



RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

**‘How can we convince travellers to choose rail travel as an
eco-friendly and responsible transportation option when
attending events?’**

World Count: 2025
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Introduction

Rail travel play an important role in the Tourism and Events sector, especially when hosting large events. It offers several advantages that make it an essential mode of transport.

Firstly, rail travel is cost-effective and can accommodate large numbers of passengers, making it ideal for transporting attendees to major events. It is also eco-friendly, producing lower greenhouse gas emissions compare to cars. This sustainable aspect is important as destinations aim to reduce their environmental footprint.

Moreover, rail networks often connect directly to city centres and event venues, providing convenient access for tourists. This ease of access can enhance the overall experience, encouraging higher attendance and repeat visits. In terms of additional benefits, rail travel can stimulate local economies by increasing foot traffic in areas surrounding stations and event venues. (Dr Stainton, 2020)

To find out what people think about rail and how we can convince them to use rail travel as eco-friendly option market research has been done.

For this work, a survey was conducted which in the first questions presents the profile of the respondent. Then questions help answer how we can convince people to use rail transport (Survey, 2024). The survey was carried out among people living in the Swansea area (Llanelli, Neath and Port Talbot).

Research methodology

Research design is a comprehensive plan or blueprint for conducting research, aimed at answering specific research questions, test hypotheses or get insights. It outlines the framework for data collection, measurement, and analysis, ensuring that the study is methodologically sound and relevant. Research design can be categorized broadly into quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods (Karunarathna, 2024).

A key decision in research design is whether to use qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. Qualitative research is ideal for understanding complex phenomena and exploring subjective experiences, it is non-numerical data. Whether quantitative research involves numerical data and statistical analyses to test hypotheses and assess relationships. Mixed methods research combines both techniques, offering a more comprehensive understanding (Tegan,2023).

Data collection is a process of gathering information to address the research questions. The choice of data collection methods depends on the research design and the nature of the data required.

There are a few qualitative data collections. One of them is interview. One to one interview provides deep insight into participants' perceptions and experience. Another one is observations. Researchers observe participants in natural settings to collect data on behaviour and interactions. This method helps gather real-world information (Hassan,2024).

One of quantitative data collection methods is secondary data where researchers use existing data sets to test new hypotheses. Another one are surveys/questionnaires. These are commonly used to collect data from a large sample. They can be administered online, face-to-face, or via telephone (Scheuren, 2004).

For this work survey was the best choice of research market. Events typically attract people from various backgrounds and locations. Using an online survey allows you to reach a broader audience, making it possible to capture the views of a large sample of eventgoers who may use different types of transport or have varying motivations.

Another reason to choose this method was that collecting data online is efficient, especially when targeting a specific group, such as event attendees. Surveys allow rapid data collection without the need for in-person interviews, making it easier to gather information from many people in a short period. (Fletcher and Bostock, 2019).

To determine how to encourage trial travel, it's important to gather quantitative data on attendees' preferences, perceived barriers, and motivations for using or not using alternative transport. Surveys are ideal for asking structured questions that yield quantifiable data, such as rating scales or multiple-choice questions.

Surveys provide data in a format that is easy to analyse, especially if the questions are close ended (e.g., yes/no questions). This is helpful when you need clear, actionable insights into what factors could increase trial travel uptake (Wong and Wan, 2012).

There are three types of research- explanatory, descriptive and predictive.

Explanatory research is used to investigate a topic that is not well understood. Often occurs when in area research needs to be done but there is not much available information.

Descriptive research involves observing and recording characteristics and behaviours. We describe what happened in the past without changing anything.

Predictive research is designed to anticipate future events or outcomes by analysing current or past data. It concentrates on utilizing existing information to make educated guesses about what is expected to occur in the future. (Bhat, 2019)

Sampling in research methods refers to the process of selecting a subset of individuals or items from a larger population to study and draw conclusions about that population. The goal of sampling is to make the research more manageable while still allowing for valid and generalizable results.

There are two main categories of sampling methods.

One of them is probability sampling, which involves random selection, giving each member of the population an equal chance of being chosen. It's used to create a sample that is representative of the entire population.

Simple random sampling means every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected.

Stratified sampling is when the population is divided into subgroups (strata) based on a specific characteristic (e.g., age or gender), and then random samples are taken from each subgroup.

Systematic Sampling happens while every nth individual is selected from a list of the population.

The last sampling selection is cluster sampling when the population is divided into clusters (often geographically), and entire clusters are randomly selected for the study. (Trochim, 2020)

For the survey has been used cluster sampling. Geographic targeting ensures that the survey results are applicable to the local area, addressing the research objectives effectively. The research market was focus on Swansea area, so this sampling was the best choice.

Second one is non-probability sampling. This does not involve random selection, meaning not everyone in the population has an equal chance of being included. It's often used when random sampling is impractical.

Convenience sampling is selecting individuals who are easiest to access, such as volunteers or people nearby. While purposive sampling selects participants based on specific characteristics or expertise related to the study.

Snowball sampling happens while existing study participants recruit additional participants from their network.

Quota sampling is when the researcher ensures that the sample reflects certain characteristics of the population in proportion (like gender or age), but participants are selected non-randomly. (Bryman, 2016).

Ethics is a fundamental aspect of research methodology, ensuring that the research is conducted responsibly and with respect for participants' rights and welfare. Ethical

considerations are crucial in maintaining the credibility of the research and safeguarding participants.

There are a few principles to follow. One of them is that participants must be fully informed about the research and voluntarily agree to participate. Researchers must protect the privacy of participants and keep their data confidential. Another one is ensuring that participants' identities are not linked to their data. Researchers must also ensure that participants are not exposed to any harm, whether physical, psychological, or emotional. Researchers must conduct their research with honesty and integrity, avoiding any form of misconduct or fraud. Participants should be informed about the study's purpose and findings after their participation. Participants should know they can withdraw at any time without facing any negative consequences. (Resnik,2020)

Significance of the study

Every study aims to fill a gap in the current body of knowledge, often addressing unanswered questions or resolving uncertainties within the field. This research's significance lies in its ability to provide novel insights or extend understanding in specific areas that may have been underexplored (Hassan,2024).

This research is essential because it addresses a growing need to reduce environmental impacts from mass travel at events. By exploring the factors that influence people's decisions to try alternative travel options, this study fills a knowledge gap, especially in understanding motivations and barriers in a real-world context.

This study also contributes valuable insights into the motivations and barriers associated with trial travel. By focusing on the psychology of event attendees, it provides a framework for future researchers to explore similar topics across other events and demographic groups. Additionally, the findings can deepen our understanding of sustainable travel behaviour, enhancing theories in environmental psychology and behavioural economics (Cerezo-Esteve, 2022)

The practical implications of this research are significant. By identifying which factors make people more likely to try alternative transport, event organizers and policymakers can design strategies that encourage sustainable travel. These insights may also influence transportation planning for large events, potentially inspiring policies that support eco-friendly transit options, such as subsidized ticketing or integrated public transport routes for attendees.

The survey that was conducted aimed to understand the motivations, perceptions, and potential incentives that could encourage travellers to choose rail as an eco-friendly option when attending events. Most respondents attended events between one to a few times a year, with cars being the most common modes of transport. Cost, comfort and travel time emerged as the top factors influencing travel choice, while the main barriers to rail travel included ticket prices and limited schedule flexibility. Over 70% of respondents stated they would consider rail if they knew it was more eco-friendly than other options. However, many still associate rails travel with being slower and less convenient. Discounted rail tickets and partnership with event's organizers for seamless travel planning were rated as the most appealing incentives, with over 70% of respondents stating that they would be more likely to choose rail travel if it was directly integrated with event tickets. To promote rail as a preferred mode for eco-conscious event travel, offering bundled event-rail tickets, showcasing environmental benefits, and improved convenience and scheduling could be effective strategies. (Survey,2024)

Timeline and budget

A timeline for a research project is a structured plan that outlines the stages of the study and when each should be completed.

First start with a literature review (reading existing research) to understand what's been done on your topic and to define your own research questions. Set up the methods and tools you'll use to collect data and test them to ensure they work. This should be done in week 1-2.

Milestone: Approval of survey content and testing completed. In week 3-5 data collection.

Distribute the online survey via email, social media, and relevant networks. Milestone: Survey closes after reaching the target sample size. Next step (week 6-7) is to analyse the gathered data to find patterns, answers, or insights related to research questions. Analyse responses using statistical software, ensuring reliability and validity of the findings. Milestone:

Completion of initial data interpretation. Final step is preparation a comprehensive report summarizing findings and recommendations. This should be done in week 8. Milestone: Submission of the final report.

A budget helps estimate the costs associated with the research. It usually includes personnel (costs for anyone helping with project), materials (e.g. software for data analysis, printing surveyors) and travel if you need to travel for interviews.

Conclusion

Conducting the survey has its advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages is that survey can reach participants quickly as it is distributed online. Compared to interviews or focus groups, surveys are generally less expensive, as they reduce the need for travel, materials, or interviewer costs. Surveys provide a consistent set of questions to all participants, which reduces variability in responses and allows for easier comparison and analysis of data. Surveys often yield quantitative data that can be easily analysed using statistical methods, making it possible to identify patterns, correlations, or trends within the data. Online or anonymous surveys may make participants more comfortable, especially for sensitive topics, resulting in more honest and reliable responses (Wright,2005).

However, surveys generally provide surface-level information and may lack the depth of understanding that qualitative methods (like interviews) provide. Responses are usually restricted to the options given in the survey. Respondents may not always answer honestly or may select answers they believe are more socially acceptable, introducing bias that skews results. Surveys, especially online, often have lower response rates, which can affect the representativeness of the sample and reduce the generalizability of the findings.

Participants might misunderstand survey questions, particularly if the wording is unclear, leading to inaccurate responses that impact data reliability (Thomas, 2024).

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