

**An Investigation Into the
Future of Events Within
Amgueddfa Cymru with
Specific Focus on the National
Waterfront Museum and
National Museum Cardiff.**

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1. Background & Rationale

It is widely accepted that *'cultural tourism is the movement of people towards cultural attractions, somewhere other than their habitual place of residence, in order to obtain information and knowledge to fulfil their own cultural demands'* and museums make up a substantial proportion of the attractions in this sector (Jovicic, 2016). Events have become an increasing present feature of the museum sector for many years and most UK museums now have people dedicated to events (Museums Association, 2018). From April 2015 to March 2016 seventeen of the top museums in the UK including *'the Tate galleries, National Gallery, V&A and British Museum'* accumulated *'47.6 million'* visitors and although this number suggest stability within the museum industry this was a drop of over 1 million visitors from the previous year (Jones, 2017) (Hargreaves, 2015). Given that this is a representation of some of the country's most popular museums and galleries it can be inferred that this decline in visitor numbers is a widespread issue amongst the majority of museums within the UK. In regards to Swansea in 2018 the Swansea Museum will have its budget cut by *'£50000'* and although there are *'no plans to close Swansea Museum'* this remains an ever-present threat (Atkinson, 2017). This drop in funding may have been caused by a number of factors. Black (2012, pg.3) suggests that the UK is on the *'cusp of a generational shift'* where the generation X and Y's are becoming more selective with where they spend their time and museums are slipping further down in popularity. In conjunction with other complex political issues may also be contributing to this decline. One-method museums have been using to combat this drop in visitor numbers is by hosting events and one off exhibitions. The purpose of this dissertation is to determine whether hosting events is beneficial to museums both in terms of footfall and funding. Although research has already been conducted into the declining popularity of museums these studies have primarily been the causal reasons behind falling footfalls and these studies have also been centred in the more classical institutions of culture. The dissertation will focus on methods with which to increase museum popularity and to do so the researcher will be specifically focusing on Amgueddfa Cymru.

Amgueddfa Cymru is comprised of seven museums within Wales but this study will focus on the National Waterfront Museum (NWM) and National Museum Cardiff (NMC), these museums both having archived records of footfall figures that are readily available to the researcher. In addition to this these two museums represent two different style of museums Cardiff being focused more heavily on the collections and NWM has more space and movable exhibits to make it more suited to hosting large scale events.

2. Aims and Objectives:

2.1. Aim

To evaluate whether events can contribute to a sustainable strategy for Amgueddfa Cymru.

2.2. Objectives

- To establish the link between hosting events within museums and footfall figures and potential funding and/or money generations.
- To establish whether hosting events, both public and private, within museums is beneficial to the museum in terms of visitor figures and experience.
- To establish how key the money generated through corporate events and venue hire are to the sustainable future of museums.
- To provide Amgueddfa Cymru with recommendations in regards to using events to the museums benefit.

3. Methodology

Saunders et al (2009) defines research as *'something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge'* it can therefore be understood that academic research must be undertaken in a strategic manor. The researcher will use the 'Research Onion', developed by Saunders et al (2009), to establish the research methodology to ensure that no stage of developing the research strategy are omitted.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the 'Research Onion' and the researchers specific chosen pathway.

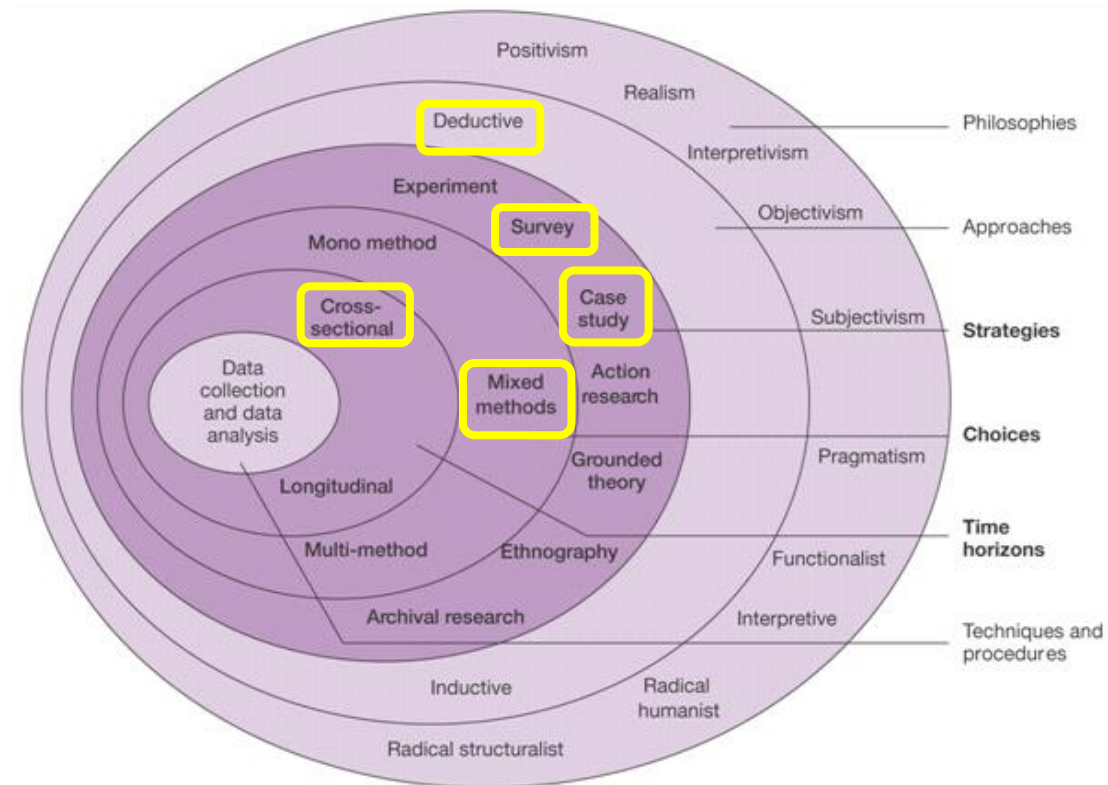


Figure 1.1. – Research Onion (Saunders et al, 2007)

3.1. Approach and Purpose

For this dissertation the researcher will be using a deductive approach as according to Loseke (2017) a deductive approach involves '*using what already is known to determine what data to collect*' and within the topic of events within museums and football fluctuations there already exists a wealth of literature. This dissertation will be exploratory in its purpose as it does not intend to offer final categorical solutions to the problem in question rather it intends to explore the research question and provide a foundation for any further study into this area (Dudovskiy, 2018).

4. Strategies

The researcher will use a triangulated methodology which according to Hair (2011) *'involves conducting the research project using several different methods and comparing the findings'* he goes on to mention that *'quantitative and qualitative approaches'* are often both used to support one another and to look at the research problem from two angles to come to one unified conclusion. Using triangulation also *'bolsters confidence'* in the data that has been collected (Denscombe, 2014, pg.298). Additionally using qualitative data as well as quantitative allows for opinion based research to be applied to the numerical data collected to bring the human element back into an otherwise very impassive dissertation (Murdock, 2018). The researcher will base the dissertation around the case study of Amgueddfa Cymru specifically within the NWM and NMC this is because the museum sector is too wide spread to investigate in its entirety there is huge variance in museum types within Amgueddfa Cymru however containing the study to the seven locations with specific focus upon two allows for informed analysis to take place and differences to be noted and explored as a part of the research. Within the case study the quantitative data element will come from the footfall figures of the NWM and NMC; this secondary data will form the foundation of the project. There will also be a qualitative element that will be formed through conducting interviews with pertinent individuals within the museums. Conducting interview will bring greater depth to the study and will allow the researcher to look beyond statistical outcomes to combine a human element to the study. The events strategy for Amgueddfa Cymru will also be considered.

4.1. Analysis of Secondary Data

Secondary data *'already exists'* however this data is generally collected for a purpose other than that intended by the researcher (Bajpal, 2011). Given the rich databases that exist within Amgueddfa Cymru access to secondary data is convenient and given the computerisation this data is also easy to manipulate and analyse. In addition to easy access analysis of secondary data is *'time and cost efficient'* as resources are not wasted in the collection of data when there is

already of wealth data around the subject (Bajpal, 2011). The researcher will be analysing the raw quantitative footfall statistics from the NWM and NMC with the aim of finding contextual reasonings for fluctuations. According to Finn et al (2000) context is key to ensure the statistics are not looked at in isolation, which may cause an otherwise unexplainable variation within the data. For example within this project the researcher will use a computer package to cross-examine the footfall statistics with seasonality and events within the museums to determine if there is a correlation between the footfall and events. The researcher will begin by creating graphics to highlight the changes that occur over the course of the year. The contexts surrounding noticeable drops and increases will then be investigated, looking specifically for national holidays and events held both within the museum and the city comparisons will also be drawn between the two museums to ensure fluctuations are not simply due to locale. By using secondary data analysis a complete sample size will also be achieved (Saunders et al, 2016). Due to Amgueddfa Cymru's footfall counters there exists a wealth of data however it is not being analysed in depth therefore it is dead data that has little value.

4.2. Interviews

Interviews will form the phenomenological element of this investigation and according to Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush '*an interview is conversation for gathering information*' which can be conducted in multiple ways, face-to-face, over the phone, Skype (2006). As well as there being multiple physical ways to collect interviews there are also three main styles of interviews; unstructured, structured and semi-structured. For the purpose of this study the researcher will use semi-structured interview style which will be conducted in a face-to-face fashion with individuals of particular significance to the case study of the Amgueddfa Cymru events sector to provide the qualitative element of the research. Semi-structured interviews involves the interviewer having a set of topics and some '*major questions*' '*questions are generally open-ended in order to gain richer information*' whilst remaining on topic (Miller and Brewer, 2003, pg.167) In addition to this semi-structured interviews do not require as much

experience as unstructured interviews to gain relevant information (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008).

As the interviews will be conducted as part of a triangulated method the researcher will only carry out five to six 45 minute interviews with pertinent individuals in order to gather sufficient data. The questions will be constructed to be open-ended to allow for the in-depth responses while still allowing the interviewer to guide the discussion for this reason up to 10 questions will be created to allow time for the respondent to give an in-depth answer. For example questions see appendix 1. Although questions have been established the researcher appreciates that they will need to be piloted. According to Saunders et al (2016) pilot testing is a '*small-scale study to test*' the researchers survey questions or interview checklist to '*minimise the likelihood of respondents having problems in answering the questions*' with the aim being to improve the validity and reliability of the data that will be collected although the researcher does acknowledge that there will always be threats to reliability, be those subject or observer errors or bias (Robson, 1993).

4.2. Sampling Framework

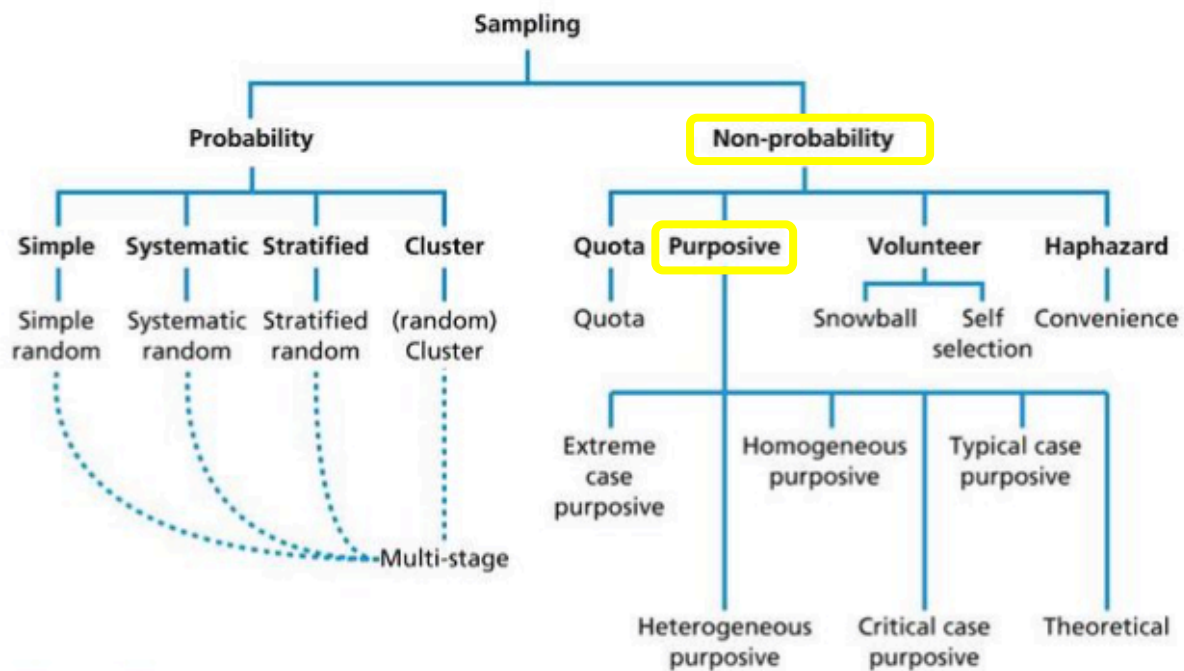


Figure 4.1 – Sampling Framework (Saunders et al, 2016 pg.276)

There are many variations on sampling frameworks as indicated in figure 4.1 above. Given that the researcher will be focusing upon interviews and secondary data analysis non-probability sampling applies best as the research questions requires an in-depth study to provide an *‘information-rich case study’* (Saunders et al, 2008, pgs.276-297). Specifically a purposive sampling method will be adopted due to the researcher wishing to conduct interviews with specific individuals within Amgueddfa Cymru these individuals will be selected because of the job they hold rather to create a representative sample.

4.4. Analysis

Once the interviews, which will be *‘audio-recorded’* with the consent of the interviewee, have been conducted the researcher will transcribe them in order for the respondents answers to be analysed effectively (Saunders et al, 2016). Once the interviews have been transcribed the researcher will use *‘manual’* analysis the transcripts to gain a general understanding of the answers. The

researcher will then move to cross-reference the responses highlighting recurring '*themes*'; this process will be done '*by hand on hard-copy transcripts*' '*flagging*' themes. The researcher will also use a '*word processing package*' to search '*key words*' and code the transcripts through '*indexing*' (Veal, 2006, pgs.210-213). When transcribing interviews it '*can be useful to number paragraphs*' to '*facilitate a cataloguing process*' (Veal, 2006, pg.212). For an example catalogue structure see appendix 2. The catalogue will display the detailed information in a user-friendly fashion the researcher will also consider creating a matrix table to display the data collected in a comprehensible manner.

5. Resources

The resources that will be required to conduct this investigation will be:

- Access to the footfall statistics from the NWM and NMC that should not be an issue given the researchers connection within Amgueddfa Cymru.
- Access to personnel within the museums to conduct interviews
- A calendar of all events conducted within the NWM and NMC across 2017 and further back if possible.

This investigation will be highly labour-intensive, and require a large amount of time devoted to analysis. To ensure time is used effectively the researcher will follow the Gantt chart shown in appendix 3.

6. Ethics & Risks

This research project is reasonably low risk as the topic area should not offend any participants nor pose any risk to the researcher or the university. Although this project is unlikely to cause offence all '*individuals have the right to privacy*' and should not feel '*coerced into participating*' in anything they feel uncomfortable with (Saunders et al, 2016, pg.249). Equally, although the researcher would like to record the interview to aid in transcribing the interviewee will need to give consent for the researcher to be able to do so. Additionally within the dissertation no member of the NWM or NMC that participate in interview will be named and instead will be referred to as NWM.1,

NWM.2, etc. One problem that may arise is the museums not granting the researcher access to the footfall statistics. Should this happen the researcher will approach Swansea Museum for their statistics as the research question can still be tackled should the case study have to change. Non-response is also a risk the researcher faces however due to the connection that the researcher has within the Amgueddfa Cymru these risks this should be minimal. The researcher has also factored additional time into the Gantt chart should adaptations to the proposed research need to be made.

2200 Words

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8. Appendices

8.1. Appendix 1 - Example Interview Questions

How would you define museum success?

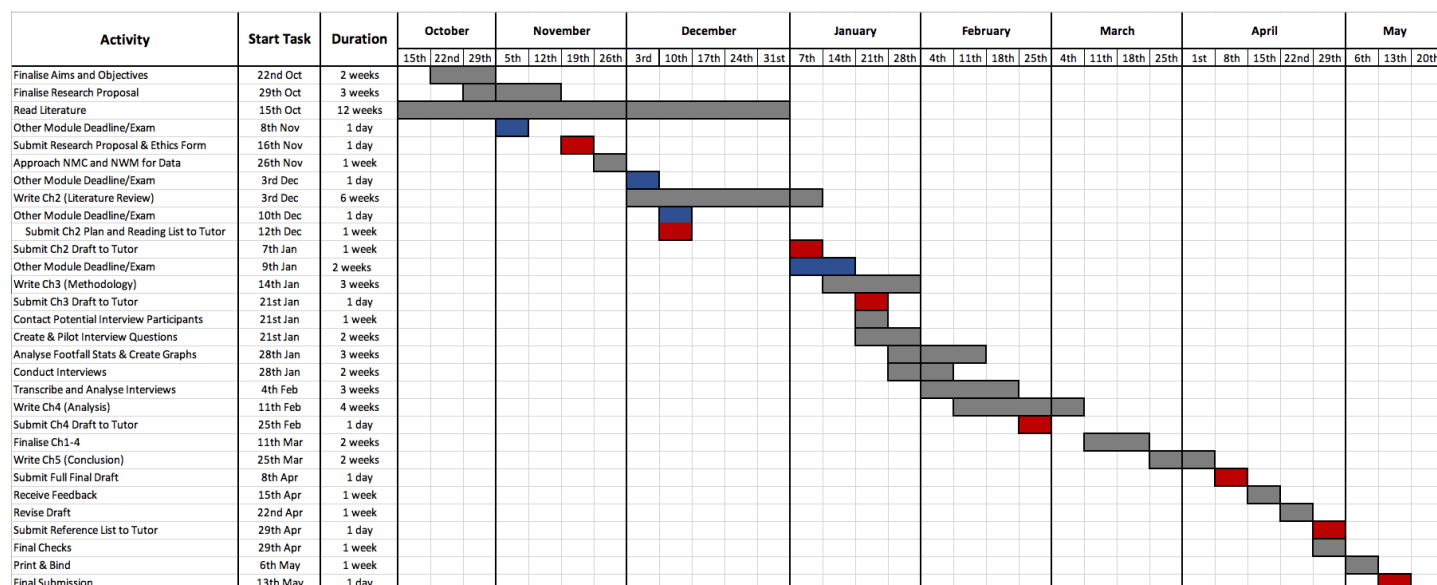
How do you feel events impact the museum?

- Footfall
- Donations
- Funding

8.2. Appendix 2 – Example of Interview Coding

Impacts of Events	Footfall	NWM.1	Para.2
		NMC.3	Para.4
Impacts of Events	Donations	NMC.2	Para.3
		NWM.3	Para.2

8.4. Appendix 3 – Gantt Chart



Activity	Start Task	Duration
Finalise Aims and Objectives	22nd Oct	2 weeks
Finalise Research Proposal	29th Oct	3 weeks
Read Literature	15th Oct	12 weeks
Other Module Deadline/Exam	8th Nov	1 day
Submit Research Proposal & Ethics Form	16th Nov	1 day
Approach NMC and NWM for Data	26th Nov	1 week
Other Module Deadline/Exam	3rd Dec	1 day
Write Ch2 (Literature Review)	3rd Dec	6 weeks
Other Module Deadline/Exam	10th Dec	1 day
Submit Ch2 Plan and Reading List to Tutor	12th Dec	1 week
Submit Ch2 Draft to Tutor	7th Jan	1 week
Other Module Deadline/Exam	9th Jan	2 weeks
Write Ch3 (Methodology)	14th Jan	3 weeks
Submit Ch3 Draft to Tutor	21st Jan	1 day
Contact Potential Interview Participants	21st Jan	1 week
Create & Pilot Interview Questions	21st Jan	2 weeks
Analyse Footfall Stats & Create Graphs	28th Jan	3 weeks
Conduct Interviews	28th Jan	2 weeks
Transcribe and Analyse Interviews	4th Feb	3 weeks
Write Ch4 (Analysis)	11th Feb	4 weeks
Submit Ch4 Draft to Tutor	25th Feb	1 day
Finalise Ch1-4	11th Mar	2 weeks
Write Ch5 (Conclusion)	25th Mar	2 weeks
Submit Full Final Draft	8th Apr	1 day
Receive Feedback	15th Apr	1 week
Revise Draft	22nd Apr	1 week
Submit Reference List to Tutor	29th Apr	1 day
Final Checks	29th Apr	1 week
Print & Bind	6th May	1 week
Final Submission	13th May	1 day