on the tourism and events sector and how they are affected. This paper also makes note of how the London 2012 Olympics were impacted by the extensive rail systems of both London and the UK impacted the ability for attendees to visit the nation and attend the many events of that time. **2**

Research Methodology

The core research question which this paper and its underlying contents and research methodology is seeking to answer is 'how can the importance of rail travel to the tourism and events sector be shown whilst also emphasizing the eco-friendly and responsible aspects of rail'. To answer this question a research design was identified in which the research will use a mixed method **Good!**ch aimed to include a series of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods for analysis and further interpretation. A mixed method approach whilst more time consuming than focusing on a singular data form is believed to provide a more accurate representation of the results and allow for more concise conclusions to be drawn. (Creswell, 2017) **3** Furthermore the application of a mixed method approach can enrich the experience of the research and allow for a more intricate exami**Good!** of the data gathered. The benefits of this approach are shown to

be seen as valuable by the further adoption of this method in research in not just the travel industry but other sectors of key research like that of healthcare. (Shorten & Smith, 2017)  4

Given the need to collect both qualitative and quantitative data the methods needed are differing however both share the common factor in which using a series of secondary research papers, surveys and data for examination and interpretation will allow us to gather existing insights or spot patterns within their data that may correlate with this research's findings. For the collection of qualitative data, a focus on the use of interviews with semi/structured open-ended questions will allow individuals to voice their opinions and feelings.  Interviews are a research technique that is used to gain an understanding of how people interpret the world around them. (Kvale, 1996) Interviews allow participants to share their feelings, opinions and attitudes towards different aspects of the world and whatever context the research brings. This can be used to attribute meaning to experiences and provide a holistic description of scenarios and aspects. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1996) The advantages  interviews as a research method are that they allow for greater in-depth exploration of topics. (Wilhelmy & Kohler, 2022) It also allows the researcher to gain insight into areas that may currently be limited in existing evidence or theory which would guide quantitative research. (Cassell & Symon, 2011) A key issue with interviews however is that the interviewer whilst noting responses also needs to be formulating questions because of the interactive nature of the communication. (Wengraf, 2001)  5 This is a concept of "double attention", meaning that the interviewer must split the attention between trying to understand the meaning of the interviewees responses whilst at the same time trying to bear in mind the need to ensure questions are liable to get answered in a fixed time with the depth needed. This is a concern as without the proper questions then the insights gathered from the interviews may be lacking.

As for quantitative data collection, a focus on the use of surveys and polls will gather a number of findings and data that can quickly be interpreted. Survey research as noted by Kraemer (1991) is made of 3 key characteristics being the ability to describe quantitatively aspects  population, that the data is collected from people and thus is subjective, and that the findings can be used to generalize the larger population. These characteristics further show the strength that surveys have in being capable and suited for gathering data on a demographic. (McIntyre, 1999) It is important to note however that surveys do have weaknesses like that observed by Bell (1996) in which biases may occur, either in the lack of response or in the nature of the responses that are received, meaning that if careful analysis and steps are not taken to mitigate or lessen the risk of bias the results can be tarnished. The combination of approaches of both qualitative and quantitative aspects should allow for the advantages of both to be shown and the weaknesses to be mitigated.  7

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In answering the research question and identifying the group who will be part of this data collection the use of sampling as a process was needed. By segmenting a portion of the population, it is easier and faster to collect data while still gaining useful insights. Due to the mixed method approach of data collection a focus on non-probability based sampling is required due to the lack of time, materials and location limiting the ability to do probability sampling effectively, as supported by the industry in the Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology (2020). For the interviews the use of purposive sampling is key as the individuals interviewed would need to be knowledgeable in the rail industry and/or the tourism and events sector to properly obtain the insights that are needed. As for the surveys, using convenience sampling would be most effective and quick to gather the data needed within a logical timeframe. With the use of non-probability sampling methods, it is key to note the potential for researcher bias and this will need to be taken into account as the data is both collected and analyzed. 8

When conducting a research project, it is important to note the ethical considerations and standards which research and its researchers must be held to. This importance is supported by research from Barrow, Brannan & Khandhar (2017) who took note of ethical guidelines being developed throughout scientific history and the cost that comes without these guidelines in place. Guidelines like that of the Nuremberg Code or the Belmont Report were developed and instituted to avoid harm to participants in all aspects as research is continued to be conducted. This study will need to treat its participants with respect, ensure informed consent and to ensure that at any point a participant's privacy is protected, and they can withdraw. Ethical considerations also pertain to ensuring that findings are honest and avoid harm. It is key to uphold these ethical considerations as it not only protects the participants and the researcher but also further improves the validity of the project and maintains scientific integrity. (Penn LPS, 2024) 9

Significance of the study

This research and further research of similar nature (Burns, 2004) are important as they note and provide validity and proven evidence that the rail travel industry is important and relevant to the travel and tourism industry. Furthermore, establishing and further proving that rail travel is an eco-friendly and responsible transportation method is important as it would show it as a viable alternative to other transport methods and could result in further government and corporate funding and focus being made into the industry which could lead in turn to expansion and possible innovation.

With the escalating problems with global warming, CO2 emissions and other problems it is becoming more and more important that not only individuals but the industry as a whole need to look for greener options and rail travel has been shown to be a viable option. A report by the European Environment Agency (2021) supports this further by

noting that rail travel is the least carbon intensive form of transportation per kilometer and unit transported, with only walk and cycle-based transport being more effective, in counter to this road and air transport was noted as the most carbon intensive. By emphasizing rail travel as a viable option, it can open opportunities for industry and for further collaboration between existing rail companies/network operators, governments and event/tourism coordinators.



By establishing rail travel as a relevant and effective travel option both economically and environmentally could result in changes in government policies for rail travel and a further emphasis on investment from internal and external investors in the industry, Additionally it could encourage further research into the viability of rail travel, its options for expansions and the potential avenues for innovation. This is further supported by the effects and subsequent study of the London Olympics and its effects on the transport industry. Figures showed that over the period of the London Olympics over 100 million journeys were made on the Tube itself and further figures on the DLR, London Overground, Cycle Hire and bus network. (House of Commons, 2012)



Timeline and budget

In the research project it is important to establish a schedule and organization of the different aspects to predict milestones and deadlines that will need to be met. The process of a research project that of data collection, data analysis, data interpretations and conclusion drawing. By focusing on a timeline of data collection early on and aiming to meet certain deadlines it can allow efficiency. An example being that of the interviews and surveys, where interviews will require active participation from the researcher and thus will be time consuming and require strict scheduling, the surveys can be done throughout the data collection process as they can be sent out both in person but also through online sources. By organizing and prioritizing the time and order of research methods it can allow for more efficient and larger data stores to be collected. Then when in the aspect of data analysis by focusing on the primary research first initial conclusions can be drawn that are based on the data directly and the participants which can then be analyzed alongside the secondary data forms and be used to draw more accurate and concise conclusions.



In terms of budget the research is limited by what is available to the researcher, this may mean costs that are incurred could be transport costs (tickets, fuel), material costs (paper, stationery) and time. Due to the further increase in access to forms of survey collection sites like SurveyMonkey (2024) the ability to collect data is far more cost effective and accessible. An additional cost could be either any costs which may be incurred if the researcher required further personnel to examine or collect the data, as well as potentially be if any secondary research requires a paywall to gain access to, however other forms of data could likely be found with further data collection.



Conclusions and limitations

With a mixed method approach to research, it can be time consuming, however it gives access to the largest amount of data and the ability to draw the most concise and accurate conclusions from the data. The sampling methods used also can run into troubles with researcher bias, but they require smaller groups of participants which is easier and more cost effective. The methods which are likely to be the most time and resource consuming are interviews and secondary data collection. It is important to note the limitations of this project and the potential that some interpretations risk bias or overlooking due to the amount of data the mixed method approach provides however if this risk can be avoided the data provided by this project will be detailed and able to draw accurate conclusions to gain insight into answering the research question posed.

Good!

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GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

SJ

60/100

Thank you for your submission.

For further feedback, please refer to the 'Rubric/Form' tab below.

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

QM

Good!



Comment 1

For future reference, for any future work, ensure to justify your work (Ctrl J) and to have 1.5 line spacing. Just reach out (Scott) if you are unsure on what I mean here.

QM

Interesting!



Comment 2

Your introduction does an excellent job of setting the stage for the discussion on the role of rail travel in tourism and events. It effectively highlights rail travel as a key factor in hosting large events, emphasising its accessibility, efficiency, and environmental benefits. The point about how rail travel helps move large crowds smoothly is a crucial one, and it ties in well with the broader topic. It's a great idea to suggest including background details about the sector and specific events, as this will add helpful context to your argument. You also do a fantastic job of pointing out the extra benefits rail travel brings to a destination. This really strengthens your argument and gives a well-rounded view of the topic.

QM

Good!



Comment 3

It should be the citation, then followed by the full stop. For example.

...concise conclusions to be drawn (Creswell, 2017).

QM

Good!

PAGE 3



Comment 4

The section does a great job of explaining the overall approach to the study and provides a clear rationale for the chosen design. It outlines whether the study is qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods, and explains why this approach is the best fit for the research objectives. The reasoning behind choosing this design over others is also well-explained.

QM

Good!

QM

Good!



Comment 5

It should be formatted like as follows;

Wengraf (2001) speaks of a concept of...

QM

Good!



Comment 6

It is great that you have backed your work up with in-text citations as this shows the level of research that you have gone through. However, be mindful of the dates. Many of your references are 25-30 years old. Research methods is constantly evolving, so having more contemporary sources will add further dynamism and contrast to your work.



Comment 7

The description gives a clear and detailed explanation of the different methods used to collect data. It outlines how each method will be applied in the research and explains why it's a good fit for the study. The section also covers the tools and instruments, including how they're developed and tested for reliability.

PAGE 4



Good!



Comment 8

The section provides a clear explanation of the sampling process, including the target population, the sampling methods used, and the sample size. It also explains why the chosen method is the best fit for the research and how it helps ensure the sample is representative, making the findings reliable.



Add citation

Add citation



Comment 9

Ethical concerns are clearly addressed, with a focus on protecting participants' rights and maintaining the integrity of the data. This section covers key ethical aspects such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and how any potential risks to participants will be managed.



Good!



Interesting!

PAGE 5



Comment 10

The explanation of why this research is important is clear and detailed. It highlights key gaps in current knowledge and shows how the study aims to fill them. The relevance of the research to current trends or challenges in the field is well-articulated, and the potential broader impact of the findings is effectively discussed.

The description also emphasises how the research could contribute to both academic knowledge and practical applications. It explains how the findings could deepen understanding, improve existing practices, or even lead to new approaches in the field. Additionally, it touches on the potential long-term effects the research might have on future studies or policy changes.



Good!



Comment 11

More depth and detail regarding discussing the practical implications and how the findings might be applied would have been beneficial.



Good!



Comment 12

You go into good depth regarding the importance of a timeline and time management, but it would have been good to see an actual timeline. When and where are you going to conduct this research. What are your key milestones going to be?



Comment 13

A very good awareness of the potential costs and budget that you may utilise for this research. However, it would have been good to see some rough estimations of costs here, and how you plan to finance it.

PAGE 6

QM

Good!

PAGE 7

PAGE 8

GRADING FORM: RESEARCH METHODS ASSIGNMENT 1

JAYDEN-SEAN BOND

60

ENGAGEMENT WITH LITERATURE

You should incorporate academic material about research methodology in section 2, while sections 1 and 3 will utilise online sources mainly to provide underpinning material for your case study. Be respectful for other who have produced work and cite their work. Show academic honesty and credibility. Your academic sources for methodology should be from text books and academic journals. Go beyond what is provided to you in the module for better marks. All sources must be critically evaluated – so that if you are using a weak source, you show it has some limitations. You must include a minimum of 20 reference sources, with in-text citations.



Engagement with an appropriate range of literature, including sources retrieved independently. Some over-reliance on texts. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies.

6

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You should show an understanding of research methods and how these can be used to investigate case study organisations in Travel and Tourism. You should show some knowledge of analytical approaches suitable to the field and show where there are limitations. This assignment should also be supported by your understanding of the field generally and all modules that you will have studied up to this point.



Knowledge is reasonably extensive. Exhibits very competent critical understanding of the well-established concepts and principles of the subject and the main methods of enquiry. Breadth and depth of knowledge.

12

COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL

You should be able to show an appreciation for which research methods are appropriate for your case study investigation. These should be well thought out, and relatively achievable, although there is always room for some failure within a plan/scheme. You should show a coherent understanding of how all the information fits together to produce your case study. You will get better marks for demonstrating the academic underpinnings of your methods and techniques.



Sound critical evaluation and analysis of concepts. Is selective in the range of evidence used and

20

synthesises rather than describes. Ability to devise arguments that show awareness of different stances, and use evidence convincingly, to support appropriate and valid judgements.

PRACTICAL SKILLS

You need to focus on selecting appropriate methods for the case study to produce meaningful and interesting findings- these need to be realistic and practically achievable given the context and limitations. You will get better marks for using the appropriate academic language, terminology and concepts. You should use what you have learned from modules up until now to assist you in writing this case study project.



A very good application of a range of established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application, with perceptive insights. Consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making appropriate links between the two. Can identify problems and propose appropriate solutions outside the context in which they were first studied. Evidence of some creativity.

14

TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS

The project should be structured in accordance with an academic report layout using the structure provided. This should involve headings, subheadings and captions that describe any diagrams or pictures. The content should be of a professional standard with correct spelling, grammar and a logical flow to your discussion. The work needs to be supported with citations which should be referenced using the Harvard method. Arial font 12 should be used, with 1.5 line spacing and justified text.



Can communicate in a suitable medium for the audience but with some room for improvement. Mostly ordered presentation and structure in which relevant ideas / concepts are reasonably expressed. Work may lack coherence in places. Can work as part of a group, meeting most obligations to others but perhaps with limited involvement in group activities. Demonstrates the basic skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making, with some areas of minor weakness.