

Exploring **data collection innovations** in tourism research

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Objectives | The scientific quality, rigour, and impact of a considerable number, if not the vast majority, of tourism studies are dependent on an effective data collection process (Churchill, 1999; Hair et al., 1998). Most of the researchers in these and related areas rely on traditional data collection tools, such as face-to-face, pen-and-paper, or online questionnaires, which are not very effective, both in terms of the time and money required to gather a reasonable number of observations. This research aims at exploring innovative, more effective, data collection tools to be employed in a tourism research context.

Methodology | By using Npolls by Appgeneration (more details on www.npolls.com and www.appgeneration.com) it is possible to collect a considerably high number of observations in a short period of time. Npolls operates on any device with the android system or equivalent (e.g., Iphone, Ipad). The researcher is able to create his/her own questionnaires, which will be answered by android (or equivalent) device users, worldwide, and receive the results, via e-mail, in Excel/Csv format.

Main results and contributions | It is then possible to analyze the gathered information from various data analysis perspectives, as illustrated by the following two exploratory studies:

Study 1: Mode of Transportation Decision

3,498 observations were collected in 2 days, and principal component factor analysis (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy=0.727; Bartlett's test of sphericity = 5,999e3, P=0.000, DF=45; Cumulative variance: 54.8%; 5 iterations) suggested two factors, reflecting the 'Quality', and 'Well-being' facets;

Study 2: Clothing Buying Decision

3,564 observations collected in 3 days, and principal component factor analysis (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = 0.815; Bartlett's test of sphericity = 9,132e3, p=0.000; DF=36; Cumulative variance: 54.7%; 3 iterations) suggested three factors, reflecting the 'Hedonism', 'Price', and 'Comfort' facets.

Conclusions | As evidenced, Npolls allows for the collection of a relatively high number of observations in a rather short period of time, with considerable advantages versus the traditional data collection procedures. There are still some limitations inherent to the fact that the number potential respondent is limited to the number of android (or equivalent) device users (which is experiencing an exponential growth). Opportunities for future research are rather appealing, provided that the Npolls tool is properly explored and used.

References |

- Churchill, G., 1999, *Marketing Research: Methodological Foundations*, Dryden Press, Orlando.
Hair, J., Anderson, R., Tatham, R. and Black, W., 1998, *Multivariate Data Analysis* (5th ed.), Prentice Hall International, London

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