

# Central Lancashire Online Knowledge (CLoK)

Title	Remotely researching leisurely settings.
Туре	Article
URL	https://clok.uclan.ac.uk/id/eprint/42569/
DOI	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2022.100048
Date	2022
Citation	Brazão, Alice, Duignan, Mike, Jarratt, David orcid iconORCID: 0000-0002-
	7244-428X and Li, Yanning (2022) Remotely researching leisurely settings.
	Annals of Tourism Research. ISSN 0160-7383
Creators	Brazão, Alice, Duignan, Mike, Jarratt, David and Li, Yanning

It is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from the work. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2022.100048

For information about Research at UCLan please go to http://www.uclan.ac.uk/research/

All outputs in CLoK are protected by Intellectual Property Rights law, including Copyright law. Copyright, IPR and Moral Rights for the works on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. Terms and conditions for use of this material are defined in the <u>http://clok.uclan.ac.uk/policies/</u> Contents lists available at ScienceDirect



Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights

journal homepage: www.sciencedirect.com/journal/annals-of-tourism-research-empirical-insights



# Remotely researching leisurely settings



Alice Brazão<sup>a,\*</sup>, Michael B. Duignan<sup>a</sup>, David Jarratt<sup>b</sup>, Yanning Li<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Surrey, Guildford, UK
<sup>b</sup> School of Management, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK

# ARTICLE INFO

#### Editor: Kirilova Ksenia

Keywords: Remote methods Digital ethnography Walking ethnography Event tourism studies Netnography

#### 1. Introduction

Identifying creative ways to collect data remotely has and continues to be embraced by researchers, primarily influenced by three factors. First, travel restrictions imposed due to, for example, political instability, war, security concerns, infections, and pandemics, including the most recent COVID-19 global lockdown. These conditions make physically collecting data difficult or impossible. Second, environmental concerns, particularly those around the need to reduce travel-related carbon emissions, both directly and in-directly, places pressures on limiting travel (Doran, Pallensen, Bohm, & Ogunbode, 2021). Third, the availability of online data sets, for example large quantitative big data sets to rich qualitative social media data, inclusive of text, still and video imagery is increasing in popularity and use. Together, incorporating remote methods can help researchers overcome logistical, financial, geographical and cultural barriers. They can also increase the volume and enhance the variety, velocity, veracity and therefore value of one's analysis and information achieved by fusing data sets for triangulation purposes. Additionally, adopting a more flexible approach to data collection provides an opportunity for extensional work as new data sources can be added to buttress one's data analysis and strengthen arguments; and relational work as new data sets can reveal new relations between, for example, people, places, events and spaces. Reñosa et al. (2020) argues the novelty of remote data collection "represents a substantive adaptation or pivot from the status quo" (p.2) integrating new evidence to tackle contemporary research problems.

Although there is some excellent practice of remote methods published, there is little structured guidance and synthesis for the options available to study leisure settings. This article contributes by bringing together a simple yet diverse set of remote methods and data analysis techniques according to the type of data generated, as presented in the 'Remote Methods in Leisure Settings Framework' below (Fig. 1).

# 2. Remote methods available and previously deployed

Fig. 1 outlines five alternative remote data gathering approaches that researchers studying leisure settings from a distance can deploy. We examine some examples below. Digital ethnography is a method of tackling social issues through cyberspace (Kaur-Gill & Dutta, 2017), and can closely replicate physically observing individuals through traditional ethnographic approaches, whilst offering new advantages too. Examples here include the use of live cameras and recorded film, Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) data. Third party providers (e.g. https://www.earthcam.com) to study tourist hotspots, cities and other local environments and the behaviour of visitors have become increasingly used (e.g. Pink, Sumartojo, Lupton, & Labond, 2017; Postill, 2017). Recruiting local researchers with 360-degree cameras and Go-Pros, or other recording devices for example can help study in situ how leisure spaces are formed and how visitors interact with them (Duignan & McGillivray, 2019), without requiring additional researchers (e.g., Pink et al., 2017). Installing static cameras to record and watch back afterwards was a

\* Corresponding author. *E-mail addresses: alice.brazao@me.com, alice@alicebrazao.com* (A. Brazão).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2022.100048

Received 5 November 2021; Received in revised form 19 April 2022; Accepted 23 April 2022 Available online 29 April 2022

2666-9579/© 2022 Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

particularly novel method deployed by Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) to assess public disorder in Chicago.

Scholars have used live webcams (e.g., Jarratt, 2020a) and uploaded content to YouTube allowing researchers to slow-down footage and interrogate specific visual elements frame-by-frame (Paterson, Bottorff, & Hewat, 2003). This was applied by Timothy and Groves (2001) who identified how "weather, crowd density, changes in facilities and infrastructure" (p.99) impacted visitor behaviour and how managers respond. Furthermore, Gómez-Martín and Martínez-Ibarra (2012) also used webcams to examine visitor crowd response to weather conditions to predict demand for attractions to facilitate accurate demand-planning measures for popular Spanish beach resorts. This illustrates how webcams have been "re-purposed as a tool to evaluate patterns of population-level physical activity behaviour" (Hipp et al., 2014, p.2).

Yet, despite thousands of publicly available live broadcasts (e.g. www.webcamtaxi.com and 'Twitch' where researchers can crowd fund users to cycle around cities, often providing tours), little work draws on the power and potential of webcams as a way to enhance data collection and analysis. This is surprising as live steams, either facilitated by a local (or not) can provide access to local insights [as opposed to a researcher who may not be geographically or culturally familiar with local settings] to drive remote data collection too (Paterson et al., 2003). Though this may be changing as Jarratt (2020a) notes how COVID-19 has stimulated webcam use by utilizing affordable technology, easy access, low cost. Furthermore, Jarratt (2020b) argues how subjects of live place-based webcams e.g., crowds or wildlife are typically oblivious to their presence, therefore may provide unfiltered images neither staged nor manipulated.

The use of social networking data becoming increasingly popular too. Social networks are defined as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 211). In terms of alternative means to gather opinion and attitudes, given the popularity of video conferencing, researchers can conduct online interviews with anyone, anywhere and at any time. This is similar to online surveys and online discussion forums that afford researchers to gather open and closed responses and conduct focus groups with a global audience (Evans & Mathur, 2005). New technologies have allowed video interviews to be not only easily conducted with subjects around the world but also transcribed in real-time with high accuracy, saving time and financial resource. For example, Kolotouchkina (2018) conducted online elite interviews with senior managers at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics who were less inclined to meeting face-to-face; and Ramchandani, Davies, Coleman, Shibli, and Bingham (2015) completed initial physical surveying by utilizing online surveys to connect with event visitors a year later to analyse post-travel behaviour.

GPS or GNSS data generated by applications like Strava (www. strava.com) have been increasingly used to track visitor behaviour and movement too (e.g. walking, running, cycling data and route choices). For example, Domènech, Gutiérrez, and Clavé (2020) provided cruise passengers with GNSS devices to monitor movements and cultural habits at each port and complemented this data with visitor experience questionnaires. Location data only is often not enough (Chaix et al., 2013) but when combined with other remote methods can reveal new and



Fig. 1. Remote Methods in Leisure Settings Framework.

complex visitor behaviour insights (Lewis, Hardy, Wells, & Kerslake, 2021). This is evidenced by Galily and Clavio (2016) and Clavio and Frederick's (2014) work using social media data to study visitor motivations in mega-event cities using location sharing, as well as following events, debates and sentiments via Twitter hashtags and accounts. The abundance of text, still and video imagery generated on social media networks can provide significant opportunity for observational, sentiment and content analysis (Postill & Pink, 2012). For example, Leung et al. (2012) exampled how mega-events can influence tourist flows by examining 500 online trip diaries to evaluate movement patterns in Beijing before, during and after the 2008 Olympics. Furthermore, this is particularly useful for researchers studying unsafe locations increasingly use remote fieldwork across "conflict ridden or otherwise hazardous locations" (Postill, 2017), p.3). Some have utilized simple communication software like WhatsApp to share data insights through to building and maintaining relationships with gatekeepers and subjects like Cade, Everett, and Duignan's (2019) work studying tourism development impacts on penurious favela zones during the Rio 2016 Olympics, through to Gray's (2016) use of social media to study public protests in Russia. This article provides a selection of both established and novel and under-utilized remote methods to help researchers incorporate new data collection methods into their work, graphically illustrated by the 'Remote Methods in Leisure Settings Framework' (Fig. 1).

### 3. Concluding thoughts

This article brings together well-established remote methods and new and under-utilized ones to create a structured framework for researchers to consider for future methodological choices. We suggest these methods can be standalone and combined together with other methods to gather the necessary data to achieve one's research aims and objectives. They also offer a more agile and dynamic approach to collecting data, a process that often requires "continual decision making about what to observe and record" in response to emerging data themes (Paterson et al., 2003, p.32). This is critical as contemporary research problems call for robust and innovative data collection and analytical techniques to identify and interrogate them. Aligned to the benefits of utilizing bigger data sets to inform data collection and analysis, we argue a novel synthesis of traditional and non-traditional methods like those detailed could potentially lead to greater volume, variety, velocity, veracity, value, and help enable researchers to engage in greater extensional and relational work to iteratively add new sources of data and obtain new and potentially deeper findings. This is critical for informing rigorous social science approaches, whilst simultaneously reducing a researcher's carbon footprint, saving research time and financial resource, and reduce risk of travel restrictions for business continuity purposes. We call on researchers to build on and extend our Remote Methods for Leisure Settings framework to advance our collective understanding as to how and why to research all types of people, places and spaces at a distance.

## **Declaration of Competing Interest**

This article was based on work funded by 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, Research and Innovation grant agreement no. 823815

#### References

- Boyd, D., & Ellison, N. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13(1), 210–230.
- Cade, N., Everett, S., & Duignan, M. B. (2019). Leveraging digital and physical spaces to 'de-risk' and access Rio's favela communities. *Tourism Geographies*, 23, 249–274.
- Chaix, B., Méline, J., Duncan, S., Merrien, C., Karusisi, N., Perchoux, C., ... Kestens, Y. (2013). GPS tracking in neighborhood and health studies. *Health & Place*, 2013(21), 46–51.
- Clavio, G., & Frederick, E. (2014). Sharing is caring: Na exploration of motivations for social sharing and locational social media usage among sport fans. *Journal of Applied Sport Management*, 6(2), 70–85.
- Domènech, A., Gutiérrez, A., & Clavé, S. (2020). Cruise passengers' spatial behaviour and expenditure levels at destination. *Tourism Planning and Development*, 17(1), 17–36.
- Doran, R., Pallensen, S., Bohm, G., & Ogunbode, C. (2021). When and why do people experience flight shame? Annals of Tourism Research, 92, 1–4.
- Duignan, M., & McGillivray, D. (2019). Walking methodologies, digital platforms and the interrogation of Olympic spaces. *Tourism Geographies*. 23, 275–295.
- Evans, J. R., & Mathur, A. (2005). The value of online surveys. Internet Research, 15, 195–219.
- Galily, Y., & Clavio, G. (2016). Texting, tweeting and playing. Online Information Review, 40(6), 1–4.
- Gómez-Martín, M., & Martínez-Ibarra, E. (2012). Tourism demand and atmospheric parameters. Climate Research, 51(2), 135–145.
- Gray, P. (2016). Memory, body, and the online researcher. *Journal of the American Ethnological Society*, 43(3), 500–510.
- Hipp, A., Adlakha, D., Eyler, A., Gernes, R., Kargol, A., Stylinou, A., & Pless, R. (2014). Learning from outdoor webcams. Chicago, IL, August: National Science Foundation. At.
- Jarratt, D. (2020a). Webcam-travel: Conceptual foundations. Annals of Tourism Research, 1–4.
- Jarratt, D. (2020b). An exploration of webcam-travel. Tourism and Hospitality Research, 0 (0), 1–13.
- Kaur-Gill, S., & Dutta, M. (2017). Digital ethnography. International encyclopedia of communication research methods (pp. 1–10). JohnWiley & Sons, Inc.
- Kolotouchkina, O. (2018). Engaging citizens in sports mega-events. Communications Society, 31(4), 45–58.
- Leung, X., Wang, F., Wu, B., Bai, B., Stahura, K., & Xie, Z. (2012). A social network analysis of overseas tourist movement patterns in Beijing. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 14, 469–484.
- Lewis, G., Hardy, A., Wells, M., & Kerslake, F. (2021). Using mobile technology to track wine tourists. Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights, 2, 1–11.
- Paterson, B., Bottorff, J., & Hewat, R. (2003). Blending observational methods. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 2(1), 29–38.
- Pink, S., Sumartojo, S., Lupton, D., & Labond, C. (2017). Empathetic technologies. Visual Studies, 32(4), 371–381.
- Postill, J., & Pink, S. (2012). Social media ethnography. Media International Australia, 145, 123–134.
- Ramchandani, G., Davies, L., Coleman, R., Shibli, S., & Bingham, J. (2015). Limited or lasting legacy? European Sport Management Quarterly, 15(1), 93–110.
- Reñosa, M., Mwamba, C., Meghani, A., West, N., Hariyani, S., Ddaaki, W., ... McMahon, S. (2020). Selfie consents, remote-rapport, and zoom debriefings. *BJM Global Health*, 1–9.
- Sampson, J., & Raudenbush, S. (1999). Systematic social observation of public spaces. American Journal of Sociology, 105, 603–651.
- Timothy, D., & Groves, D. (2001). Webcam images as potential data sources for tourism research. *Tourism Geographies*, 3(4), 394–404.
- Postill, J. (2017). Remote Ethnography: Studying Culture from Afar. In Hjorth, L., Horst, H., Galloway, A., & Bell, G. (2017). *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*. Routledge.

Alice Brazão is a PhD researcher at the University of Surrey's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, UK.

Michael B. Duignan is Head of Department and Reader in Events at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Surrey, UK.

David Jarratt is a Senior Lecturer in Tourism and Event Management in the School of Management, University of Central Lancashire, UK.

Yanning Li's recent research focus includes social sustainability, EDI, gig economy and liminality within the event context.