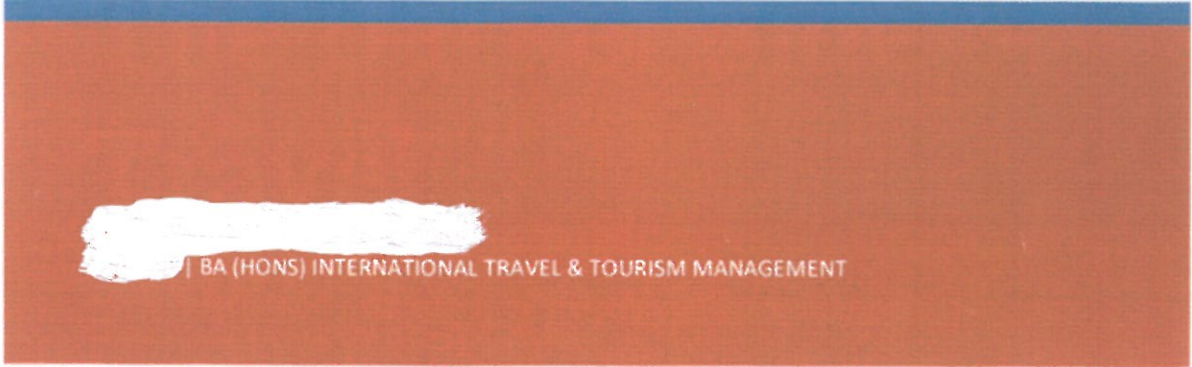


Dark Tourism: Sites of Suffering The Darker Side of Travel

**A Critical Analysis of Dark Tourism and Visitor Motivations
Case Study of Auschwitz-Birkenau
Research Proposal**



| BA (HONS) INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM MANAGEMENT

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1.0 Aims & Objectives

This dissertation aims to explore the term '*dark tourism*' and to investigate extensively this expression. Additionally, it will analyse visitor motives with first hand evidence and knowledge.

By the end of this study, it is hoped that the research will have met these objectives: to have established what attracts people to dark tourism, an organic investigation to the motivations behind the visitors and an evaluation of their behaviour, and an examination of whether it is right to visit victim sites & disaster zones, just because of human curiosity. With the research one is hoping to obtain, this report will evaluate the visitors experience to my chosen site. To conclude, one will identify future plans for dark tourism and shall take a glance at future sites and in particular, Fukushima, Japan.

The main site this report will focus on in detail is Auschwitz, Poland. The author will be visiting Auschwitz early next year to carry out fieldwork, and get first-hand experience of this infamous site.

This report will also provide a contextual review of,

- Hiroshima, Japan - 1945
- Alcatraz Prisons, USA - 1934
- Chernobyl Disaster, Prypiat, Ukraine - 1986
- Cambodia Genocide - 1975-1979
- Slums –
 1. Rocinha, Brazil
 2. Dharavi, Mumbai
 3. Nairobi, Kenya
 4. Maharashtra, India

2.0 Background

This research is an introductory study into the sensation of dark tourism. Dark Tourism is a mixture of history, tourism & tragedy. it seems that there is a perpetuating desiderata for tourists all over the world, to go and visit places that are cognate to death, disaster and tragedy. Dieke et al. (2011) state *'dark tourism is becoming a widely known form of tourism and it has increasing popularity among tourists around the globe in the tourism industry.'*

Dark tourism is defined by Foley and Lennon (1996:198) as *'the phenomenon which encompasses the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites'*. However, Tarlow (2005:48) defines dark tourism as *"visitation to places where tragedies or historically noteworthy death has occurred and that continue to impact our lives"*

Some tourists are content with travelling along with the masses to the usual destinations keeping the traditional form of travelling alive; others, then again, search for excitement in more extraordinary locations, constantly creating new challenges for the industry. The core of this research is to find out predominately what the motivations behind dark tourists are. Dark tourism is part of niche tourism, *'the term 'niche tourism' is largely borrowed from the term 'niche marketing', which in turn has appropriated the niche concept from the language of the relatively recent discipline ecology.'* (Novelli, 2005:4)

3.0 Rationale

The subject area to be investigated is that of the term '*Dark Tourism*' and visitor motives, as well as human curiosity of these notorious sites. The following shows reasoning for the area of research due to quandaries that still remain.

In a recent article published by the Mail Online, '*Why are we so fascinated by Auschwitz? 'Dark tourism' to 'death sites' helps us deal with our mortality, study reveals*' sources have said researchers are becoming increasingly engrossed with why visitors are so fascinated with learning about violence, cruelty and death and seeing its effects of such catastrophic sites first hand? (Mail Online, 2015)

Figure 1 below, shows that a cultural obsession with death and '*dystopia*' stems from death within society.' *When combined with sadistic tendencies, insecurities about death and society, stimulation and emotional contagion and coming face-to-face with death, it creates the desire to visit dystopian dark tourist sites'*

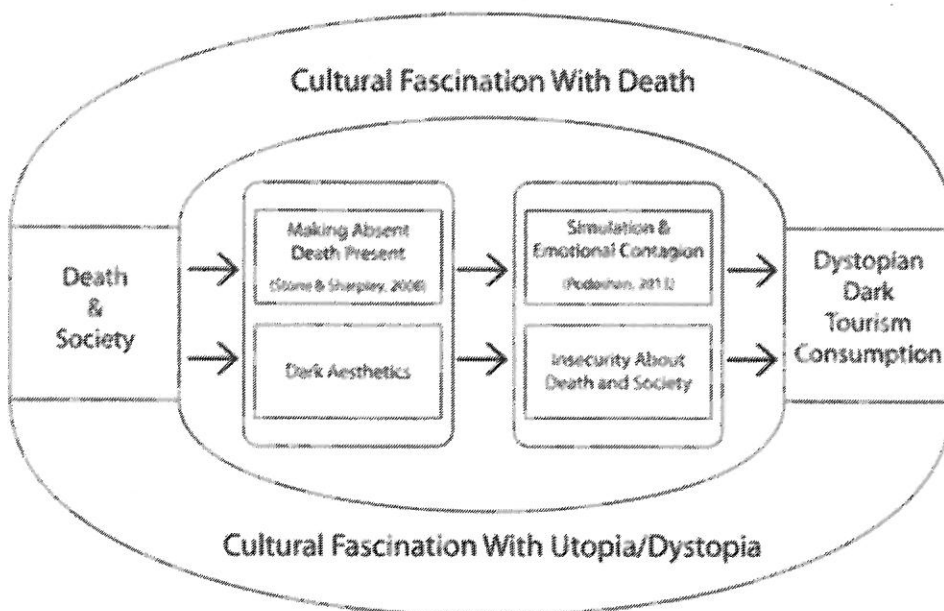


Fig. 1. *Cultural Fascination with Death & Dystopia* (2015)

4.0 Methodology

Rajendar Kumar describes research as *"An intensive and purposeful search for knowledge and understanding of social and physical Phenomena. Research is a scientific activity undertaken to establish something, a fact, a theory, a principle or an application."* (Kumar, 2008)

When compiling research there are a variation of methods and approaches that can be chosen. Figure 2 below, by Saunders, et al., 2009, shows the contrasting phases.

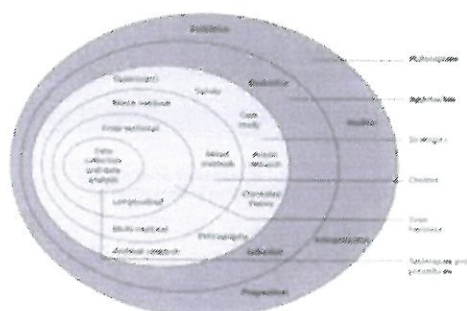


Fig. 2. *The Research Onion* (2009)

Data collection is a term used to describe a process of preparing and collecting data. The purpose of collecting this data is to obtain information, to record the information, to make decisions about the information, to implement the information into the suitable purpose & finally to pass the information on to others.

The research for this report will be two levels, primary and secondary;

Saunders et al describe primary data as, '*Data collected specifically for the research project being undertaken*' (Saunders et al, 2009) whereas, Wild & Diggins says "*Primary data is data that is collected to address a specific problem... Primary data can be collected through either quantitative or qualitative research*" (Wild & Diggins, 2009). Primary data is generally fresh and collected for the first time and is useful for current studies and for future studies. Primary data is used for the application of statistical methods.

To obtain the data for this report, questionnaires will be used. Saunders et al define questionnaires as 'General term including all data collection techniques in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order. See also delivery and collection questionnaire, interviewer-administered questionnaire, on-line questionnaire, postal questionnaire, self-administered questionnaire.' (Saunders et al, 2009).

The researcher is aiming to have 200 completed questionnaires by visitors to Auschwitz, Krakow, Poland. This will ensure the data is fresh and original as the visitors will be completing these questionnaires directly after or during their tour of this notorious site. Questionnaires can be type of quantitative data, depending on the questions. Quantitative data, is based on numbers, and does not tell why, when, how, it is defined by Saunders et al as, *'Numerical data or data that have been quantified.'* (Saunders et al 2009) The questionnaires will be made up of a few different types of questionnaires, such as, Dichotomous variables, also known as binary variables: these are answers that only have two categories, meaning only two different response options, such as male and female. The content of the questionnaires will ensure that the data received will be both quantitative and qualitative.

Another, primary data collection method that will be used is, semi structured interviews. Semi structured interviews are a, *"Set of Predetermined questions related to domains of interest administered to a representative sample of respondents to confirm study domains, and identify factors, variables and items or attributes of variables for analysis or use"* (Schensul, 1999). Interviews are a type of qualitative data, Saunders et al define qualitative data as, *'Non-numerical data or data that have not been quantified.'* (Saunders et al, 2009) Qualitative tells you why, when, how. Saunders et al, also define *'qualitative interview'* as a *'Collective term for semi-structured and unstructured interviews aimed at generating qualitative data.'* (Saunders et al. 2009)

Here questions do not have a formal structure as there are no fixed questions, this allows us to ask questions which can lead to greater collection. The advantages of using this method is firstly its increased reliability, this is because structured interviews assure that diagnostic criteria are covered systematically and completely (Deborah, et al., 2014). Furthermore structured interviews give the researcher an opportunity to probe the interviewee which may lead to unexpected and unforeseen information being revealed (Walsh & Wiggins, 2003) however, semi structured interviews warrant the risk of interviewer bias, which reduces its validity. Furthermore the validity can be questioned due to answers given by the interviewee, this can be caused by them purposely lying or being unable to recall the full truth. Finally due to it being semi structured there will be a large amount of data obtained that will be wasted, due to it being off topic. (Walsh & Wiggins, 2003)

Saunders et al describe secondary data as, *'Data used for a research project that were originally collected for some other purpose.'* (Saunders et al, 2009). Secondary data is data gathered and recorded by someone else prior to and for a purpose other than the current project, it is data that is being reused, and it is data used from a book. This sort of data will be used to back up my own research in this project, and will be referenced, the types of this data that will be used are newspaper articles, journals & books.

4.1 Paradigm

Rossmann & Rollis define paradigm as '*shared understandings of reality*.' (Rossmann & Rollis, 2003)

The most congruous approach for the questionnaires which is the quantitative data is Positivism on the research onion, shown in figure 2. *Positivism is in accordance with the empiricist view that knowledge stems from human experience. It has an atomistic, ontological view of the world as comprising discrete, observable elements and events that interact in an observable, determined and regular manner*" (Collins, 2010, p.38). Positivism is associated to quantitative research, this involves hypothesis testing to obtain the objective truth.

Additionally, the most suitable approach for the interviews would be the phenomenological methodology, Stan Lester describes Phenomenological methods as "*effective at bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives, and therefore at challenging structural or normative assumptions, while adding an interpretive dimension to phenomenological research, enabling it to be used as the basis for practical theory allows it to inform, support or challenge policy and action*" (Lester, 1999). Phenomenological methodology is additionally well known as Interpretivism on the research onion, shown in figure 2, this is due to the data collection methods being semi structured interviews. Interpretivism can be described as *the method which emphasizes nature in the participation of people's social and cultural life* (Bound, 2011). Interpretivism is associated with qualitative research, and it used to obtain an understanding of the word from an individual perspective.

4.2 Sample

A *sample* is the group of people who take part in the investigation. The people who take part are referred to as "*participants*".

Sampling is a process utilized in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations will be taken from a more immensely colossal population.

Qualitative, the type of sampling that will be used to carry out this research is Purposive sampling, this is a selective method of sampling this means targeting a particular group, this involves, "*Selecting a sample based on your own judgement regarding which units are most representative or useful*" (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). Purposive sampling will be used as the research will be carried out in a particular group. However, expert sampling, an individual with specific qualifications and experience, may be used if the researcher is able to obtain an interview with such person while in Krakow, Poland, as an expert opinion is a highly reliable source.

Quantitative, the type of sampling that will be used to carry out this research is Quota Sampling, this type of sampling allows the researchers to sample a subgroup that is of great interest to the study and it allows the researchers to observe relationships between subgroups. This type of sampling is best for my questionnaire as it focuses on a specific group of people, with the same interest of visiting this site. The type of participants that could be completing this questionnaire are of all ages, from school trip groups with teachers and children 16 + (with teachers consent) through to elderly men and women. With the main visitor nationalities being Polish, British, Israeli, German and American (Mail online, 2015) this sampling method is best to compare and contrast the various answers.

Additionally, 'Stratified Random Sampling', '*when the percentage of the sample taken from each stratum is proportionate to the percentage that each stratum is within the whole population.*' (Ken Black, 2011). Stratified random sampling is used to split the data into female and male and age categories to see if age or even gender shows any differences on the reasons to travel to such a site, this type of data sampling is used for comparison. The main reason for using Stratified Random Sampling is that it has the potential for reducing sampling error.

4.3 Advantages

With both data collections there will be the opportunity to explore the issues in depth, and the questions will be written in a way that the responses should be accurate and reliability for this study. The questionnaires will easily generate to quantitative data.

4.4 Limitations

As this report will be using both quantitative and qualitative data, it will have many limitations.

The main limitations being:

Qualitative- can be time consuming to assemble individuals, and some individuals do not have the time to answer all the questions or could answer the questions briefly, this leads to inaccurate data which is not reliable. Additionally, because the nature of this study, it could be difficult to collect sensitive information. Finally, Accuracy depends on who and how many people are sampled

Quantitative – can be slow to implement and analyse the data received from this data. Again, it can be difficult to collect sensitive information due to the nature of this study. Also, accuracy is limited to who is willing to complete the questionnaires in such a difficult environment and gaining the amount of questionnaire replies from individuals to gather the most accurate information. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be expensive to collect due to travel and other costs.

5.0 Research Design

As explained in the research design, both qualitative and quantitative data will be gathered and will be analysed and recorded.

Qualitative, from the interviews transcripts will be saved to ensure the data is accurate. These transcripts will be used to identify trends, the qualitative data will be formed and presented in diagrams, such as, graphs and tables.

A content analysis will be utilized as it, *"Classifies textual material, reducing it to more relevant, manageable bits of data"* (Weber, 1990). Content analysis can be utilized as *"The diagnostic tool of qualitative researchers, which they use when faced with a mass of open ended material to make sense of it"* (Mostyn, 1985). With content analysis, qualitative data can be converted into quantitative data.

Quantitative, the questionnaires will all be kept and the data entered on spreadsheets from where graphs and tables will be compiled, fully representing the answers obtained.

The data will be compiled into graphs and tables, such as, pie graphs, this graph shows the proportions of each segment of a whole and only handles one data series, this means the data will be clear. Pie graphs would be used for data such as ages, nationalities etc. Also, line graphs which will show the relationship between more than 2 types of data, the lines of this type of table customarily exhibit the exposure variable (independent variable), and the columns, the outcome variable (dependent variable).

6.0 Resource Planning

A resource is, "A stock or supply of money, materials, staff, and other assets that can be drawn on by a person or organization in order to function effectively."

To complete this study effectively, many resources will be used. Such as, University resources from the library and online resources, Google Scholar, Google Books, online articles, reports and journals, the world wide web, hard copy books and also, help from my mentor.

Time is the most important resource with this proposal, realistic timescales are key so the researcher has completed a Gantt chart, shown in appendix 1. Ron Basu says *'A Gantt chart is a simple tool which represents time as a bar or a line on a chart. The start and finish times for activities are displayed by the length of the bar and often the actual progress of the task is also indicated.'* (Ron Basu, 2004) This Gantt chart will show the timeline for this project, which will run from October 2015, until May 2016.

7.0 Ethical Issues & Risk

The aim of ethics approval is to consider the issues of the research planning to finalise the area of study and focusing on the main aspects for the research (Ethical approval, 2012). The nature of this study is very aphotic, and holds an ethical risk. When preparing the questions for the interview and the questionnaire, the researcher will be careful of what questions to ask and how to compose these questions. Ethics are about the moral position adopted by the researcher and those funding that piece of research. Each of these groups has a moral obligation to protect people from any mistreatment which could result from taking part in the research itself. (Robertson and Dearling 2004:33). The ethical agreement form is shown in appendix 2.

Information on this study will be given to respondents within the consent form at the beginning of both questionnaires and interviews. In the consent form, it explains that the data collection is anonymous. *'informing the respondents that they will be anonymous is important as it should mean they are more likely to answer honestly.'* (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007, p. 288)

This topic poses a large ethical risk due to the mortality of the subject, the researcher will take this into account when creating the questions for the questionnaire and interviews. It is important that the researcher thinks about the participants feelings and poses an understanding of these through the questionnaire. The consent form, shown in appendix 3, explains that visitors can participate in this questionnaire at their own compliance. In the consent form, it acknowledges visitors that they can consider participating in this questionnaire before feeling forced to do so, it is completely voluntary. The participants must confirm that they are over the age of 16 before starting the questionnaire. As explained in the consent form, all questionnaires will be dealt with in confidence. *'Assurance of confidentiality has been proven to be more operative in motivating responses'* (Singer, Hippler, & Schwarz, 1992). Finally, achieving accurate and reliable data will remain a high importance throughout the data collection period.

8.0 Appendix

Appendix 1

