



DARK TOURISM: MOTIVATIONS AND VISIT INTENTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Death and calamity hold a fascination for people. To grasp this, simply observe traffic slowing to a crawl as it passes a vehicle collision. This attraction, however, extends beyond the side of the road and into the domain of tourism. Thousands of people come from all over the world to see Auschwitz-Birkenau, Anne Frank's House, Graceland, Oklahoma City, Gettysburg, Vimy Ridge, the Somme, and Arlington National Cemetery.

As seen by the recent establishment of an apartheid museum in Johannesburg, South Africa, the list expands each year.

Because of the growing popularity of this tourism product, a small group of academics has begun to research it. Lennon and Foley, who invented the term Dark Tourism, Seaton, who coined the word Thana tourism, and Rojak, who established the notion of Black Spots, are at the forefront of the field. Despite continuous research, there is still a lack of knowledge about what drives people to dark tourism destinations.

However, given the content and sensitivity of these sites, understanding motivation is critical. Some are deteriorating slowly, and visitors play an important role in their preservation.

Keywords: tourism, dark tourism, museums, death, violence, horror.

Introduction

Individuals are interested in passing and catastrophe. Basically you need to follow the activity from moderate to critical while going through a car accident to get this. In any case, this interest goes beyond the motorway and enters the tourism sector. Currently, various passages and fiascos attract millions of visitors from all over the world: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Anne Frank House, Graceland, Oklahoma City, Gettysburg, Vimy Edge, Somme, Arlington National Cemetery. The list expands every year, as



evidenced by the later establishment of the apartheid showroom in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Due to the ubiquity of this tourist site, a small number of scientists have begun to consider this miracle. The field is led by Lennon and Foley, who named it Dim Tourism, Seaton, who coined the term Tang tourism, and Rojak, who coined the concept of Dark Spots. In any case, despite progressing research, there was no understanding of what actually pushes people to places of boring tourism. However, understanding the inspiration is essential, especially given the subject matter and influence of these places. Some of them are gradually rotting, and guests play a significant role in their preservation. Therefore, without legitimate governance, the convergence of guests can further disrupt directions or activate contacts with locals. The information at this point also provides directors with vital mechanisms to legally oversee the change of partners. While many feel interest in the playthrough and the fiasco essentially stems from discouragement, the range of variables included expansion due to interest in history and legacy.

To begin with, consider that a list of possible motivations has been compiled. Then, to call the distant better; much better; higher; stronger; Having improved and improved understanding of these ideas, the guests of the Holocaust Gallery in Houston have been studied as an example. As a commodified, engineered place of passage and aversion, the exhibition hall fits the definitions of a dim tourist destination established by leading scholars. Hence, by asking guests in the historic center what brought them to that place, they will ideally share intuition with the needs and demands of certain stakeholders.

Finally, this study hoped to find out if inspiration in the exhibition hall could shed light on inspiration elsewhere in lackluster tourism.

Literature Review

To understand the purpose and conclusions of the project, one must first understand the idea of dark tourism and related concepts. Two scientists, Malcolm Foley and J. John Lennon, coined the phrase "dark tourism" to describe "a phenomenon that involves displaying and consumption (by tourists) of authentic and commodified places of death and disaster" (1996:198). In their book *Dark Tourism: The Pull of Death and Catastrophe*, Lennon and Foley go even further, defining what constitutes dark tourism and what does not. For example, friends and family visiting dark tourist spots are not considered dark tourists.

"Those who arrive by luck, the itineraries of travel companies or simply interested who happen to be in the area, form the basis of dark tourism for us," says the author



(2000: 23). According to the authors, the motivation of visitors has a greater influence on dark tourism. However, they acknowledge in the aforementioned piece that incentives can play a role in a bleak tourist experience. "These tourists may have been inspired to travel by a desire to see the truth behind media representations and/or a personal relationship with inhumanity," they write (1996:198).

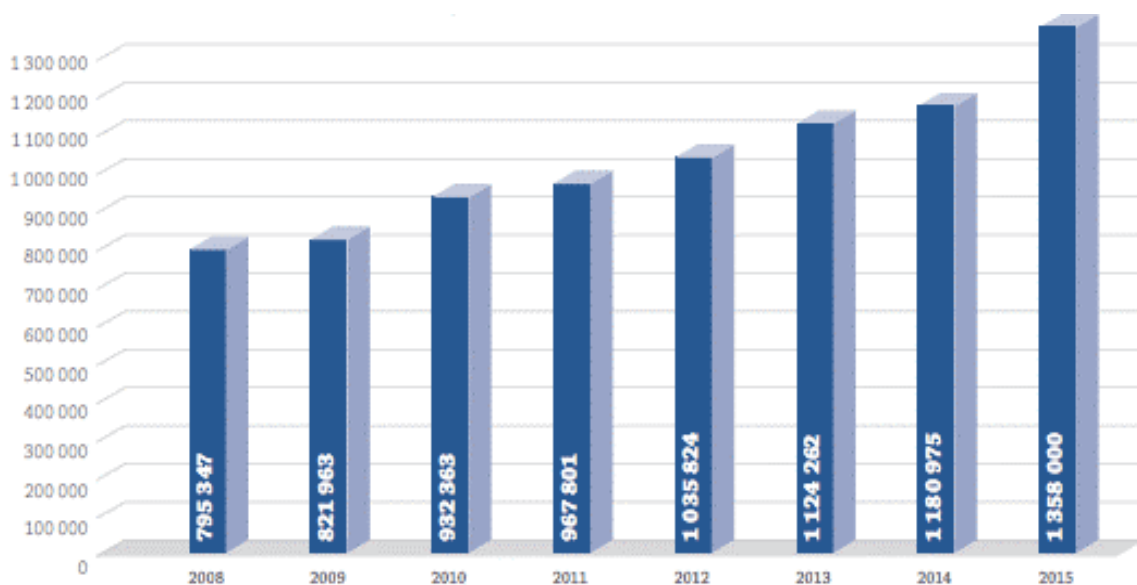


Table 1. Developing of dark tourism.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Dark tourism is often defined within postmodernism in most writings on the subject. To fully understand the significance of dark tourism in today's society, it is vital to understand modernism and the history of the post-prime. The movement that spawned postmodernism, modernism, is a good place to start.

At the time, the Industrial Revolution was causing rapid changes in civilizations, including a shift in power from 2016 aristocracy and absolutist rulers to a newly emerging middle class. Societies that were ahead of the curve are becoming more urbanized, industrialized and regulated.

Other significant changes in society were brought about by the industrial revolution and modernity. First, people no longer relied on the church as a result of scientific and industrial advances. The boundaries between the holy and the profane have been blurred by modernity. It also affects tourism. As an example, Rojak (1993) notes that while graves used to be treated with respect and dignity, modernity has opened them up to mass tourism, turning them into tourist destinations.



PREVIOUS STUDIES

The topic of dark tourism as a tourist driver has been explored in several studies. According to Conforti (1996), one of the keys to rehabilitating Italian ghettos for visitors is nostalgia. These locations are used for "...Italian-Americans who have never lived in or near an Italian-American community in similar areas, but travel there to emphasize their individuality and learn more about them."

On any given Saturday afternoon in New York's Little Italy, nearly half of the visitors are Italian-Americans: suburbanites come to the city for a nostalgic cultural experience.

"Old soldiers return to the battlefields to return and remember the days of their youth," notes Smith (1996) in his study of military tourism.

"Those of us who have been in combat have something exceptionally unique," one grizzled veteran laconically put it.

I absolutely had to be here to pay tribute to these brave soldiers" (1996, pp. 260-261). Smith's use of vernacular in depicting military tourism adds to this sense of nostalgia.

"Heroic past remember the fallen... lest we forget... when we were young... reliving the past..." are just a few examples. (Smith 1996:205) they all imply a romantic longing for a bygone mistake. "...age brings romance to days gone by"

Lowenthal continues (1982:78), and the more time passes, the more mysterious everything looks. This use of romanticism to evoke nostalgia can also be found in Barbados, where tourism officials decided to "... caricature host and visitor within the romantic feudal framework of the 17th century Great House" rather than relying on scientific facts (Dunn and Potter). 2001:75). Marketers are focusing on the romantic side of pre-war plantation life rather than its darker side. As a result, many seek to return to a more pleasant, civilized era.

Motivation and intentions

Understanding motivations is the starting point of understanding tourist behaviors (Crompton,

1979; Kim et al., 2011). Tourist motivations (e.g., excitement, relaxation, curiosity) are found to

have a direct positive effect on their behavioral intentions (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Many

suggested that additional constructs (e.g., tourist motivations, satisfactory prior experience)

can enhance the predictive power of TPB (Conner and Abraham, 2001; Alegre and Cladera,



2009). Several studies have shown that motivations have a positive effect to behavioral intention or affects intention to visit (Baloglu, 2000; Yoon and Uysal, 2005) or to use a certain product/service (e.g., Alegre and Cladera, 2009; Vazquez and Xu, 2009). For purposes of this study, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is utilized to serve as a guide to determine behavioral intentions. Concluded from previous research, the following hypotheses statements have been developed to test the relationships of the Theory of Planned Behavior:

- H9. Attitudes will have a positive relationship with Intention
- H10. Subjective Norm will have a negative relationship with Intention
- H11. Perceived Behavioral Control will have a positive relationship with Intention

Methods

This study uses an experimental method due to the paucity of data on rewards for visitors to Holocaust museums. The two methodologies chosen were a qualitative focus group and a questionnaire distributed to a sample of tourists and local visitors. A survey conducted among museum visitors was the main approach used in this study; however, it was recognized that a preliminary focus group with museum staff would improve the content of the survey. Given their direct interaction with the public, it was believed that the staff could provide first-hand information on trends and visitor observations.

Museum staff are the most likely to hear remarks and observe reactions to the museum as they regularly interact with dark tourists. Although the literature is largely based on empirical research, scientists may overlook some of the experiences that front-line workers are aware of. Also, compared to scientists, the general public can be more casual and careless in front of employees.

The survey was handed over to the sample after the focus group materials were included in the questionnaire. Only 186 out of 300 questionnaires sent out were considered suitable for final analysis. The survey results are simply listed in chronological order on the following pages. The results should stand out on their own. Once the survey instrument was completed, procedures were undertaken to extend the survey to the sample. Respondents had two options for filling out the questionnaire: either send it back, or do it online on the author's website. designed specifically for this study. You will find it in the Recreation, Parks and Tourism



department. The URL for the Texas A&M University server was <http://www.survey.tamu/holocaust/>.

The Holocaust Museum in Houston admitted at the start of the study that the original information card they handed out had space on the card for email addresses. As a result, the sample was divided into two groups: those who had only a postal address, and those who had both a postal address and an e-mail address. As soon as the website was up and running, postcards were sent to them notifying them that the researcher would be contacting them shortly. Pre-contact was established because it has been shown that contact with respondents before submitting a questionnaire increases response rates (Linksy, 1975).

Within the next two weeks, people will receive either an email or a survey by mail, according to the postcard. Postcards sent on May 3, 2022.

One problem with this study is that the emails and survey were not sent later, as noted in the limitations section of the article. On May 21, 2022, 283 questionnaires were distributed to people who only had a mailing address. Two hundred and seventeen (217) emails were sent to the remaining sample of email addresses in the following week, May 27-29.

A cover letter was sent with each survey informing visitors of the purpose of the survey, their eligibility to participate, and any contact information they would need if they had any problems.

Discussion

Before any analysis or discussion can begin, it is important to acknowledge that this study has limitations that will affect any results and conclusions.

To start with, dark tourism is a very new industry with little research, especially in the area of motivation. As a result, there are no examples to compare. The findings are exploratory in nature and serve as stepping stones for further research, which is urgently needed.

The research approach, on the other hand, has certain disadvantages. The sample was collected over one week in June 2022, during spring break, from a specific demographic. As a result, given the time of year, the number of tourists, students, and other specialized demographics may have been higher than at other times of the year. Data was collected using handwritten information cards throughout the development of the sample database. Since handwriting was used, address typos (especially email addresses) are likely, and some people may not receive surveys. In addition, as previously stated, there was a large delay between the initial pre-contact postcard and the sending/emailing of the actual surveys.



Potential respondents may have moved during this time, lost interest, or forgotten information.

Email surveys are also a newer option. Even though almost half of the respondents had email accounts, not everyone is familiar with computers and may have been too afraid to use technology. In addition, some respondents may not have opened the letter due to possible computer viruses, despite the fact that pre-contact postcards were delivered.

Third, there is the possibility of author bias. This study was inspired by the author's own interest in dark tourism, and although there has been considerable literary analysis, some of the original motives were taken from the author's own ideas. As a result, there may be other motives that the author does not know about.

Fourth, while this study aimed to assess visitor motivation, it should be noted that the survey was conducted after the tourist had visited the museum and responses were likely influenced by the museum experience. As a result, the concepts of motivation and experience can be confused, and this overlap is considered as a limitation in this research study.

Finally, because this study primarily considered the Houston Holocaust Museum as a case study, the results may not necessarily apply to other dark tourist destinations. One of the original goals of this study was to find out if the motifs in the museum mirror those in other dark tourist destinations. However, it should be remembered that only one site was considered in the study, and the results should be considered from this point of view.

When considering the above limitations should be taken into account. Although the data are based on rigorous literature research, a museum focus group, and rigorous review analysis, research limitations and the author's personal biases influence the author's conclusions and judgments. More research is needed in the field of dark tourism to substantiate this work.

Conclusion

A review of the literature identified a variety of factors that may push or draw visitors to dark travel destinations. As Dunn (1977) pointed out, internal forces can push people to a certain place, while pull factors are those that at the destination can attract them.

Traveler Five research questions were created at the beginning of this study to guide it. Two studies have focused on the push-pull idea. It is possible that people will be pushed. Visit such places out of a desire to connect with their past, an interest in



historical facts, or a combination of both. Guilt, nostalgic longing, simple curiosity or knowledge of death and near-death catastrophe.

In addition, through the media, tragedy and disaster sites can attract or attract tourists through education, remembrance, rarities and relics, or the sacralization of places. While media was first included in research questions as a push component, it eventually evolved into an intermediary between push and pull variables rather than a push element in and of itself. This study aims to find new aspects of visitor motivation, guided by additional research questions.

First, to determine what additional elements influenced the attendance identified by the focus group and visitors; second, determine the importance of location in motivating HMH visitors; and third, to determine the implications of visitor motivation at fatality and disaster sites for management.

The purpose of this study was to find out what effect these dark tourism variables had on people visiting the Holocaust Museum in Houston. In line with the pioneering spirit. According to experts in the field of dark tourism, the museum served as a place for dark tourism. According to Seaton (1999), a visit to HMH can be seen as a trip to a fictitious location where the testimony of the deceased was collected. According to Foley and Lennon (2000), travel to HMH can be seen as the consumption of a commodified place of death and disaster.

A visit to HMH, according to Rojak (1993), may represent a visit to a dark place, a commodified place where a huge number of people died (albeit an artificial place). As a result, at the beginning of this study, it was assumed that visitors would be guided by the same or comparable factors found in the murky tourism literature.

A survey of 186 visitors to the Holocaust Museum in Houston revealed many parallels between the forces of dark tourism. However, he identified a number of circumstances specific to American Holocaust sites that were briefly mentioned in a broader literary study, including the location of museums. The following paragraphs discuss each element in more detail.

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