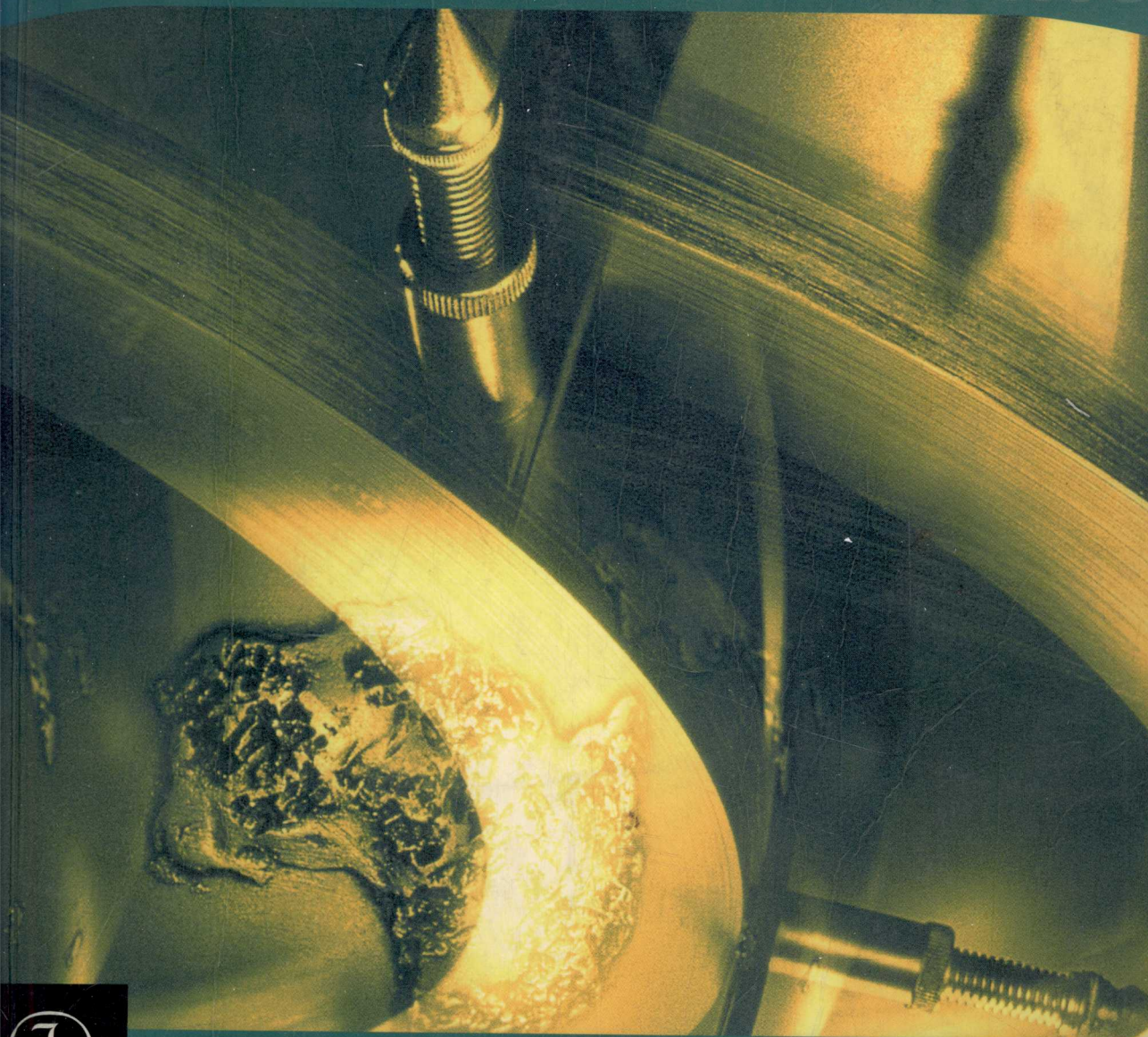


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TOURISM RESEARCH



GAYLE JENNINGS

*T*OURISM
RESEARCH

GAYLE JENNINGS

Central Queensland University



John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd

First published 2001 by
John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd
33 Park Road, Milton, Qld 4064

Offices also in Sydney and Melbourne

Typeset in 10.5/12 pt New Baskerville

© Gayle Jennings 2001

National Library of Australia
Cataloguing-in-publication data

Jennings, Gayle, 1955–.
Tourism research.

Includes index.
ISBN 0 471 34255 6.

1. Tourism — Research. I. Title.

338.4791

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Cover photograph: Courtesy of The Image Bank/Dominic Rouse

Printed in Singapore

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



PREFACE

Welcome to tourism research. This textbook aims to develop your understanding of the skills involved in tourism research. The text is based on seven conditions of learning: immersion, demonstration, approximation, expectation, responsibility, practice and feedback.¹

Working through this textbook, you will be 'immersed' in models and 'demonstrations', providing you with a base upon which you can develop your skills and knowledge about tourism research. Throughout the chapters, Industry Insights offer additional examples and/or models, and quotes present other viewpoints in regard to tourism research and the research process. Remember that you may be required to read beyond this textbook for sources to support your approaches and decision making in regard to your own research project — accessing special topic tourism books, tourism and hospitality journals and periodicals, specific tourism and hospitality research related Web sites and related disciplinary literature and information sources to further assist your engagement in the research process.


Ultimately, you are 'responsible' for 'engaging' in the research process and in assuming appropriate ethical behaviour in the conduct of your research. Only you can orchestrate this. This textbook, your lecturer and/or tutors and other resource materials are there to facilitate your learning. As you engage in textbook tasks, and practise your research skills, you will receive 'feedback' on your 'approximations' or interpretation of the various models used in research from your teachers, lecturers or tutors. Ensure you use the feedback to constructively develop your skills and knowledge.

The textbook will engage you in a small-scale research project. Generally, you should clear your research projects with your lecturers, as each tertiary institution has specific requirements related to the conduct of research that must be followed when proposing and conducting research. You should also note that this textbook is based on an overriding assumption that you have a background in tourism theories, concepts, models and frameworks, but have little or no knowledge of the act of conducting research. As you work through this textbook, you will need to draw on this previous knowledge base as you engage in your research project work. For those unfamiliar with basic concepts, models, frameworks and theories utilised in tourism, the first chapter will provide you with some background and a list of references upon which you can further extend your knowledge base.

The text deliberately introduces the qualitative methodology chapters before the quantitative methodology chapters, as they tend to receive least attention in the teaching agenda. The structure of the text ensures flexibility irrespective of whether a quantitative or qualitative methodology is presented first.

Furthermore, the textbook draws on contemporary as well as seminal and key writings. You might consider some of the latter dated; however, do not discount the importance of these seminal works. Many are the source documents upon which others have developed more recent interpretations. As a researcher, you

1. Cambourne, Brian. 1988. *The Whole Story: Natural Learning and the Acquisition of Literacy in the Classroom*. Auckland: Ashton Scholastic.



should supplement these seminal works with more current publications such as journal articles, especially academic e-journals, which will provide the most up-to-date information on tourism research for you to access.

Finally, two case studies are presented at the end of the book in chapter 12 to exemplify the incorporation of the key themes in the preceding chapters.

A brief note about the use of the plural pronoun 'their' with a singular noun, such as 'researcher' — this was the publisher's requirement instead of the alternating use of 'she' or 'he'. You should familiarise yourself with the non-sexist language policy of your own institution when preparing your work assignments associated with this text and follow that policy.

I hope as you engage in your studies in tourism research that you are both challenged and rewarded as your skill and knowledge levels build. Best wishes with your studies.

Note to lecturers and tutors

In preparing this textbook, decisions of what to include or not include were influenced by three key points. Firstly, this is a beginning research textbook and cannot be all things to all people, especially given the coverage of theoretical paradigms, qualitative and quantitative methodologies and the writing process associated with research within a twelve week teaching period. There will be lecturers and tutors who use qualitative and/or quantitative methods who will not necessarily find all of the methods of data collection or analysis that they use included. As educators, such researchers can complement the material presented in this textbook with their own experience, knowledge and expertise. Secondly, chapter contents were selected to achieve a balanced representation of themes for a week's worth of learning. Thirdly, some comparisons in the textbook are presented using the opposing ends of continua. Lecturers and tutors should reinforce alternatives that may be achieved by the mixing of methods.

Gayle Jennings 2001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The impetus for writing this book was borne out of immense frustration at not being able to locate a suitable text for use in the research in tourism classes in which I was teaching. A number of tourism texts were available; however, they tended to avoid discussions of the theoretical paradigms that inform research processes and the quantitative research methodology was favoured over the qualitative methodology. I sought a text that introduced students to theoretical paradigms so that their research process would be informed and guided by these theoretical frameworks, and that also presented qualitative and quantitative methods in equal measure and grounded research discussions in tourism within an Australian context. Apparently, others shared my frustration.

I was first encouraged by Maureen Martin at John Wiley to write this text. The development of the book has been a challenge. I would like to acknowledge Darren Taylor's understanding, support and encouragement, and the moral and professional support, as well as technical suggestions, of Catherine Spedding and Caroline Hunter, my copy editors. The reviewers of chapters — Sue Beeton (La Trobe University), Chris Cooper (University of Queensland), Kay Dimmock (Southern Cross University), Christine Lee (Monash Gippsland) and Barry O'Mahony (Victoria University of Technology) — offered critical feedback and served to improve the development of the text. In the end, the final product is my responsibility. I hope, however, that they find that collectively their comments have been incorporated in the text.

My thanks also to Les Killion, Central Queensland University, for allocating me to the *Research in Tourism* course, which initially placed me on the path to writing this text. Colleagues in the School of Marketing and Tourism and in the Faculty of Business and Law at Central Queensland University also provided support and encouragement to me while I was involved in this endeavour.

To the students who have shared the journey of learning in research in tourism over the years, my thanks also — you fashioned the need and the overall structure and content of this text.

Finally, my thanks go to my family and friends who have been supportive and have not complained about my absence in their lives while I worked on this textbook — you are all long-suffering and much loved.

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The role of *research in tourism*

'[O]ver the last fifteen years ... world competition in tourism has grown dramatically as more and more countries and regions realize both the desirability and the necessity of including tourism as a major component of their social and economic structure. During this period, the tourism industry has been gradually "getting its act together" by becoming a more cooperative and more coordinated force. In parallel, and on another front, progress has been made in developing research techniques which improve the reliability of travel and tourism data, thus enhancing our understanding of consumer behavior and consumer spending patterns in tourism. While much progress yet remains to be accomplished, there is little doubt that the level of sophistication in tourism research is much higher than it was and that there will be continued pressure for even more rigorous information gathering, analysis and interpretation systems.'

(Ritchie & Goeldner 1994, p. xiii)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- discuss the nature of tourism as a 'discipline'
- understand the role of research in tourism
- distinguish between the various types of research
- outline the steps involved in the research process
- identify the phases of the writing process as applied to tourism research.

As a student of tourism research, you have a significant role to play both in the rigour of data collection, analysis and interpretation as well as in the development of the sophistication of tourism research. In undertaking this subject, you will acquire knowledge and skills to conduct and evaluate tourism research. As a consequence, you will be able to contribute to the development of the sophistication and the rigour of tourism research.

To assist you in acquiring your knowledge and skills, this textbook is conceptually divided into three sections. In the first section, discussion focuses on the role of research in tourism, the theoretical underpinnings of tourism research, data sources for tourism research and the ethics of tourism research. In the second section, you will learn about the methodological considerations for tourism research, in particular qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. This section also considers the use of computer programs in tourism research. The third section outlines the role of the writing process in tourism research. You will be presented with information regarding the writing of research proposals, reports and journal articles as well as guidelines for presenting seminars and poster papers. Finally, the textbook concludes with some reflections on the future of tourism research.

This chapter is the first of four chapters that discuss various aspects of the research process. The chapter introduces some background information regarding the history of tourism research, the development of tourism from a field of study to a 'discipline' and the impact of this development on tourism research. The role of research in tourism is also discussed. The various types of research are identified and the latter part of the chapter explains the research process using a series of steps as well as the various phases of the writing process as it applies to tourism research.

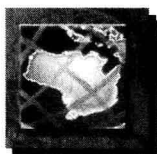
Initially, the study of tourism — that is, tourism research — was predicated to the counting of numbers and the determination of economic benefits. This occurred because tourism, a service industry, was viewed as an economic development tool both at a national and international level, particularly for those regions or nations with minimal or no primary or technological resources. For many years, boosterism and the economic tradition (Getz 1987) were the predominant planning approaches adopted for tourism development. Both are founded on economic paradigms. As a consequence, research focused on tourism as an economic activity, in particular the economic advantages and disadvantages of tourism (Crompton & Richardson 1986; Helber 1988).

More recently, however, attention has turned to the nature of the tourist, the tourist experience and, circa the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987), the social, environmental and

economic impacts of tourism, as well as training and educational needs. Interest has also shifted from the supply side (e.g. the tourism industry sectors and government) to the demand side of tourism (the tourists).

In the Australian context, recent trends provide an indication of the potential role of tourism as a key focus of future economic development. However, tourism research is not well represented in the national research effort and it is apparent that this potential will not be realised unless national research capabilities are upgraded to meet the challenges of this increasingly complex and competitive area of economic activity. Nor will it be possible to manage the social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism in a manner that is consistent with the principles of sustainability unless decision making is informed by rigorous and ongoing research (Bushell, Faulkner & Jafari 1998, p. 6).

As you can see, there is some similarity between this quote and the quote at the start of the chapter, and by studying tourism research you are contributing to the improvement of the research capabilities of Australian tourism. The following Industry Insight discusses another way you can contribute to the development of tourism within Australia.



INDUSTRY INSIGHT

The Council of Australian Tourism Students (CATS) is one avenue by which you can contribute to the development of tourism within Australia. The council aims to:

- ensure CATS is represented at tertiary institutions offering tourism programs
- provide a collective voice for tourism students both during and after their studies have concluded
- improve the employment prospects for graduating tourism students
- facilitate the Tourism Council of Australia to maintain the standards and quality of tourism education
- organise various activities and provide services to assist tourism students.

Source: *Tourism Queensland* (2000, p. 39)

Given the rapid growth of tourism during the twentieth century and the predominant view of tourism as an economic activity, it is no surprise to learn that the study of tourism postdates the phenomenon of tourism itself. Or further, that the disciplinary nature of tourism commenced as a fragmented and multidisciplinary approach rather than an integrated and interdisciplinary one or a synthesised holistic discipline of study.

In reality, tourism is only just emerging as a discipline in its own right. Its beginnings are founded in other disciplines such as economics, geography, sociology, social psychology, social anthropology, marketing and history. These and other disciplines enabled an understanding of tourism to be achieved in the absence of a specific 'tourism' discipline. Resultantly, tourism, as a 'discipline', has evolved over time by drawing on other disciplines to inform its research processes and its theoretical frameworks. However, some would question whether tourism is yet a 'discipline' in its own right. The problematic nature of tourism centres on whether it is a multidisciplinary and/or an interdisciplinary field of study.

Przeclawski (1993, p. 11) has noted that multidisciplinary research involves the study of tourism from an individual discipline's theoretical and methodological paradigms ('concepts and methods'), with the result that the findings are discipline specific and unable to be synthesised except superficially. An interdisciplinary approach, on the other hand, is one in which tourism phenomena are studied using various disciplinary perspectives, although they are grounded in the same sampling procedures, the same sites and the same methods to facilitate the accumulation of a comprehensive information set about the phenomena (Przeclawski 1993).

There have been various arguments as to whether tourism should be multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary in nature. See, for example, the discussions by Jafari (1977), Leiper (1981), Stear (1981), Przeclawski (1993), Echtner and Jamal (1997) and Tribe (1997). To reiterate a past perspective:

tourism is usually viewed as an application of established disciplines, because it does not possess sufficient doctrine to be classified as a full-fledged academic discipline (Bodewes 1981, p. 37).

Leiper (1989) suggests there is a need for the establishment of a central ground. This ground should be interdisciplinary based, as the use of a multidisciplinary approach rather than an interdisciplinary approach is counterproductive to the development of a tourism discipline. A multidisciplinary approach is fragmented with unconnected findings. By utilising an interdisciplinary approach, 'interdisciplinary triangulation' can be achieved (Janesick 1994, p. 251). 'Interdisciplinary triangulation' enables other disciplines to inform the research process and thereby broaden both the understanding of method and data. An interdisciplinary approach is also promulgated by Weaver and Oppermann (2000, p. 7), who provide a useful illustration of the evolution of tourism studies towards discipline status (see figure 1.1).

While there appears to be a desire to move towards an interdisciplinary approach within tourism literature discussions, the future, as indicated in