

Villa College

Research Digest

ISSUE 7 (OCTOBER 2021)

VC Research Digest provides updates on current and ongoing research projects of Villa College staff and students, and provides fresh research ideas and snippets to help expand the horizon of research and inquiry



EDITORIAL

Setting the Right Tone to Nurture a Culture of Research at Villa College

The first issue of the Villa College Research Digest was published one year ago in October 2020, with the objective of inculcating a culture of research and inquiry among Villa College staff, students, and the wider Maldivian community. Today as we enter into the second-year cycle of the Research Digest, it is worthwhile pondering about the work we have done so far in this regard and what lies ahead of us in creating space for new possibilities of learning, innovative practices, and new ways of managing things.

Over the past year, the Research Digest has played an important role in facilitating our academically minded colleagues to present their research ideas and ongoing projects to a wider audience. Our contributors have addressed multiple topics under diverse thematic areas. For example, in the area of research scholarship and writing, topics explored issues such as aspects of academic writing; creating stories from qualitative data; reflective narration; tackling the writer's block; conducting a narrative systematic review; conducting thematic analysis; ways of doing literature reviews; crafting research problem statements; developing theoretical and conceptual frameworks; finding inspiration to write; setting the scope of a research project; and ways to inculcate writing habits. In the area of education and teaching-learning, topics included research on new forms of teaching-learning models; classroom management aspects; inclusive pedagogy; mentoring and reflective practices in teaching; and teaching tips related to testing. From academics in the field of psychology and human development, there had been topics such as research on parenting styles; and ethics in psychological work. Some other topic areas included aspects of workplace behaviour; challenges in developing tourism; gender segregation in the tourism industry; addictive behaviours; issues of radicalisation; motivation to learn; challenges of supervising post-graduate students; review of renewable energy initiatives; and relevant issues of living in the new normal. It is only reasonable to assume that this richness of ideas must have made a positive learning impact on the readers of the Research Digest.

As we enter the new cycle, we are hopeful that the future issues of the Villa College Research Digest will continue to attract more and more high-quality contributions and persist to enthuse the readers. Building a lasting and impactful culture of research requires sustained efforts on the part of researchers and all academics. It is paramount that we strive to set the right tone of academic enthusiasm and build this culture of research in a manner that is aligned with the broader vision of a knowledge society.

Dr. Ahmed Shahid
Editor (VC Research Digest)



IN THIS ISSUE

Enforced Remote Working and Productivity: A Study on Telecommunication Sector of Maldives

Dr. Biju Koreth Puthanveetil Madhavan and Aishath Thashkeel

Management Education – Towards A New Reality

Abdulla Nafiz

Does Covid-19 disprove Servicescape framework?

Shajeer Saimudeen Shahida

Analysis of Maldivian Schools' Responses to a Life Skills Education Questionnaire

David Mingay and Dr. Aishath Nasheeda

Five Tips to Formulating a Research Topic

Dr. Aishath Nasheeda

Continuity and Change: Origins of the Tourism Phenomena

Mohamed Shafy Rasheed

PUBLISHED BY

Institute for Research and Innovation
Villa College

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Enforced Remote Working and Productivity: A Study on Telecommunication Sector of Maldives

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1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

As the world came to a standstill in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many organizations were forced to find an alternative way to ensure that their day-to-day operations proceeded without interruption. Enforced remote working was then implemented widely as a policy to cope with this sudden shift and to ensure business continuity (Tanpipat, Lim and Deng, 2021). Studies from the US show that in May 2020, 35.2 percent of the workforce worked from home, which was an increase from 8.2 percent in February. Furthermore, the same study illustrates that among these, 71.7 percent of workers were able to perform effectively (Bick et al., 2020).

The telecommunication industry in Maldives is a duopoly, with Dhiraagu and Ooredoo as the service providers. During the pandemic they were in a unique position as they had dual responsibilities. Firstly, they had to support the government and the entire nation so that the country functioned by being connected during the challenging times. Secondly, both the companies had the additional responsibility to support their own employees to move and adapt to remote working without service interruptions. Therefore, the transition to enforced remote working is critical for the organizations as the impacts otherwise could have been felt across the country.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. What is enforced remote working?

The concept of remote working has been in academic literature dating back to 1973. Remote working often is interchangeably used with terminologies such as distributed work, flexible work arrangements, home working, virtual work, teleworking, e-working and work from home (WFH) (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). Irrespective of the terminology, this concept is a lenient arrangement where employees can work at a location remote from their central offices and are able to communicate with their colleagues through technology though there is no personal physical contact (Allen, Golden and Shockley, 2015). However, during this pandemic, organizations had little choice but to force their employees to commence work from home, hence the term enforced remote working (Anderson and Kelliher, 2020).

2.2. Covid19 pandemic and remote working

In 2020, remote working was adopted as a necessity by organizations to deal and defend against the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak (Prin, 2020). This was born out of a need to support virtual collaborations, communications, and working from a distance (Hermann and Paris, 2020). Remote working has beneficial effects for both employers and employees. For instance, studies have shown that through its implementation, benefits such as reduced commuting time, avoiding office politics, using less office space, increased motivation, improved gender diversity, healthier workforces with less absenteeism and turnover, higher talent retention, job satisfaction, and better productivity were experienced (Robertson, Maynard, and McDevitt, 2003).

Scholars agree that while there are potential benefits, disadvantages also arise as a consequence of this form of working (Hunter, 2019). The blurred line between work and family, inability of remote workers to disengage from work and over working, distractions, social isolation, and employees bearing the costs have been identified as common challenges (Eddleston and Mulki, 2017). Furthermore, there have been concerns raised by managers regarding reductions in productivity and the harmful impacts on coworker relationships (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). Studies also indicate that employees might be distracted by the presence of young children or family members while working at home (Baruch 2000; Kazekami, 2020).

2.3. What is the connection between remote work and productivity?

There are many discussions by authors as to whether remote working can help achieve the desired results on employee productivity. Elshaiekh, Hassan and Abdallah (2018), suggest that, both positive and negative outcomes may arise on the performance of employees depending on various factors.

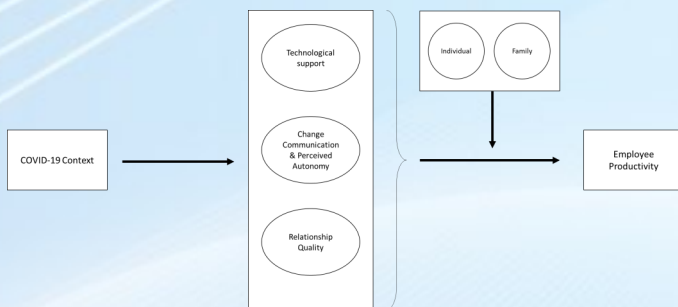
In the case of enforced remote working, while there may be some aspects relating to the practicalities of managing employees who are working from home (communication, monitoring of work and workload) which may be similar to pre-COVID-19, studies argue that it is likely that there will be many differences, particularly for employee

outcomes, in the context of enforced remote working (Anderson and Kelliher, 2020)

Irrespective of context, analysis of literature reveals key factors which may impact employee productivity with remote working. Factors such as work-life balance, communication, perceived job-autonomy, technology, employee wellbeing, work relationships, employee engagement, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, employee motivation, ICT infrastructure and adaptive behaviors of employees are all likely to have differing impacts on productivity (Ansong and Boateng, 2018; Anderson and Kelliher, 2020; Vyas and Butakhieo, 2021)

2.4. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study aims to measure the impacts of organizational factors on employee productivity in the enforced remote working context. Therefore, this study aims to measure the effect of Work Life Balance (WLB) as a moderating variable on employee productivity. Based on the review of previous studies, the recurring key major organizational factors include technological support, change communication and perceived autonomy and relationship quality. Studies further emphasize the importance of WLB as a key variable impacting productivity.



3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the role of organizational factors impacting productivity.
2. To measure the intensity of the factors impacting productivity.
3. To analyze the mediating effect of work life balance on productivity.

4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H₀1: There is no significant impact of organizational factors impacting productivity.

H₀2: Work life balance does not have a significant mediating effect on productivity.

5. METHODOLOGY

The study is quantitative in nature and the rationale behind the chosen research design is to measure the impact of the factors which is associated with realism. Deductive approach followed will assist to check the validity of the

factors chosen from the review to the study context.

The study will focus on the telecommunication sector of Maldives which consists of dual organizations. From each organization, four key departments will be chosen as the study area. The sample frame will include all the employees working in the said four departments. The sampling methodology will be proportionate simple random sampling, with a sample size differing based on the strength of each department. The study targets to achieve 80% response rate from each department.

A structured questionnaire will be administered through Qualtrics which helps in tracking the number of responses real time and come out with preliminary analysis - descriptive statistics. Questionnaire will be sent to the employee's official email address. In the inferential statistics, multivariate statistical tools such as exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modelling will be used to test the model fit.

6. EXPECTED FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Outcomes of this study will help to understand the impacts of organizational factors on employee productivity. This will also shed light on how WLB, both from an individual and family perspective shape the productivity level of employees. This research will further guide organizations in the future, should there be a situation of enforced remote working. From the employee's perspective, this study will help to understand how to effectively manage remote working and the impact of total responsibility burden.

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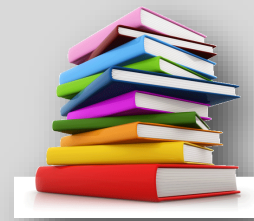
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FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Ethical Issues in the Use of Big Data for Social Research

Michael Weinhardt

ABSTRACT

With the advent of Big Data (BD) in the social sciences, vast amounts of data (and the tools to analyze them) have become available faster than ethical and legal standards could develop regarding the use of such data. At the same time, data collectors and analysts face new moral dilemmas as the proliferation of personal and impersonal data clearly poses new challenges to traditional assumptions about privacy and autonomy. The discussion of such ethical challenges seems to lag behind and the literature specifically dealing with the research ethics of BD is still scarce. This article asks which ethical and legal aspects need to be considered when collecting and analyzing data on individuals from the web and combining them to gain an enriched picture of human activities. It proceeds to provide a brief overview of existing research ethics regulations and outlines areas of particular relevance to the challenges that come with the use of BD, such as the delineation of human subject research, the (im)possibility of informed consent for these new kinds of data, the sources and public availability of data and questions of risk and risk assessment. It also formulates some generic recommendations in order to stimulate further debate, one of which posits that social scientists must address and discuss the challenges that emerge in research applications of BD more widely than it is currently the case.

Weinhardt, M., 2020. Ethical Issues in the Use of Big Data for Social Research. *Historical Social Research/ Historische Sozialforschung*, 45(3), pp.342-368.

Read on... <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26918416>

SCAN ME



Management Education – Towards A New Reality

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It is time to rethink and reflect. COVID-19 situation appears to gradually ease here in the Maldives. What we considered reality and “rules of the game” are changing in many sectors including the higher education sector. Management education is no exception. Like everyone else, students and faculty are longing for direct face to face human interaction. Amid this evolving situation, how do we ensure that we continue to serve the society?

While there are many questions in our minds, a key one is how do we continue to explore the new opportunities available to us? I firmly believe the importance of management education will rise to an all-time high. We may see some short-term contraction in the overall demand; however, it does not mean its importance to the society has dwindled. On the other hand, it is very likely that the demand will pick up soon and emerge stronger and better.

Today, we continue to experience some of the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, we see supply chains disrupted, businesses on the verge of bankruptcy, skyrocketing freight costs. At the same time, new businesses continue to emerge, primary sectors such as fisheries and agriculture continue to flourish and remain vibrant. Amid all these, how do we ensure we survive, remain resilient and do better? I believe, in part, management education is the answer.

As management educators and regulators, we need to rethink our curriculum, programme design, and delivery configurations vis-à-vis the new technology platforms. We need to build better institutional capacity to handle short- and long-term financial pressures. We must create more sustainable financing models rather than just rely on government grants or student fee revenue from semester to semester. We need to use technology to enhance programme delivery while at the same minimizing our operational costs.

A second question we face is are we going to cater to the same student segments or are we going to diversify and move beyond our traditional comfort zones? Technology has taught us that the impossible is possible now. Why not we explore greater opportunities within the South Asian region and beyond? Greater collaboration within the region need to be conceptualized and implemented. We need to leverage management education to tap the full potential of the South Asia region. Student exchanges, cross institutional programme accreditation, faculty exchange

and collaborative research are few ideas that come to mind.

Maldives is a geographically dispersed country. There is no island to island transport infrastructure except scheduled air and reasonably regular limited sea transport to some inhabited islands. Except in a few regions, population is relatively scattered throughout the country. Reaching students in the outer scattered islands in a cost-effective way continues to be a challenge. Technologies we experimented and utilized pre-pandemic and now to deliver online lessons need to be embraced and deployed to the fullest in the new normal era.

Staff and students have started to experience online fatigue. I have had many staff who are eager to be on campus and meet students. We start to realize how energized and motivated we are when we interact with students and colleagues face to face. The energizing benefits and value of face to face human interactions cannot be questioned now.

Finally, a key question many regulators and to some extent some administrators and the public keep on asking is the quality of teaching. Now we have experimented with technology-based lesson delivery, we are more familiar with ways of enhancing quality. We know that technology itself is not a silver bullet for all our challenges. How we integrate technology in programme design and delivery, and how we utilize them to provide enhanced learning support are the key towards the new reality in management education.



BE THE
REASON
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Does Covid-19 disprove Servicescape framework?

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Ever since the introduction of additional 3 Ps (people, process, and physical evidence) by Booms and Bitner (1981) the service marketing sector started witnessing the emergence of several concepts and frameworks related to them. The significance of place and physical evidence in determining the quality and effectiveness of service delivery process has been first postulated by the Servicescape framework (Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014) which is developed by Bitner (1992). The framework considers how physical environment dimensions such as ambient conditions, space/function and signs, symbols and artefacts and their influence on the participation of both employees and customers in the process of service delivery (Tax & Stuart, 1997).

The expanded Servicescape proposed by Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) also keeps physical space as it is whereby adding social and natural environment to the framework. Consumers' approach/acceptance or avoid decision to a service brand is largely influenced by space which is made up of machineries, equipment, technology (Edvardsson et al., 2010), arrangement and layout of furniture as well as their comfort and accessibility (Bloch, 1995). This article examines the scope of an empirical research to assess the adaptability of Servicescape framework or to recommend necessary alterations in the post Covid-19 pandemic.

An editorial of Rosenbaum and Russell-Bennett (2020), has been provided with some potential research areas in the field of service marketing during the era of Covid-19 pandemic. One of the questions they raised in the said editorial is "how has the Servicescape framework been affected by Covid-19 pandemic?". In the post Covid-19 era there could be chances that people across the world would be in a static fear to get into enclosed shopping malls where they may not be able to maintain social distance and being susceptible to breathing in virus particles or touching the virus affected surfaces (Mark Scott Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020). On contrary to that, studies in the USA also reveals that there are consumers who do not wish to maintain social distance and wear face masks or any other face coverings in the public domains that adds to the fear (Mahase, 2020). Service industries such as restaurants and entertainment venues will continue to struggle with the consumers' fear, in terms of judging the safety of their physical settings (Bove & Benoit, 2020) especially in the settings where multiple customers and service personnel physically co-present and coordinate with one another during the process of service consumption (Kelleher et al., 2019).

There is a process called 'webrooming' where customers

research for products online before they purchase product from a physical shop and the intensity of webrooming is expected to rise in the post Covid-19 market place as the customers of not only products but also services such as hair salons, fitness studios, restaurants and so forth would also start webrooming to ensure the safety and hygiene of the physical space (Mark Scott Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020). Adults in the countries such as Australia, North America, Ireland and UK reported to have their home cooking increased whereas the frequency of eat out has been declined (Flanagan et al., 2021). Earnestly all businesses such as restaurants, movies, hospitals, educational institutions, and other service providers with usual closed settings for service delivery and reasonable customer waiting time may continue to face adverse impact on their frequency of service exchange due to the consumers' fear of physical space.

In a situation where customers are reluctant to visit the physical venues of the service providers and prefer online/door-to-door service deliveries or in-home service alternatives it is quite natural to have some questions raised against the existence of Servicescape framework which is primarily talking about the importance of space or physical settings in determining the customers' choice, in its real form. This article is concluded with an agreement to the research question raised by the editorial of Rosenbaum and Russell-Bennett (2020) and a recommendation to the researchers' in the field of marketing to conduct empirical studies in order to validate the Servicescape model or to come up with some contextual amendments to the model in the era of Covid-19 or any similar types of pandemics.

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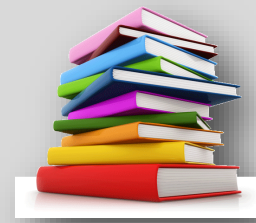
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FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Chinese Revolution and Development of the World Economy

Pertti Honkanen

ABSTRACT

This paper considers China's economic development and place in the world economy. The People's Republic of China is becoming the most powerful country in the world in terms of GDP. Nowadays, China is an important partner in world trade both as an exporter and importer. Thus far, the United States has been the leading force in managing and coordinating the global economic and especially financial system, but now the economically advancing socialist China is a challenge to the USA. The Chinese model, socialism with Chinese characteristics, is discussed and compared with earlier stages of socialist construction, e.g. the NEP experiment of Soviet Union. The paper ends with notes about environmental and ecological problems, stressing the importance of socialist answers to these challenges. In this regard there are encouraging aspects in the current political program of the Chinese leadership.

Honkanen, P., 2020. Chinese Revolution and Development of the World Economy. *World Review of Political Economy*, 11(2), pp.171-188.

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SCAN ME



Analysis of Maldivian Schools' Responses to a Life Skills Education Questionnaire

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Research background and problem statement

Maldivian teenagers experience the same problems as teenagers do everywhere: smoking (American Cancer Society, 2020), drug abuse (National Drug Use Survey, 2013), fighting and bullying (Nasheeda et al., 2016), teenage pregnancy (no reliable data), and peer and family conflict (Fulu, 2007). In addition, they are exposed to extremist grooming (Benmelech and Klor, 2016).

Life Skills Education (LSE) has been used successfully around the world to help teenagers cope better with these pressures (Maryam et al., 2011). Programmes help develop adaptive social and behavioural skills: self-awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, empathy, effective communication, building interpersonal relationships, coping with emotions, and dealing with stress (Gerami et al., 2015).

In view of this, the Maldivian government started trialling LSE in schools in 2003. Materials were developed and training was given to teachers. The success of these trials led to them making LSE part of the national curriculum in 2008. However, the 2008 revision moved away from the more-effective dedicated session delivery format (UNESCO, 2010), to the integration of LSE into normal subject lessons.

Initial take-up was high, but by 2020 anecdotal evidence started to emerge that fewer schools were delivering LSE and only including a limited range of year groups. If these stories are true, we have a problem.

Aims and Objectives

Our research aimed to discover how much and how LSE is implemented, how it is delivered, attitudes to LSE, and the reasons for these. On the basis of our findings, we aimed to make recommendations to schools and the government to improve the situation.

Research questions

The research questions were: To what extent, and in what way, is LSE delivered in Maldives? What are stakeholders' attitudes to LSE? What are the blockers to full and effective LSE implementation?

Methodology

We emailed all 242 schools in Maldives, asking them to complete an online questionnaire. Fifty-four schools responded. The questionnaire was designed to elicit a variety of quantitative and qualitative data covering the following:

1. School size.
2. LSE implementation and allocation of resources.
3. Attitudes to LSE.
4. Benefit to pupils.
5. LSE development.

The questionnaire can be accessed at <https://forms.gle/wEUqaNoVJEz1ccpy7>.

Quantitative responses were enumerated by category. Qualitative responses were first analysed on a question-by-question basis, and then subjected to a thematic analysis to see if any common ideas came up repeatedly. Unusual responses were also taken into account, since these can often offer interesting insights.

Findings

The anecdotal data was not wrong: 18.5 percent of schools in the sample were not delivering LSE. This translates to a possible 45 schools nationwide, depending on sample representativeness. Non-implementing schools cited lack of resources and staff. One respondent cited 'mismanagement', but without providing further details.

Schools who were delivering LSE, were often delivering it in dedicated sessions, rather than using the less-effective revised 2008 method. They were often using the recommended Ministry of Education content. One respondent wrote:

"We have conducted from grade 6 to 10: Communication, Assertiveness, Self-esteem, Values, Self-awareness, Relationships, Decision Making, Peer Pressure, Anger, Stress, Conflict Resolution, Child Abuse, Media Influence, Gender & Sex, HIV Aids, Gender Roles, Anger Management, Starting a Family, Conception & Pregnancy, Contraception, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Dual Use of

Condoms, Responsible Parenthood, Domestic Violence & Abuse, Becoming Organised.”

Some schools were interpreting ‘life skills’ differently, however:

“Students learnt various life skills needed in their daily lives. For instance, practice making roshi [Maldivian flat bread], gift packing, folding clothes, shoe lacing, making a burger and gift wrapping.”

Content was generally thought to be appropriate, although modifications were sometimes thought to be necessary for local mores:

“Most of the content is appropriate and very useful. Some of the activities given in the lessons are inappropriate for our society. For example: students role play about boyfriend and girlfriend and the dialogues are inappropriate...the content is imported from the western world and given to our schools without any change.”

The age groups most likely to be receiving LSE were 10–15 year old, and they were getting anything between 20 and 170 minutes a week, in groups of between the entire year group and five pupils, delivered by between one and four members of staff. Delivery method varied from chalk-and-talk to activity-based and discussion-based lessons. In other words, there was inconsistency in many aspects of LSE delivery, some of it possibly detrimental to effective learning.

Resourcing was widely considered to be a barrier to effective implementation. This included staff training, time for preparation and delivery, and materials. One respondent did say, however, that there are plenty of resources available on the internet if you know where to look.

On the positive side, staff, pupils, and parents were overwhelmingly in favour of LSE. Staff and pupils enjoy the lessons, and they and parents can see the benefits that derive from them. For example:

“We get feedback from parents that the students want to do those activities at home. And after taking social skills, we can see in schools also how the students treat other students.”

Conclusions

We made a small number of recommendations which the data suggest should make a big difference to the effective implementation of LSE. We asked that the Ministry of Education provide a little bit more guidance to schools regarding:

1. Standardising the content of their LSE delivery.
2. Advising school management on what level of resources – time, staffing and physical – should be allocated to LSE.

3. Provision of initial and ongoing training in LSE delivery.
4. Taking advantage of staff enthusiasm by nominating some school staff as LSE Ambassadors to spread the word to non-participating schools about the benefits of implementation.

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Five Tips to Formulating a Research Topic

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It is common for students to struggle to generate a good research topic for their research project. Students make the mistake of searching for literature immediately without carrying appropriate readings. When students do not have background knowledge of an area of research, understanding research articles can be a challenge. Hence, a researchable idea is generated when the background of the topic is understood leading to formulation of good research questions that are novel and adds value to the literature. One way to develop a novel and original research is to ask questions that the current literature has not explored. However, as novice researchers this should not be the focus of a research project. What is important is to demonstrate skills and abilities to do research. Thus, the topic that is chosen by a student becomes the platform to display skills and abilities that show cases the attitude of a potential researcher. In other words, the topic that is chosen should have the essential key components to exhibit skills and quality for review.

A possible researchable topic requires solutions to problems, generated from unknown or unanswered questions. However, not all research topics are generated from unanswered question or requires solutions, the most basic ones are always the simple puzzling issues within a community or society. For example, relationship between exam scores and number of hours studying, why does majority always win even when they are wrong? Why do people bully others? These questions may seem simple and straight forward, but in reality, to investigate and explore these concepts it takes much longer time than expected. Hence when choosing a topic, it is advisable to think of the available time given to complete the project. Always keep room for buffer and understand that research takes time. Here are five tips to help you get started on a topic.

Tip #1: Look for sources to generate ideas

Apart from observations and reading from media, one of the best ways to look for inspiration is from conferences, webinars, and taught modules. Are there any specific topics that is interesting? Has anyone discussed research that was interesting?

Tip #2: List down the most concerning/interesting issues – do not personalize the issues

Be reflective of the chosen ideas. It is not advisable to choose a topic based on one's feelings. Try to avoid getting too personal with the topic as it will be hard to start research without a preconceived beliefs and ideas. As novice researchers, your job is to show case skills and ability as a researcher. One of the fundamental characteristics of a researcher is to be free from biases. Therefore, starts with general ideas.

Tip #3: Narrow down

Once you have listed down several general ideas, start to refine them. If you find it hard to narrow it down, consult your supervisor for suggestions and do some secondary research -reading literature.

Tip #4 Search for literature

Conduct a literature search on the topic of interest. Always opt for journal articles rather than blogs and webpages. Read abstracts to filter out important articles. When reading literature look for key texts, concepts and theories, what research question have been asked and what was the finding. Also, a good section to read in a journal article is recommendations and further research section - scholars put forward areas that needs further investigation.

Tip #4: Ask – Can you get data?

Without data there will not be any research. It is crucial to ask if data is available. Whatever the data is, it should be out there. Hence, what data is to be gathered and the sources of data must be identified. Furthermore, it is also important to understand if one can get access to data. If so, how? Who are the key gatekeepers or stakeholder? Do you know how to reach them? Are vital questions to ask.

Tip #5: Managing data?

Knowing what kind of data is required is crucial to data handling. When deciding on a topic it is also important to give a thought about the kind of data that will be collected, how data will be collected, and how data will be used to answer the question?

Choosing a possible research topic is the first step in

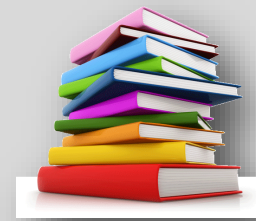
research. A good topic will facilitate in formulating research questions and hypotheses that helps to describe what the research is about and why it is important to address the issue. This will enable to align the research methodology in terms of what type of data should be collected, from whom the data needs to be collected and by which means. Therefore, choosing a researchable topic is vital to a successful research project. It will not only provide a sound and significant study but also show cases the essential skills of a researcher.

SUGGESTED LINKS

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Grit is living life
like it's a marathon
not a sprint.

- Angela Duckworth



FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Citizen Voice and Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-making

Kimberly L. Triplett

ABSTRACT

Although, it is understood that public participation is fundamental to the planning process, practitioners struggle with low levels of participation from the general public, but especially participation as it pertains to race, gender, and class. Transportation planners, practitioners, and scholars have had difficulty in selecting an appropriate public participation model to help solve the problem. This paper expands the relevance of the public participation models by introducing the Public Participation Process (PPP) Model to help in the understanding and implementation of citizen participation in transportation decision-making. Previous literature have models of public participation, but this theoretical model goes beyond other public participation models by integrating an additional step and an outcome of public participation in order to gain a fuller picture of evaluating and measuring effectiveness of public participation outreach efforts. Key elements of the PPP Model include six steps: Inform; Access; Listen; Engage/Involve; Standing/Influence; and Influence-Policymaking.

Triplett, K.L., 2015. Citizen Voice and Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-making: A Model for Citizen Engagement. *Race, Gender & Class*, 22(3-4), pp.83-106.

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SCAN ME



Continuity and Change: Origins of the Tourism Phenomena

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The word hospitality predates the use of the word tourism, and first appeared in the 14th century. The word originates from the Latin word *'hospes'*, which means both visitor and stranger (Jeter, 1991). William Theobald (1998) stated that the word tour comes from the Greek word *'tornos'* and Latin word *'tornares'* for circle and turn, and that is what tourism and tourist represent; the activities of circling away from home, and then returning.

Tourism and its Origins

The historical roots of tourism can be traced back almost to the origins of civilization. The nature of what tourists do in their leisure time may have changed, as technology has expanded the opportunities for traveling. As a result, tourism has evolved from being an activity that was the preserve of the 'leisured classes' (i.e. the aristocracy), to a mass phenomenon.

The concept of tourism revolves around two words: continuity and change. Continuity means that tourism has continued to be an important process and implies that it has remained influential in the leisure lifestyles of certain social classes. On the other hand, change characterizes the evolution of tourism through the ages, as tourism is a dynamic and ever-changing phenomenon. Much of the change is based upon the interaction between the demand for and supply of tourism opportunities through time. In terms of supply, key factors considered in promoting the development of tourism can be explained by the role of innovations (i.e. new ideas) that have generated new products, experiences and destinations, and released a latent demand for tourism. Example: Thomas Cook in the 19th century, and the introduction of new technology (railway, cars, and jet aircrafts) led to creating an interaction that is inherent in all forms of tourism: a movement from origin area to a destination and vice versa.

Tourism in the Classical Times: Ancient Greece

The ancient civilization of Greece was not significantly noted for any major development of tourism, but more for the Greek philosophers' recognition, endorsement, and promotion of the concept of leisure, upon which tourism is based. Aristotle expressed that the concept of leisure is adamant to the Greek lifestyle and further explained that slaves should do the work required while the freemen of Greece should put their leisure time to good use (Solemsen, 1964). This positive leisure doctrine may well have been the original 'leisure lifestyle', which encouraged the pursuit of philosophy, poetry, music, non-work, and measures of self-development as elements of Greek society. Thus it led to the birth of sports and events tourism through the

development of Olympics Games after 776BC (Page, 2019), although this is highly disputed among the historians and academics of the field (Montgomery, 1936).

Tourism in Classical Times: Ancient Rome

The state and private individuals of Rome is credited as the pioneers of spas, baths, and resorts whereby they enjoyed similar lifestyles as the Greeks did. The construction of Colosseum (Lancaster, 2005) for events and spectator sports, as epitomized in the film *Gladiator*, created the supply of tourism-related facilities. Two elements of tourism can be observed from the Roman society. For one, domestic tourism thrived in the Ancient Rome as resorts and recreational facilities were developed, and events were organized in the urban areas and this led to the society to spend their holidays at the establishments, engaged in leisure activities (Page, 2019). Followed by the conquest of overseas territories and their administration by the Romans created a demand for business-related travel, thus creating a need for international travel (Page, 2019). Considering this, and to service tourist needs – inns, bars, tour guides, and souvenir sellers were established during this era.

Tourism in the Middle Ages: 500AD to the ascension of Henry VII in 1485

The rise of Christianity led society owning land estates which established a feudal system of peasants and nobility (Bloch, 1961). Jousting tournaments were quite popular then, which involved spectatorship by peasants and other nobilities. This led to a surge in demand for temporary accommodation and travel services to be provided for the events held (Bloch, 1961).

Pilgrimages which is one of the oldest forms of non-economic traveling boomed in this era. However, in the 15th century, the Black Death led to labor shortages which resulted in the decline of pilgrims traveling within Europe (Pamuk, 2007). It is important to note that the feudal system that started in Medieval Europe, did not flourish until the Renaissance which focused on a quest and thirst for knowledge and discovery.

Tourism: Renaissance and Reformation

The Renaissance originated in Italy after 1350 (Burckhardt, 1860). Tourism trends led to the development of domestic tourism. The Reformation, in contrast, emerged after 1500 with the ideas of Luther and Calvin with their religious passion that created what has been termed the Protestant work ethic (Page, 2019). This was a significant turning point about the historical context of leisure and tourism, since Lutheran and Calvinistic ideology raised questions

regarding the value of leisure (Page, 2019). They portrayed leisure as idleness contradicting Aristotle and emphasized that individuals should devote themselves to live a better life focusing on work rather than leisure and enjoyment of pleasure. These ideas can be seen more clearly in the rise of the industrial society, where leisure was disparaged by the capitalists and entrepreneurs who needed to create a more profitable economy.

Tourism: the European Grand Tour

The 'Grand Tour' was a traveler's circuit of key destinations and places to visit in Europe, mainly by the wealthy, aristocratic and privileged classes in pursuit of culture, education, and pleasure (Black, 2003). The origins of such tours can be observed similar to the Romans that travelled to Greece in pursuit of culture and education. As a form of tourism, the Grand Tour reached its peak in the 18th century. Some critics have gone as far as to suggest it was the forerunner of the modern overseas holiday (Page, 2019). Capitalists and entrepreneurs engaged in the development of spa resorts which led to the emergence of inland tourism destinations. Thus, making a pathway to a new genre of tourism – the seaside resort.

Tourism and the coast: Transition from spas to the seaside resort

Tourism supported as coastal areas emerged in the 18th century among the European and North American countries. This was still at the time when spas and other inland resorts were expanding the industries. Heavily influenced by poets and artists such as Constable, and the sentimentalists, it gave birth to the idea that beach and coastlines are a place for leisure, pleasure, and spiritual fulfillment (Page, 2019). This therefore associated and increased the notion: enjoying bathing or swimming with tourism. In a manner, entrepreneurs thought of taking the risk and paving way for the phenomena of mass tourism, by cementing what we see today as organized tourism.

Thomas Cook took chance of this and was later renowned as the first entrepreneur to organize packaged tours. He went on to utilize the Victorian railway system establishing tours to Scotland in 1848 and other overseas tours in 1850s (Page, 2019). Cook went on to establish as the first tour operator in America and passenger cruises facilitator on the River Nile in the 1880s (Page, 2019). Others soon followed the pioneer of what we know today as, mass tourism.

Tourism in the Edwardian and inter-war years

As the transportation services developed through out time, it led to the emergence of new forms of domestic tourism such as cruise liners, holiday camp, and air travel (Page, 2019). This therefore influenced upon the taste of travelers exploring on their needs and wants. With the advent of telemarketing, it gave way to the rise of mass tourism during the post-war era.

Post-war tourism: Towards international mass tourism

The current trends in tourism can be traced back to the post-

war era such as the rise in demand for holidays among societies. The time-period saw a jolt in the demand due to experiencing rapid growth in income, opportunities to travel abroad, and leisure time. Many of the current trends in tourism can be dated to the post-war period, particularly the rise in demand for holidays.

Transportation improvements were drastically noticed, such as the introduction of jet aircraft such as the DC10 and Boeing 747 jumbo jet, Airbus A380, and production of high-speed trains (Page, 2019). In addition, new forms of accommodation services were as well on the rise such as timeshare estates (Bowen, 2005), self-catering and secondary homes (Hoogendoorn & Visser, 2004), and Airbnb (Kunwar, 2020). Moreover, the striding developments made by tour operators such as holiday brochures, direct selling, online travel agencies, competitive pricing, kiosk services in procuring packages, currency, insurance, can be observed (Page, 2019). Abundance of information available through a click of a button allowed the travelers and societies to be intrigued and fascinated by the concept of leisure. This was then commercialized by governments to promote themselves as a premium destination.

The future of tourism: Space Tourism?

The future demand for space tourism is a luxury venture to travel experience. This could grow from 150,000 trips a year with a ticket price of over US\$70,000 to 1,000,000 trips with a deflated price of US\$12,000 per ticket (Page, 2019). It is estimated that this venture into space can generate a revenue of US\$11 billion per year (Page, 2019). The concept of space hotels is emerging since the drastic developments and steps toward these phenomena by the works of Elon Musk (Wattles, 2020), Richard Branson (Azeez, 2021), and Jeff Bezos (Melas, 2021). The flights would travel to space hotels with passengers and would then lead to historical activities to be performed, which was once solely focused on Earth – leisure. What is evident is that in the early years of space tourism the demand will be low, and price will be high. All the more pointing to this, the perception of this innovative tourism will change as the activity becomes more acceptable – similar to any product life cycle.

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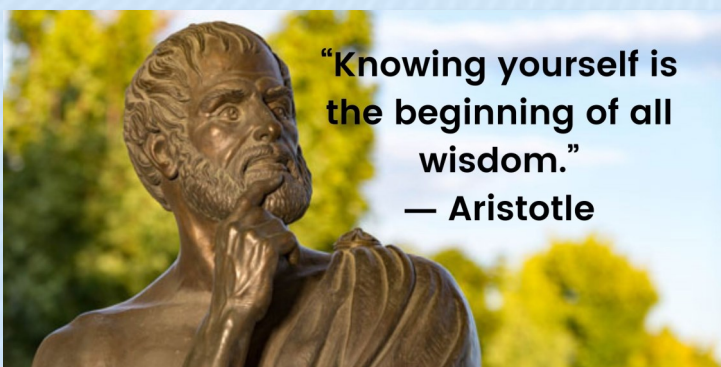
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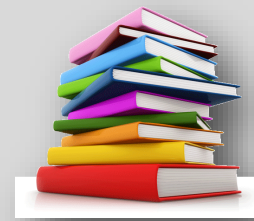
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**“Knowing yourself is
the beginning of all
wisdom.”
— Aristotle**



FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

Why infrastructure still matters: unravelling water reform processes in an uneven waterscape in rural Kenya

**Jeltsje Sanne Kemerink, Stephen Ngao Munyao,
Klaas Schwartz, Rhodante Ahlers, and Pieter
van der Zaag**

ABSTRACT

Since the 1980s, a major change took place in public policies for water resources management. Whereas before governments primarily invested in the development, operation and maintenance of water infrastructure and were mainly concerned with the distribution of water, in the new approach they mainly focus on managing water resources systems by stipulating general frameworks for water allocation. This paper studies the rationales used to justify the water reform process in Kenya and discusses how and to what extent these rationales apply to different groups of water users within Likii catchment in the central part of the country. Adopting a critical institutionalist's perspective, this paper shows how the water resource configurations in the catchment are constituted by the interplay between a normative policy model introduced in a plural institutional context and the disparate infrastructural options available to water users as result of historically produced uneven social relations. We argue that, to progressively redress the colonial legacy, direct investments in infrastructure for marginalized water users and targeting the actual (re) distribution of water to the users might be more effective than focusing exclusively on institutional reforms.

Kemerink, J., Munyao, S., Schwartz, K., Ahlers, R. and van der Zaag, P., 2016. Why infrastructure still matters: unravelling water reform processes in an uneven waterscape in rural Kenya. *International Journal of the Commons*, 10(2).

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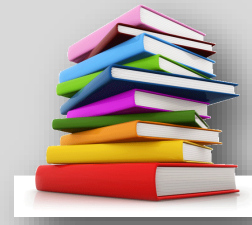
- Be between 700-850 words in length
- If a completed research project, it must at minimum include:
 - ⇒ Research title
 - ⇒ Research background and problem statement (including lit. review)
 - ⇒ Aims and Objectives
 - ⇒ Research question/hypothesis
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 - ⇒ Aims and Objectives
 - ⇒ Research question/hypothesis
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FROM THE WORLD OF RESEARCH

THE BEIRUT PORT EXPLOSION

Chirine Khalil Nassaar and Corina-Christiana Nastacă

ABSTRACT

The Beirut port explosion caused substantial damages, not only for the city, but also for the country's economy. The explosion caused 207 deaths and more than 6,500 people were injured. Also, around 300,000 people lost their homes and the physical damages costs are estimated to \$4.6 billion. The economy and the architecture of the city was severely affected and not only the Lebanese people felt the negative impact of this event. It is estimated that foreigners from 22 countries were affected by the blast, especially the Bangladeshi nationals. In this respect, the present research aims to present the Beirut Port explosion and its effects on the citizens' lives and its negative impact on the city's economy and architecture. In the end, conclusions regarding the causes of this tragic event are drawn and a series of recommendations regarding the rebuilding of the city and its development, are presented.

Nassar, C.K. and Nastacă, C.C., 2021. THE BEIRUT PORT EXPLOSION. *Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management*, 16(3), pp.42-52.

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