Progress in Tourism Management

Revitalizing fieldtrips in tourism: Visual anthropology, photo elicitation, rapid appraisal, participant observation and Habermas

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ABSTRACT

In seeking to strengthen pedagogical and research outcomes in tourism students' fieldtrips to assess community sustainability and resilience in Cheung Chau Island, Hong Kong, and maximize experiential learning opportunities, the relatively neglected methodologies in tourism research of visual anthropology and Rapid Appraisal and the rarely reported concept of Habermas' communicative action to promote teamwork through consensus-based decision-making in tourism studies, were combined with more commonly utilized ethnographic participant observation. While taking photographs is fundamental for millions of tourists and has been researched from many perspectives, the use of visual anthropology and participatory photo elicitation not only to record but to generate new knowledge as a major component of research-oriented data collection, is comparatively novel in tourism studies. In isolation, all four methodologies are not new and are common in a range of social studies: but their fusion especially for tourism research, is atypical and assumes an additional element of innovation.

1. Introduction

Teach me and I will forget.

Show me and I may remember.

Involve me and I will understand

[Ancient Chinese proverb attributed to Xun Kuang, circa 280 B.C., translated by Hutton, 2014]

Each year for the past six years (2013–2018) we have taken a group of 35–40 students enrolled in our *Master in Sustainable Tourism* program on a one-day fieldtrip to Cheung Chau Island. It is located 10 kms southwest of Hong Kong Island, and covers 2.45 square kms with a population of 22,740 (Census and Population Department of Hong Kong, 2011). A traditional fishing village dating back 450 years with Bronze Age rock engravings 3000 years old, its low-rise buildings and narrow streets are devoid of all motorized vehicles (except for miniaturized ambulances and fire trucks). Motorcycles are banned, thus bicycles and tricycles are the main form of transport for personal mobility, goods and services (for example, all public waste is collected - by women - who pedal or push tricycle carts or hand-carts up and down the steep hills and confined lanes). This stark contrast with the noise and bustle of skyscraper-dominated Hong Kong, coupled with Cheung Chau's picturesque fishing harbour, unpolluted beaches and coastal hiking trails, wooded headlands and ancient Daoist temples, sea food restaurants and cultural festivals, make it a magnet for 200,000 domestic tourists and about 40,000 international tourists (all mostly daytrippers) each year (Plate 1). More than 1000 bicycles and tricycles are available for hire and constitute a key component for many touristic experiences (Plate 2). The island is famous for its annual Daoist 'Da Jiu' ('Bun Festival'), a four-day series of street parades (*Piu Sik*), lion dances and temple ceremonies to worship several Daoist deities (Plate 3). The street parades feature young children dressed as folk heroes and heroines such as the Monkey King and are suspended high on metal frames as if levitating. The festival culminates at midnight on the final day when youths compete to be the first to scramble to the top of three 25 m-high pyramids (now constructed of aluminum after an accident with the collapse of a traditionally-assembled bamboo edifice ten years ago) covered in thousands of buns that are erected outside the Pak Tai temple, the oldest in the island (Lau & Li, 2015). The festival attracts up to 50,000 visitors each year on the final day to watch the spectacular 'bun race'. The buns, imprinted with the Chinese characters for *Ping an* ("Peace)", now represent the signature image of Cheung Chau and several million are sold as souvenirs throughout the year. Tourism has replaced the original fishing economy of the island although its maritime heritage is still strongly featured.

PLATE 1. What do you see?.

When understood as a language, *"photographs carry the same subjective, interpretive potential as words when they are 'read', imbued with meaning for the viewer"* (*Moran & Tegano, 2005, p. 2*). *"There are no boundaries, no strictly defined limits to meaning but rather a pluralism of approach and meaning (and) while this leads to interpretive complexity, it points also to the richness of the photographic record in both theoretical and evidential modes"* (Edwards 1992, p. 4).

2. The research question

2.1. The problem

Annual one-day field trips for a cohort of between 35 and 40 Masters students to an offshore island in Hong Kong (Cheung Chau), where they were given a broad mandate to examine tourism-related issues and write a team report (4–6 persons per team), were in many cases found to be resulting in relatively shallow, limited research-based probes. The expectation that, as postgraduate students they would be able to conduct self-directed, independent analysis, was being met by only some student teams. There was a tendency to treat the field-trip as 'just an outing' manifested, for example, in the amount of time students spent in taking "selfies" and group photos that were not productive in

terms of any learning or research outcomes, even if useful in strengthening social (affective) solidarity. Given that pedagogical results from field-trips can range from cognitive to affective outcomes (DeWitt & Storksdieck, 2008; Knutson, 2016), and extend to modification of behaviour (e.g. Alon and Tal (2015) found that exposure to environmental issues in the field, as self-reported by students, changed their personal actions/responses to perceived anthropogenic degradation), the need was to find a structure for field-trips that would enhance these multiple objectives. Thus, some six years ago we embarked on a new approach to the design of our fieldtrips in order to maximize teaching, learning and research outcomes, with the realization that a much more specific research framework beyond background briefing was needed to guide students to more productive outputs (Behrendt & Franklin, 2014).

PLATE 2. These images convey a 'social landscape of tourism', a composite of images that constitute the streetscapes of Cheung Chau, the practices of tourism and spectatorship that organize 'ways of seeing' … The ambiguity of these images evokes a number of possible interpretations. It is an ambiguity that may find resolution, coherence and critique through the eye of the reader [Paraphrasing Neumann, 1992].

PLATE 3. Cheung Chau Bun Festival,1–3 May 2017. "I think photographs should have no caption, just location and date … I won't give explanations. My photographs are there; I do not comment." (Famous photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson, 1979; quoted in Franklin, 2018).

In this context, we considered the following research question: What combination of methods could positively shape students' ability to work in small teams to produce sound, field-based research analyses that would achieve the desired cognitive and affective consequences and outcomes? What design features were necessary to strike a balance between encouraging creativity on the one hand, while avoiding programming that, if too rigid, might stifle student-originated discovery on the other? (Griffin & Symington, 1997).

Our restructuring followed guidance from Baildon and Damico (2011) that an inquiry-based framework for the teaching and learning of social studies should start by identifying worthy investigative questions, combined with Griffin's (2017, p.290) caution that for benefits to be maximized from fieldtrips: "pedagogical considerations are central to the participants' planning and undertaking of such experiential trips" and must be carefully formulated in advance. Contextually, we thus formulated our aim for the Cheung Chau field trip in broad terms as follows: "To enhance the relationship between a field-trip and the potential benefits to students' critical thinking, creativity and capacity to apply 'real world' observations and findings, the students would analyze the abstract concepts of community sustainability and resilience as
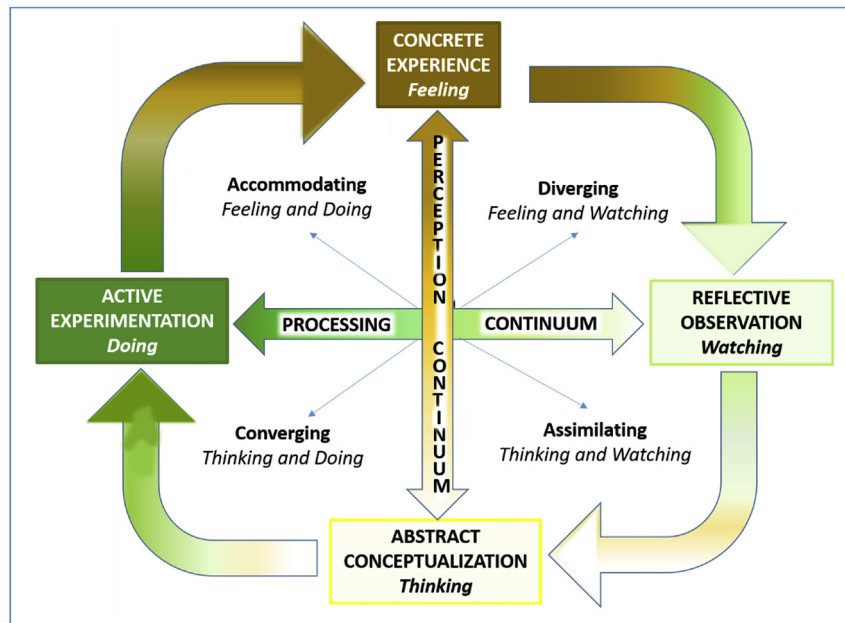
Diagram 1. Experiential learning cycle (after Kolb, 1984).

they relate to tourism in a small island environment." Cognizant of Griffin's (2017) view, we utilized Lew, Ng, Ni & Wu's (2016) list of 32 indicators of community sustainability and resilience to provide the framework of 'worthy questions' the students could investigate, and while this was being somewhat prescriptive, the sheer number of variables and indicators provided ample scope for the students to exercise creativity and display their analytical skills in attempting to identify them and apply them to specific instances on Cheung Chau.

Drawing on a wide range of field-trip techniques and methods from the literature (e.g. Beckendorff & Zehrer 2017; Bell, Lewenstein, Shouse, & Feder, 2009; Bryman, 2012; Griffin, 2017) and a combined 50 years of practical experience in conducting field trips in multiple settings and different countries by the authors, we evaluated the merits of different approaches to fieldtrips and identified six core pedagogical purposes to drive the exercise. These were:

1. Familiarizing the students with the methodologies of visual anthropology, including photo elicitation (cognitive). This method was prioritized to encourage creativity, and simultaneously was a specific response to the ubiquitous behaviour of taking "selfies" in order to harness their constant use of e-media for imagery by re-channelling that energy through applying the techniques of visual anthropology;
2. Combining that method with ethnographic participant observation, both for data collection in a 'real-life' situation and new knowledge generation as our chosen tools for undertaking a Rapid Appraisal (RA): (cognitive);
3. Providing a hands-on introduction to and basic training in the technique of RA (cognitive);
4. Honing student skills in critical thinking, including analysis and interpretation (cognitive). In combination with the preceding methods, this was to activate student-initiated research findings and conclusions;
5. Developing team work in research through a simplified application of Habermas' (1989a,b) concept of communicative action which is designed to achieve consensus in actions and decision making by stakeholders (affective). This entailed the students entering into a social contract to undertake decision-making through accord rather than majority vote or administrative fiat, providing a foundation for reinforcing their teamwork; and

6. Pursuing cooperation and collaboration through post field-work production by each team of a visual essay (applying Habermas to achieve consensus on what went into each report), and group discussions (cognitive and affective). This essay simulated a Rapid Appraisal (RA) approach to data gathering (cognitive).

A key element of this multi-methods approach was to address the gap in knowledge by expanding our understanding of the role that critical visual research can play in generating new knowledge (Rakic & Chambers 2012) and also data for a Rapid Appraisal, both as forms of 'action learning' in order to contribute to improved learning and research outcomes of fieldtrips. Hence, the focus of this paper is on methodologies to be applied in the field rather than on analysis of the data collected, although the latter is also referenced. Before expanding on each of the core features it is necessary to outline briefly the concept of experiential learning theory (ELT), defined as "learning through experience" by Jakubowski (2003,p.25), of which fieldtrips are one manifestation.

3. Experiential learning theory (ELT) and fieldtrips

Pedagogically, fieldtrips are not only a time-honoured way of extending the knowledge of students by introducing them to actual situations outside the classroom but by providing them with experiential learning through research methodologies in the 'real world' (Jakubowski, 2003). ELT dates back to ancient times in both east and west, as evidenced by the ancient Chinese saying quoted above and Aristotle's equally famous statement: '*For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them*' (Aristotle (350 B.C.).). In its modern pedagogical form it is derived from Dewey's, 1938 theory of experience, refined by Lewin as reiterated by Cartwright (1951) to encompass group dynamics in action learning and research. Kolb (1984, p.41) described ELT as "… *the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and converting experience.*" Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle (see Diagram 1) is an integrated process with each stage being mutually supportive of and feeding into the next. It is possible to enter the cycle at any stage and follow it through its logical sequence (Beckendorff & Zehrer 2017).

Fieldtrips constitute one way of transforming Kolb's theoretical

cycle into practice. As Jakubowski (2003, p.24) stated: "*By connecting classroom and community, by taking learning beyond the text … fieldtrips constitute a framework of inquiry-based learning as opposed to a reliance on direct instruction.*" She noted that critically responsive pedagogy invites involvement and can be realized by utilizing a conceptual framework into which is incorporated experience, critical thinking and reflection, and action. Fieldtrips may be less structured than formal classroom education, but Pitman, Broomhall, McEwan, and Majocha (2010) contend that learning which takes place in a more open-ended, unrestricted context where spontaneous circumstances may arise, can generate equally significant inputs for a student's educational development. Scherle and Reiser (2017, p.123), noting the capacity of fieldtrips to expose students to social and cultural environments they might not normally encounter (a "contextual engagement") argue that "*fieldtrips may foster a new understanding of the social world as it can motivate students to question their social environment*" and seek an improved understanding of factors within it. Beckendorff & Zehrer (2017) also conclude that since education is the process of acquiring knowledge then it should not be restricted to classrooms and textbooks but should include the types of experience and observations that can be gained from fieldtrips. An additional benefit of fieldtrips is an obvious novelty value perceived by many students in taking them out of the classroom and placing them in less familiar environments/settings that tend to facilitate greater motivation in learning (Falk, 1983). See Plate 4.

We now move on to explore the various methodologies applied in our fieldtrips.

4. Visual anthropology: photography as visual literacy and a methodology for tourism research

Anthropology is a conglomerate of disciplines – variously labelled and structured in different countries as 'just' anthropology, or divided between social, cultural and physical anthropology, or as ethnography, ethnology, human geography or social history – that aims to record the collective behaviour of humans in their social and cultural contexts (Mead, 2003, p. 3 in Hockings, 2003). In the past 40 years, these descriptors have been increased with the term 'Visual anthropology' and this refers to the use of the photographs and film/video when they are utilized as a predominant methodology of research in social sciences (Weber, 2008). Simply put, "*Visual methods entail the use of images to learn about the social world*" (Hartel & Thomson, 2011, p. 215). Weber (2008, p.42) lists ten reasons outlining the value of photography as a research tool (Table 1 refers):

In this context, our starting point is that photography is a visual language and as such possesses some of the same features as spoken and written language in terms of communication characteristics and structure (Jacobsen, 2007). The motivations for taking some photographs and not others, their framing and their focus of attention, and the uses to which they are put, are also, like languages, culturally and socially constructed, often institutionally determined. In tourism studies this sort of approach is evidenced for example in discussions about postcolonial rhetoric on ethnic tourism and visitation to former colonies (Dann, 1996; Caton & Santos, 2008, González, 2009). Stereotypically, however, photography and photographs for many decades were not viewed as a language open to interpretation but rather as a given truth depicting reality, a factual record - and the legal systems in many countries continue to reinforce this approach with their use of photographs and surveillance recordings as evidence: 'The camera does not lie'. Conversely, when understood as a language photographs *carry the same subjective, interpretive potential as words when they are "read", … imbued with meaning for the viewer* (Moran & Tegano, 2005, p. 2). Sturken & Cartwright (2003, p. 56, cited in Moran & Tegano, 2005, p. 3) note that:

> *Photographs, like words, are both encoded and decoded with meaning. The creator first encodes a photograph with meaning or intention when*

she takes the photograph, (and then) "*it is further encoded when it is placed in a given setting or context*".

Thus, an observer of photographs interprets (decodes) or 'reads' meanings into them in much the same way as words are interpreted. "Reading" photographic images is –

> … *in many ways an extremely subjective process: There are no boundaries, no strictly defined limits to meaning but rather a pluralism of approach and meaning (and) while this leads to interpretive complexity, it points also to the richness of the photographic record in both theoretical and evidential modes*" (Edwards, 1996, p.4).

The 20th century French humanist photographer, Henri Cartier-Bresson, who pioneered the genre of street photography, famously said in an interview in 1979:

> "*I think photographs should have no caption, just location and date … I won't give explanations. My photographs are there; I do not comment*" (in Franklin, 2018, p.2).

An example of the ambiguity of photographs taken to its extreme is by the influential 20th century American photographer, Richard Misrach, with his book of photographs of desert landscapes: it has no title page, no introduction, no captions on the photographs, not even page numbers. The only text is the title of the book on the spine, and its publisher (Misrach, 1979). Berger (1973, p.3) argued that: "*All photographs are ambiguous,*" a state promoted by discontinuity because we cannot know what happened before nor after that particular moment of time frozen by the camera lens. He paid tribute to the power of photographs to exist as text in their own right in his 1973 book, "*Ways of Seeing*", in which three of its seven chapters use only images, while the other four are a combination of both images and text.

Photography may be subjected to the same semiotic analysis as any other signs or representational system that are used to produce and communicate messages/meaning. Linguistics identifies two elements of a sign, that of signifier and the signified (Saussure 1916 translated by Harris 1983; Allan, 2009). Its most distinctive theoretical characteristic is that it negates the division of subject from object: semiotics locates the sign as an original unification of subject and object, such that a sign (e,g, a road sign depicting animals crossing) represents something (a kangaroo) to someone (the driver/passengers/tourists). In other words, for meaning to be constructed, the signifier and the signified must exist in relation to each other. Hall (1997, p.31) states that: "*It is the relationship between form and meaning that is fixed by our cultural and linguistic codes, which sustains representation*".

From this perspective then, "*photographs are culturally situated and consequently convey different meanings to different viewers based on personal life experiences, knowledge, and perspectives*" (Moran & Tegano, 2005, p. 4).

There has been an increasing use of visual material in social and cultural research that until recently was not matched to the same extent in tourism and travel studies which have generally been slower in adopting them. This is somewhat surprising given that photography and tourism have been bedfellows since the invention of the camera in the 19th century (Horne, 1992; Osborne, 2000), and more specifically since Urry in his globally acclaimed "The Tourist Gaze" published in 1990 (revised in 2002), asserted that we live in a world of "omnipotent vision" (2002, p.144), of the "awesome dominance of the spectacle (spectacular) (2002, p.149), where he privileged the ocularcentric over other senses. Thus while tourism encompasses all senses, Urry argued that the visual experience predominates for perhaps a majority of tourists and is based on the consumption of sights. One might have expected a surge in visual research in tourism as a result of his seminal work, but in this context Feighey thirteen year later wrote that while:

> *Knowledge about the world is increasingly articulated visually and the ocularcentric nature of tourism is widely recognized by tourism professionals and academics as well as by tourists and locals … much tourism*

(caption on next page)

PLATE 4. Fieldtrips. Photographs, like words, are both encoded and decoded with meaning. The creator first encodes a photograph with meaning or intention when she takes the photograph, (and then) "it is further encoded when it is placed in a given setting or context" (Sturken & Cartwright, 2003, p.56).

Table 1

	Ten Reasons outlining the value of photography in field research (Weber, 2008)
1	Images can be used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into words
2	Images can make us pay attention to things in a new way.
3	Images are likely to be memorable.
4	Images can be used to communicate more holistically, incorporating multiple layers, and evoking stories or questions.
5	Images can enhance empathetic understanding and generalizability.
6	Through metaphor and symbol, artistic images can carry theory elegantly and eloquently.
7	Images encourage embodied knowledge.
8	Images can be more accessible than most forms of academic discourse.
9	Images can facilitate reflexivity in research design.
10	Images provoke action for social justice.

Table 2
Visual research.

	Four Types of Visual Data used in Visual Research (after Prosser & Loxley, 2008, p. 5, p.5)
1	***'Found' images*** Pre-existing photographs, film and other images that become the focus of a visual research project
2	***Researcher- created data*** Empirical researchers typically look/perceive and record/document their observations
3	***Respondent-created data*** Participatory research between the respondents/subjects and the researcher in which visual methods potentially enhance respondents' contributions
4	***The visual as representation*** Representing data and findings but with a visual orientation

research does not reflect the importance of the visual in tourism …. Despite the importance of the visual in tourism, image-based research methods are simply not on the agenda for many (Feighey, 2003, p.76 and p.78).

Later work by Rakic and Chambers (2008, 2009), Hillman (2007) and Scarles (2010), arrived at much the same conclusion as Feighey (2003), with Rakic and Chambers (2008 p.146) echoing the views of Crang (2003) and Pink (2007) that there was in general a reticence by tourism researchers to pursue innovative approaches.

In contrary vein, social sciences researchers Prosser and Loxley (2008, p.4) noted that other disciplines were active in embracing visual literacy and research, referring to:

An international 'sea change' in methodology (that) has led to a growing interest in 'beyond text' across disciplines. Visual methods cover a range of alternative, diverse and creative possibilities that will expand and support the shifting orientation of social science research and ultimately advance knowledge. Simply put visual methods can provide an alternative to the hegemony of a word-and-numbers based academy.

In fact, the use of creative visual media in social studies is not new although an extension into participatory modes leading to 'action research' is more novel (Buckingham, 2009; Shaw, 2017).

Recognizing the gap in tourism literature, Robinson & Piccard (2009) compiled an eclectic collection of 14 essays assessing the visual in tourism from the perspectives of five or six different disciplines. Included among them were discussions of 'visual anthropology' as a practice and methodology that could both enrich interpretations of tourists' social behaviour and lead to new knowledge (see chapters by Martinez and Albers, 2009; Frankland, 2009; Hoskins, 2009; Lanfant, 2009). In 2010 Feighey, taking cognizance of a growing literature such as the contribution made by Robinson & Picard, reversed his earlier judgement and acknowledged that tourism studies were joining other social sciences in increasingly using visual literacy as a tool to enhance tourism knowledge. Lean (2011) supported this perception, suggesting that after a long and slow gestation, a meaningful effort to integrate visual methodologies more broadly in tourism research, often closely interconnected to theoretical changes in cultural and social sciences, was finally occurring.

Prosser and Loxley (2008) identified four types of visual data used across disciplines that are also increasingly appearing in tourism research (Table 2 refers).

The study of ***found images*** (i.e. pre-existing sets of photographs such as may be located in family albums or in copies of 100-year old magazines) achieved substance in the second half of the 20th century when, for example, the disciplines of history and sociology collaborated to cast new light on the life and times of past generations (e.g.

Gernsheim (1981) on 19th century Victorian and Edwardian Fashion, and Linkman (1992) on travel photography in England in the 1850s). The Victoria & Albert Museum, London, held an exhibition in 2013 of travel photographs in the 19th century that very effectively captured the nexus between both fields (ie. photography and travel: Plate 5 refers). Postcards have proved a fruitful source of 'found' images in tourism research for a number of years. Postcards and tourism grew together in the 19th century with the concurrent invention of the camera and the advent of mass tourism, and there are many studies that through their images explore their history, relationship to and reflection of social values and behaviour of different times, destination characteristics, host-guest relations, ethnicity, colonialism, sexism, humour, identity construction, collectability, the role of travel photographs and postcards as souvenirs in stimulating memory, and so forth. See from many examples, Burns (2004) who interprets postcards from Arabia as "a visual discourse of colonial travels in the Orient"; Edwards (1996) in Selwyn (1996) on myth-making through postcard images; Markwick (2001, p.417) who analyses postcards from Malta as "*a system of representation and their associated social functions*" to dissect theories of tourist expectations and motivation; Cohen (2007) on images of Santa Claus on Thai postcards; Cohen (2013) on the representation of Arabs and Jews on postcards in Israel; Hearn (2013) on British humour evident in 'saucy' seaside postcards; and Wheeler (2013) on the history of postcards over time and their reflection of changes in tourism. Travel brochures share a similar historical canvas of photographs as an abundant source of 'found' images (Jenkins, 2003). Plate 5 provides examples of 'Found images'.

Researcher-created visual data (such as photos and diagrams) were first used in social research in the early 19th century with the development of 'modern' sociology, although science used drawings and diagrams going back millennia (Banks, 2007). In anthropology, the most famed example is that of Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead: *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis* (1942). After ten years studying and photographing communities in Bali they compiled, analyzed and published 759 photographs from a set of 24,000 of their own photographs "*to present several perspectives on a single subject, or in sequences which showed how a social event evolved through time*" (Harper, 1998, p. 26). Bateson and Mead "*used theory and knowledge of the field of anthropology to interpret, contextualize, and validate their photographic data, and* (while some of their interpretations were later criticized) *this method made photography a respected tool in anthropological research*" (de Brigard, 1995, p. 26).

One of the recognized limitations of researcher-created visual data is the potential for imposition of an etic narrative that may be at significant variation with an emic understanding of what the images portray, and therefore of a need to strike a balance between external

Plate 5. 'Found' Images. In 2013 the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, held an exhibition on 'Photography and Travel' displaying 19th century photographs to capture the intimate relationship between the two. The link between tourism and photography was further reinforced by the fact that the Museum is a major tourist attraction in the UK, receiving 3,789,748 visitors in 2017.
[Source: Photographs of captions and images by the lead author when visiting the Museum in 2013].

and internal readings of the data. In other words the divide between positivism where the images are accepted as depicting 'reality' and interpretivism, which is also a long-standing discourse in non-visual research methods, needs to be bridged (Winston, 1998). Participatory collaboration between the researcher and respondent/subject-generated visual data is one way of mitigating this divide. The use of a form

of visual anthropology on our fieldtrips to Cheung Chau island is an example of researcher-created visual data, and this is discussed in more detail below.

Respondent-created visual data is a research method that is common in social health, in education with school children taking photographs as they engage in undertaking various educational

Table 3
Issues with social media visual resources.
(Source: From Sigala, 2017)

Some characteristics, limitations and potential biases of social media visual resources
1   Demographics are not broadly representative: millenials dominate their use and older generations are less evident (we would add: other than 'grey nomads' perhaps).
2   "Selfie gaze" tourists see and experience the destination largely through their cameras and the comments and feedback that they receive to their posts.
3   This may distort an image of the destination/attraction/activity because their level of satisfaction may be dependent upon how many "likes" and positive comments they receive (or conversely negative responses), rather than the actual quality of the destination and experience. Thus -
4   The perception that "everyone is watching me" can change the way people consume places and what they see and how they behave at a destination in order to highlight positive attributes, socially desirous experiences and present a more idealized self.
5   To achieve this outcome through their online profiles and posts, even though the weather may be dismal or the experience unsatisfactory, they may 'stage-manage' an opposite picture by 'filtering out' undesirable elements.
6   Hence, 'Selfie gaze' tourists not only participate in touristic photography, they artificially create it, for example, engaging in the performance of various intimate relations (hugging family members) and facial expressions to externalize emotions (duck face).
7   Where photographs were once used as a personal travel memory, social media have converted them to a significant public source of travel inspiration and the most popular way of online communication, self-expression & identity formation.

activities, in anthropology and sociology where some researchers have provided ethnic minorities and others who have never used cameras before with cheap cameras to record their life through their eyes. It has been described as a process to empower the subjects (Harper, 1998), and in the past 20 years it has become an accepted methodology in some disciplines. But as a methodology for gathering emic understandings it has gained little traction in tourism research when the respondents are identified as subjects/hosts/locals who are recipients of tourists/tourism.

If however, tourists are the respondents from whom researchers seek visually created data then there is an increasingly-utilized methodology called VEP (Visitor-Employed Photography), a term conceived by Cherem in 1972 who recruited visitors to take photographs to assess their response to a USA wildlife park (cited in Prosser & Loxley, 2008). Chenoweth (1984) applied the same VEP technique to landscape architecture. A variation is 'Volunteer Employed Photography' (also VEP: Garrod, 2007) which has attracted a number of tourism researchers (e.g. Balomenoua & Garrod, 2014; Gou & Shibata, 2017; Hillman, 2007). Different themes may be defined by the researcher to guide visitors in their photo-shoots such as how they view a destination, or what are the most important components of a historical heritage site or a national park. In other cases there may be no instructions so random imagery that reflects a visitor's own proclivities may result. The collections of photographs are then analyzed, with or without interviews of the photographers themselves (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004). Practitioners include Andersson-Cederholm (2004) who used sets of photographs taken by backpackers, together with narratives also produced by the same backpackers, to explore 'deviance' from mass tourism in the context of backpacker culture seeking 'off-the-beaten-track' travel experiences; and Caton and Santos (2008, p.7) who classified photographs taken by American students on a study-abroad programme to several Asian countries into five dichotomies rooted in colonial discourse:

> "traditional/modern, subject/object, master/servant, center/periphery, and devious-lazy/moral-industrious. … The analyzed photographs completed a circle of representation inscribed with sociocultural ideologies of Western power and dominance."

Urry's concept of 'the hermeneutic circle of representation in tourism' first proposed in 1990 (2002, p.127), provided a variation on VEP in which tourists are not directed or 'employed' but produce photographs of their own volition in which they are both "consumers" of images created by others and "producers" of images that will be consumed by future tourists (the findings of Caton and Santos (2008) constitute such an example of Urry's hermeneutic circle). When Urry first proposed this notion in 1990, electronic photography was in its infancy and electronic photo-sharing platforms such as Facebook, TripAdviser and Flickr did not exist. Technical advances since then have resulted in a mega-explosion of publicly available images where tourists have become active contributors to an immense system of image production and

reproduction. The general term for such activity is UGP – 'User Generated Photography', where there is no researcher-guided input (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013). When subjected to interpretation and analysis both forms of VEP and UGP are forms of 'photo-elicitation' (Hurworth, 2003; Prosser & Loxley, 2008). The sheer volume of UGP can materially affect the image of a destination outside the intention, scope and control of tourism industry destination image creators/place-makers such as marketing authorities and individual tourism businesses. This resource has facilitated a relatively new area of research into the capacity of 'the electronic tourist gaze' to influence decision making - see for example, Gali and Donnaire (2015) who analyzed 3,400 tourists' photos downloaded from Flickr to demonstrate how tourists have created alternative visions of Barcelona, Spain, from its 'official' industry promotion/promoters; and Stepchenkova and Zhan (2013) who carried out a similar study on Peru. It can be anticipated that the ready availability of many millions of publicly available UGPs will generate visual research into aspects of tourism that is only just beginning to be tapped.

The limitations of accessing these resources need to be recognized, however. Lo, McKercher, Lo, Cheung & Law (2011, p.725) in a study of Hong Kong tourists who shared photographs on-line, reported that while 89% of all pleasure travellers took photographs only 41% of them posted their photographs on-line. They tended to be younger, better education and with higher incomes that those who did not, and they represented five different segments based on number and type of media used, demographic profile and travel motive. Sigala (2017) noted that identifying, searching and sharing tourism experiences and information especially through 'selfies' and other visual representation have been identified as principal ways in which social media has transformed the tourist experience, but there are significant issues to consider in utilizing them. She outlined a number of their limitations and characteristic, and we have distilled these into a list (see Table 3).

Hillman (2007, p.136) accepts some of the potential for bias but only to a certain point, suggesting that the filtering-out that occurs can nevertheless represent valid representations of the world view of the individual and that self-generated photographs "authenticate the travel and justification for the exploration of the "real", the "true" and the 'authentic' validation of the journey carried out." She argues that this is particularly so of backpackers who strive to move away from the well-trodden paths of the mass tourist even when the photographs they themselves take are replicas of familiar images of the 'frontier' or the 'Outback': they are 'hard' genuine evidence that the traveller 'has been there'. This democratization of content production has pushed to the sidelines the 'gatekeeper role' traditionally played by newspapers, magazine editors and TV producers who prior to the advent of social e-media vetted all content before it was published or aired (Chin-Fook & Simmonds 2011). Notwithstanding Hillman's contrary arguments, we would suggest that 'self-censorship' is a common feature of many online photographic postings and merits further research.

The fourth type of visual data listed by Prosser and Loxley (2008, p.42) is that of **representation** which has two main strands: visual representation of word and numbers-based research; and visual representation of visual research. The former is manifest largely in graphics (pie charts, bar charts, columns, graphs, tables, diagrams) and they have been utilized for many hundreds of years to illustrate text. Geographers have of course drawn maps for centuries, and Google maps and other interactive e-media maps have revolutionized this aspect of their work. Visual representation of visual research has a strong emphasis on photography (*vide* Scarles, (2004) on interrogating landscapes though the medium of photography) and film and video, although sketching, pictograms, pictographs, cartoons and drawings are all part of the mix (Rakic & Chambers 2012). Because images have polysemic attributes (Edelheim, 2007), in a great majority of cases they are accompanied by text or captions so that the researcher directs the reader/ observer to the preferred meaning with the aim of reinforcing the researcher's assumptions. Critics argue that accompanying captions and text with photographs short-circuit the possibility of equally valid alternative interpretations and may even be perceived as a power play and the imposition of a political perspective – the socially and/or politically powerful exerting influence over the less powerful (Rosler, 1989). The counter-claim is that photos as visual representation increase the impact on the observer and that their polysemic nature underpins their advantages as a teaching and learning tool.

In the last decade in particular there has been an increase in studies across a broad spectrum of tourism topics that are image-based. In general the research has followed two lines of enquiry: (i). the 'projected image' and (ii) 'perceived images' (Gali & Donnaire, 2015). The first investigates from different standpoints those images instigated/ created/manufactured by the tourism industry and agencies engaged in place-making, destination promotion and marketing to attract tourists. Just a few of the many examples include Dewar, Li & Davis (2007) on marketing; Hunter (2012), on the destination image of Seoul; Santos (1998) on tour operators' promotional material in the formation of the destination image of China; and so forth. By contrast the latter research concerns analysis of photos and other images as they expose "*values, ideas and ideologies related to experiences, knowledge and individual and subjective perceptions built in the minds of tourists*" (Gali & Donnaire, 2015, p.893). A number of examples have already been cited above, including Robinson & Piccard (2009). Both categories are relevant to research into the relationship of photography to a tourist destination (Chalfen, 1979; Garrod, 2009).

On the whole, however, while visual material is growing as an area of tourism research, visual **essays** are largely absent from the mix. According to Lean (2011), "*arguably the most prominent proponents of visual essays are Berger and Mohr … (who) in "A Fortunate Man" (1997) observe the life of a doctor in the English countryside, using both a photographic and narrative essay. This book is considered a landmark work in the sociology of medicine.*" Berger (1972) and Misrach (1979), as noted above, were also proponents of visual essays devoid of text. Lean goes on to say that the use of visual essays in tourism, travel and mobilities writings is very limited. One such example is Neumann (1992), who authored an eight-page visual essay in the journal, *Visual Studies*, about the Grand Canyon that consisted of 15 uncaptioned photographs with less than one page of explanatory text. Neumann wrote that:

> *The images convey a 'social landscape of tourism' a composite of public images that constitute the Grand Canyon, the practices of tourism and spectatorship, the signs and devices that organize 'ways of seeing' and the icons of popular travel. I believe that the ambiguity of these images evoke a number of possible interpretations. It is an ambiguity that may find resolution, coherence and critique through the eye of the reader* (p.29, cited in Lean, 2011, p.328).

Another rare example is that of Edensor, Christie and Lloyd who in 2008 had a photographic essay published in the journal, *Space and Culture,* which incorporated uncaptioned photos, accompanied by a short written essay to capture attributes of a site to be developed for the 2012 London Olympics (not quite tourism-oriented although obviously falling within the scope of leisure and sports).

Lean himself in his doctoral thesis (2011) incorporated a visual narrative essay (chapter 3) with numerous photos taken while researching three 'marginal' destinations (the undeclared war zone of Cote D'Ivoire and neighbouring countries in west Africa; Timore Leste in the final stages of its fight for independence; and the traumatic killing fields of Cambodia), a formative contribution in constructing a framework for his textual analysis of transformative travel. He stated that the visual material provided - "*a level of detail about relationships, roles, performances, encounters, memories and emotions that take place during physical travel that were unavailable within written accounts*" (Lean, 2011, p. 126). This conclusion mirrors some of Weber's (2008, p.42) ten reasons outlining the value of photography as a research tool (quoted above) and also finds an echo in Scarles (2010, p.905), who suggests that a fusion of visual elicitation and auto-ethnography offers a useful method for investigating "*the embodied performances of tourists' experiences*", that marshalls "*spaces of understanding*" and moves beyond the confines of oral and written communication to a more enlightened, reflexive position. She submits that:

> *Visual auto-ethnography becomes the bridge that connects researcher and respondent experiences within the interview … (and) facilitates an enriched research space within which previously 'hidden' embodied knowledges are shared.*

As identified by Prosser and Loxley (2008) another element in visual analysis is a participatory approach that facilitates different forms of photo-elicitation. In its most basic form photo-elicitation is the use of photographs (whether researcher-created, respondent-created or found) in a research interview to stimulate a response involving either the researcher and/or the subjects as photographers, with the researcher in both cases then engaging subjects in the interpretation of the resultant photos to obtain emic ('insider') understandings that reveal more nuanced meanings. Table 4 (below) sets out Hurworth's (2003) ascription of four categories of photo-elicitation, each process located on a continuum of greater to lesser participant involvement in the assembly and analysis of photographic data:

These four categories challenge the 'myth of photographic truth' (Sturken and Cartwright 2003) and add credence to the belief that, as with any form of communication, photographic images are open to a multitude of interpretations, exploration of which can reveal perspectives and meanings within the research process (Close, 2007).

In the context of our fieldtrips to Cheung Chau the type of student-generated visual material does not fit neatly into one or other of the four categories of photo-elicitation as employed by anthropology and sociology, since all of those four categories incorporate the researcher actively collaborating with subjects in jointly-produced interpretative outputs. Rather our departure from Hurworth's four categories consists of variants, as follows:

1. The subjects (residents of Cheung Chau, tourists visiting Cheung Chau) take no photographs for the research
2. Every member of each student research team contributes to the joint co-creation of a critical visual essay with photographs they themselves took during their fieldwork (primary participation in photo production);
3. All teams engaged in the fieldtrip participate in appraising each other's visual essays. The essays were (in random order) submitted for whole-of-cohort scrutiny and elicited comment from the cohort as peer reviewers, often producing different interpretations and re-interpretations of the photographs displayed (secondary participatory discussion, polysemic readings, first stage of 'the iterative process', Beebe, 1995); and
4. Subsequent analysis of the students' visual essays by the supervisory researchers generated new knowledge based on joint contributions

Table 4
Categories of photo elicitation.

Categories of photo-elicitation (after Hurworth, 2003)

'Autodriving'
Developed as a market research tool in which the researcher photographs participants who are then asked to reflect on their behaviour. For example, Heisley & Levy, 1991, used this technique to obtain interpretations by consumers of their behaviour as represented in photographs they (the researchers) had taken.

'Reflexive photography'
Uses images taken by subjects as participants foil owed by reflective interview in which they interpret the meaning behind the image. For example, Lehna and Tholcken (2001) used this technique to explore nursing students' perceptions of case management.

'Photo novella'
Requires subjects as participants to construct a 'story' about a photograph taken by them to stimulate change in their environment or social situation. For example, LeClerc, Wells, Craig, and Wilson (2002) elicited rich interview data with elderly Canadian women about their experiences of life after hospital discharge.

'Photovoice'
Developed (e.g. Wang, Cash, & Powers, 2000) as an extension of photo novella, in that photographs are explicitly used to effect awareness and change at community level. This technique has been used with women as victims of domestic violence to explore the meaning of safety in their lives and to stimulate social action (Frohmann, 2005).

LEAST PARTICIPATION → GREATEST PARTICIPATION

by the staff and students in a further extension of participatory scholarship (subsequential staff/student collaboration in a second stage of the iterative process, after Beebe, 1995).

This approach ties into "*the conception of participatory knowledge as an experiential production*" held by Franzen and Orr (2016, p.5) who state that: "*Knowledge emerges through experimentation with participating in and creating cultural (and pedagogical) forms.*" In our case the process of co-creation of visual essays by tourism students often elicited new knowledge and this was enhanced by subsequent staff researcher reviews that added to the research output. There were occasions when one or more members of a research team engaged the subject(s) of one or more of their photographs (i.e. Cheung Chau residents or tourists) to help them (the researchers) understand the story behind the picture, and when this occurred the participatory element moved the research closer to 'autodriving (category 1 of photo-elicitation); but it is not aimed at market analysis so remains apart.

An example of this kind of participatory photo elicitation/knowledge expansion occurred in 2014 when one team took a photograph of an old lady selling about 30 types of hand-produced marine products (smoked, sun dried, baked, salted, oiled, preserved – fish, prawns, octopi, seahorses, shellfish of many kinds, etc) from a small stall in a little alleyway, and then interviewed her about her work. It transpired that she was 90 years old, and that she was the sixth generation of her fisherfolk family to process and sell marine products from outside the family home. She said that there were only four other old persons (two women, two men, all in their 90s) living on Cheung Chau who still possessed her age-old skills to process marine products, and so when they died the traditions would die with them. She said that none of her seven sons or daughters were interested in learning her trade, and all but one had moved off the island to Hong Kong, where education meant that none of her 20 grandchildren and great grandchildren had any interest in returning to live on Cheung Chau. This interview sparked the research team to examine the loss of sustainability and resilience through inability to retain traditional skills and fishing lifestyle, also an examination of intergenerational equity, and their visual essay included 8 other photographs that explored various aspects of waning traditions.

This interaction constitutes an example of how the different methodologies were combined: it commenced with visual anthropology depicting traditional knowledge (see Plate 6), moved in to ethnographic

participant observation, involved the technique of rapid appraisal, and was included by consensus in the final powerpoint presentation, with critical thinking underlying the whole process of data collection and interpretation, all elements contributing to a manifestation of experiential learning.

This interpretation of the waning of traditional knowledge and therefore loss of sustainability and resilience was coupled with a series of photographs and ethnographic participant observation by another team that focused on the demographics of aging, including the fact that Cheung Chau has a large number of Seniors' Homes which act as attractors for families who have migrated out to Hong Kong city to return 'home' to see their aged relatives (VFR (Visiting Friends & Relatives)). Preliminary investigation suggested that a significant number of the residents of these homes were retirees from mainland Hong Kong escaping the pollution and bustle, thus reinforcing the 'pull factor' for VFR. The contribution that aging and VFR could make to tourism sustainability is an under-researched area, and Cheung Chau as a site for such an investigation was revealed through the data gathered by the students using the combination of different methodologies on their fieldtrips. Plate 7 depicts seniors on Cheung Chau.

5. Rapid appraisal

From the large and varied amount of material available about the concept of Rapid Appraisal (RA) only several pertinent references are drawn upon to provide the basis for understanding how we adapted RA for use in our fieldtrips to Cheung Chau. A widely accepted definition is that of Beebe (1995, p.42):

"Rapid appraisal is an approach for quickly developing a preliminary understanding of a situation where specific research techniques are chosen from a wide range of options and where it is assumed that:

(1) *all the relevant parts of a local system cannot be identified in advance;*

(2) *the local system is best understood by combining the expertise of a multidisciplinary team that includes locals; while*

(3) *combining information collected in advance, direct observations and semi-structured interviews; and*

(4) *time should be structured to ensure team interaction as part of the iterative process."*

Plate 6. Traditional knowledge. Images communicate holistically, incorporating multiple layers and evoking stories and questions (after Weber, 2008). "Photographs are culturally situated and consequently convey different meanings to different viewers based on personal life experiences, knowledge, and perspectives" (Moran & Tegano, 2005, p. 4).

PLATE 7. Seniors. "Visual methods entail the use of images to learn about the social world" (Hartel & Thomson, 2011, p. 215). What is powerful about images is their capacity to generate meaning, and not merely to transmit it (Buck-Morss, 2004, p.23). If each photograph was accompanied by a caption and text, could they be seen as short-circuiting the possibility of equally valid alternative interpretations, as a power play even, and the imposition of a political perspective – the socially and/or politically powerful exerting influence over the less powerful (Rosler, 1989)? Or do these photos as visual representation increase the impact on the observer and does their polysemic nature underpin their advantage as a teaching and learning tool?.

The concept of RA constitutes an effortless 'fit' with fieldtrip exercises and experiential learning theory since it takes place 'out there' and not in the classroom, and is based on a team or teams to undertake the research. It was originally advanced by social scientists as a way to amass timely information about the social and cultural aspects of natural resource management within a very short time frame (typically just a few days to a few weeks) and was labelled 'Rapid Rural Appraisal' by

early practitioners (Beebe, 1995; Chambers, 1980; Kumar, 1993). It has been adopted by many development agencies such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, United Nations social and technical agencies, other multi-national aid agencies and bilateral aid agencies delivering development assistance to many Third World countries as they began to realize that technical projects meant to alleviate poverty often missed the mark because of the lack of socio-economic data. The

original focus on rural issues from a technical agricultural perspective gave way to a much broader interpretation of rapid appraisal in which multi-disciplinary teams (including especially anthropologists, sociologists and geographers) joined with technical experts from e.g. transport, health, education, engineering, etc, to obtain both a wider and a deeper understanding of issues, often from a systems perspective. For the past three decades RA has been a widely used and effective tool for compiling and analyzing data in a variety of fields, not just quickly but with a degree of acceptable accuracy. By the mid-1990s, a number of other terms appeared which placed greater emphasis on the participatory element of RAs, such as 'participatory rural appraisal (PRA)' and 'participatory learning and action' (PLA) (Chambers, 1997). This approach entailed adding one or more local/indigenous members to a team so that the data could be enriched through what we have described as an emic ('insider') perspective.

Rapid appraisal is not a substitute for long-term basic research methods, including questionnaire survey methods (Kumar, 1993, p. 44). As a short term method, in general a RA cannot generate the statistically sound results offered by a survey covering a valid random sample of say 500 or more respondents, nor provide the in-depth understanding possible with long-term qualitative research methods. But if well-constructed they can yield quite reliable and substantial information about targeted problems because a multi-disciplinary RA team will often produce a holistic, highly significant understanding of the breadth of a local situation. A rapid appraisal is particularly appropriate when used as a method for defining the scope of a research problem that can be followed up with a longer, more detailed investigation. Additionally, a series of regular RAs over a period of several years can provide a quick method of assessing whether the implementation of a project is proceeding effectively or needs adjustment, and can also be used to identify trends that might not be initially apparent (Kumar, 1993). Table 5 delineates major elements of a rapid appraisal:

While the annual fieldtrip to Cheung Chau allowed the students to experience the technique in a real-life application and in all of our student teams there was usually a mix of undergraduate qualifications (geography, tourism, environmental science, business management, economics) obviously the teams were not composed of 'experts' in these fields and rarely included sociologists or anthropologists. Nor were local Cheung Chau community residents included as members of each team so that the participatory factor was not present in their fieldwork. However, as Hong Kong and mainland Chinese our students were not working in a foreign country, had no problems with language, and shared many socio-cultural commonalities with the Cheung Chau population: thus while interpretation of findings could not necessarily be classified as 'emic', by the same token they certainly were not wholly

'etic' (from outside).

A common problem with RAs is a failure to allow sufficient time for teams to be "observant, sensitive, and eclectic" (Carruthers & Chambers, 1981, p. 418). Where insufficient time is available and inadequate planning underlies the fieldwork, Chambers (1980, p.3) argues that "*predictable biases*" will infuse the process, such as an "*inappropriate focus on elements of the system that are the most obvious, observations of systems when it is physically easiest to observe, contact with individuals already involved in projects, and contacts with individuals who are less disadvantaged*." He suggests that "*attempts at rapid appraisal carried out without sufficient time and with inadequate planning should probably be called "tourism*" Chambers (1980, p.3). It is acknowledged that this is a well-founded criticism and given that our fieldwork is restricted to one day, it could be inferred that our teams were engaged in "tourism" rather than a 'real' RA. However, we consider that there are a number of mitigating factors that suggest otherwise. First and foremost it is a training exercise and is a valid introduction to the RA technique. Second, because team members are ethnically the same as their research population, sensitivity both culturally and socially is not an issue. Third, harnessing the energy of up to eight teams for six to eight hours of fieldwork may be equated to one team undertaking a six-to-eight days' RA even though their research takes place on the one and same day. That has its own limitations of course, since there will be influences at work on that one day which would not be apparent on other days, such as differences between weekday and weekend behaviour by residents, and elements of weekday/weekend visitation (and possibly even the weather – a rainy day would induce different behaviours from a clear sunny day!) Nevertheless the fact that there were multiple teams at work meant that they were able to compile a wide variety of data that provide a relatively comprehensive picture of the issues of sustainability and resilience regarding visitation to Cheung Chau. Finally we would note that utilizing Beebe's three basic concepts outlined in Table 5 provides a flexible but rigorous approach to relatively quick qualitative research data that goes beyond a "tourist" approach.

Each year the results inevitably encompassed a degree of overlap because each group operated as a self-contained entity in isolation from the other groups and sometimes they identified similar aspects of sustainability and resilience. Given that there are many factors of 'sustainability' and 'resilience' (e.g. the table by Lew, Ng, Ni, and Wu (2016) lists 15 indicators of sustainability and 17 indicators for resilience) we could have allocated different indicators for each team to investigate and this would probably have generated a broader spread of data. However, we regarded any repetition or overlap as 'acceptable collateral damage' because of our emphasis on other objectives embedded in the fieldtrip, such as: (a) small group team work involving

Table 5
Major elements of a rapid appraisal (after Beebe, 1995).

Basic concepts	Specific techniques chosen/adapted depending on the situation
1. Systems perspective	
~ Assumptions that elements of a system and their relative importance cannot be identified in advance	~ Semi-structured interviews
	~ Use of short guidelines
~ Use of local definitions and emic categories	~ Purposeful selection of respondents
~ Consideration of indigenous knowledge	~ Group interviews
~ Consideration of variability	~ Rejection of the use of survey questionnaires
2. Triangulation	
~ Multiple perceptions	~ Small interdisciplinary teams
	~ Local participation
~ Multiple research methods	~ Combination of interviews, information collected in advance, and direct observation
	[*Visual methodologies are included here]
3. Iterative process	
~ Use of information collected to guide the research process	~ Structured research with time for interaction
~ Production of tentative hypotheses and the use of findings to refine them	*[*Post-fieldtrip collaboration by team members to analyze Rapid Appraisal findings for research agenda]*

[*…] Additional dements added to Beebe's original chart by the authors.

Table 6
Themes of Cheung Chau fieldtrips 2013–2018

Statistics of 38 Visual Essays 2013–2018		
MAIN THEMES		6-yr total of
		Individual slides
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (pollution, transport, etc.)		78
HERITAGE, CULTURE, TRADITIONS, TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE		62
DEMOGRAPHICS - OLD AGE		44
INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT, ZONING, LAND USE		35
GENDER ISSUES		32
MISCELLANEOUS		54
TOTAL		**305**
NUMBER OF SEPARATE ITEMS/ISSUES		
(Unavoidable repetition occurred each year)		
Sustainability indicators/characteristics	69%	87
Resilience indicators/characteristics	31%	40
TOTAL		**127**

their own decision-making; (b) the need to counteract rote learning by enhancing skills in problem-solving and critical thinking; and (c) encouraging student-centred creativity: allocating say five indicators per team would have been highly restrictive and prescriptive, significantly reducing the student-centred learning research process. There was also the benefit that repetition of independent findings by different teams sometimes within the same fieldtrip, sometimes spread out from one year to the next, reinforced and validated the overall results. And the overall results – 127 individual factors across five broad themes, identified and compiled over six annual exercises – have provided sufficient data to design several long term research projects (Table 6 and Plate 8 below refer). Without the results of the RAs these projects could not have been designed with relevant detail, and the one we regard as the most innovative (related to demographic factors affecting sustainability and intergenerational equity) which emerged from the post-fieldtrip iterative deliberations (Beebe's 3rd stage) could possibly have remained completely 'hidden'. This project, on 'Aging and Tourism', is outlined in Section 7.

6. Ethnographic research – participant observation

The annual fieldtrip has also been used as a vehicle to introduce the students to the major methodology of anthropological/ethnographic research, participant observation. An accepted definition is that it is a technique of field research, commonly used in anthropology, sociology, human geography and social psychology, by which an investigator (participant observer) studies the behaviour of a group/community through sharing in its activities (DeWalt, DeWalt, & Wayland, 1998, p. 259). As with the students' introduction to RA, their application of this method is also a basic familiarization since its practice in 'real life' anthropological research entails immersion in a social and cultural environment that typically is for many months, often one year or more (O'Gorman, MacLaren & Bryce, 2014). That immersion embodies acceptance by the group/community, with the researcher gaining their confidence through empathetic rapport. This of course takes time, often weeks or months, and cannot be achieved in the one-day fieldtrip that our students undertake. Nevertheless, the students operationalize some features through recording a range of their fieldtrip observations, through engaging the local residents and tourists in conversations and possibly opportunistic interviews, and through their use of photography. Drawing on Spradley's (1980, p.58) five types of participation (see Table 7 below) we encourage the students to identify themselves as 'passive participants', operating most of the time in a 'bystander role', viz:

Taking into account the caveat that the Cheung Chau fieldtrip is an embryonic application of participant observation, we emphasize what

O'Gorman et al. (2014, p.46) refer to as "double-reflexivity", where there is on the one hand "the specific situational nature" of the fieldtrip itself with the students acting out their role as field researchers, and on the other, the broader catalogue of socio-cultural theory on which they may draw as they seek to identify elements of sustainability and resilience. The students' final visual essays contribute to the dual reflexivity referenced above.

As part of their briefing the students are advised that participant observation may be carried out as either overt or covert research. 'Overt' is open: the group being studied knows that their behaviour is being researched. 'Covert' research is disguised, when those being studied do not know that their behaviour is being scrutinized for research: they think the students are, in the instance of Cheung Chau, just members of another group of tourists. Given that tourists throng the island 365 days a year, with thousands of them taking photographs, it is very easy for the students-as-researchers to blend into the visitational environment and adopt the role of covert observers.

Our pre-trip briefing exposes the students to the pros and cons of both approaches to participant observation. Critics of overt participant observation argue that it is limited in its findings because the objects of their scrutiny are public fronts that are socially fashioned by those involved. In other words, people, knowing that their behaviour is being studied, will change their behaviour, or their comments, or how they do something, to ways which will be acceptable or expected as 'right' for public consumption, and not leave themselves open to criticism or ridicule. 'Backstage' (or real) behaviour may be kept hidden away from the researcher. Covert participant observation is therefore often said to produce better results because those whose actions and behaviour are being studied or recorded are unaware and thus act 'normally' (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994).

But there are ethical concerns in 'using' people for research without their approval and a summary of key issues (drawn from Bryman, 2012) are presented to the students, with an emphasis placed on avoidance of any potential harm to the subjects. Our final instructions to the students are that they are to be polite at all times, seek permission to engage an individual or individuals in discussion with a disclosure that they are researching tourism to Cheung Chau if this is in specific circumstances adjudged the better way to proceed, and to avoid any actions or activities that potentially could cause offence.

7. Critical thinking

The emphasis on **critical thinking** was a specific stratagem adopted not only for its inherent pedagogical value (Pithers & Sodon 2000) but to counter an educational environment in mainland China that has traditionally focused on rote learning where students are given relevant material to learn and memorize, rather than on problem solving (Wong, Lin, & Watkins, 1996). Critical thinking as a concept is widely referred to, but a single, precise definition is lacking. Glaser (1941, cited in Lloyd & Bahr, 2010, p. 2) describes it as "*an individual cognitive skill with three distinct characteristics:*

i. *An attitude of being or state of mind to thoughtfully consider the problems and subjects that come within a range of one's experiences;*
ii. *Knowledge of the methods of logical enquiry and reasoning; and,*
iii. *Some skill in applying those methods.*

From these three attributes, critical thinking may be broadly defined as "*the ability to critique current paradigms and contribute to intellectual inquiry*" (Lloyd & Bahr, 2010, p. 2). In our pre-trip briefing, the students were advised that critical thinking was not criticizing but analyzing behaviour or a situation in order to understand what was happening, when, where, and why. We linked this into our other pedagogical aspects and methodologies by noting that they would utilize critical thinking in visual anthropology and participant observation by assessing what images to record, and then analyzing their sets of

PLATE 8. Themes of sustainability and resilience identified through the modified Rapid Appraisals and revealed through visual anthropology carried out by student teams on Cheung Chau, 2013–2018.

photographs in terms of what those images could impart about tourists and/or local residents and their behaviour. This would take them below the surface of the picture to interpretation of the image, a further exercise in critical thinking. Simple descriptions of what we could see with our own eyes were unacceptable. Interviews, secondary research, library research or any other research technique that would provide

Table 7
Categories of participant observation.
(Source: Spradley, 1980).

Type of Participant Observation	Level of Involvement	Limitations
Non-Participatory	No contact with population or field of study	Unable to build rapport or ask questions as new information comes up.
Passive Participation	Researcher is only in the bystander role	Limits ability to establish rapport and immersing oneself in the field.
Moderate Participation	Researcher maintains a balance between "insider" and "outsider" roles	This allows a good combination of involvement and necessary detachment to remain objective.
Active Participation	Researcher becomes a member of the group by fully embracing skills and customs for the sake of complete comprehension	This method permits the researcher to become more involved in the population. There is a risk of "going native" as the researcher strives for an in-depth understanding of the population studied.
Complete Participation	Researcher is completely integrated in population of study beforehand (i.e. he or she is already a member of particular population studied).	There is the risk of losing all levels of objectivity, thus risking what is analyzed and presented to the public.

elucidation could be undertaken.

An associated element of this approach was therefore to present them with the abstract concepts of sustainability and resilience and ask them to capture physical/material/real life manifestations of these constructs through photographs drawing upon the various attributes of the two concepts (such as those listed in Lew et al., 2016 table). Translating these abstract concepts into material images captured though photographic media, required significant mental effort. Their images had to be presented as a powerpoint pictorial essay. Interestingly every year students wanted to be told what they should photograph (we interpreted this as one manifestation of their expectations of the role of teachers arising from rote learning rather than problem solving). Our response was unforthcoming: it was entirely up to them but they had to explain and justify what aspect(s) of sustainability and/or resilience they had identified.

Critical thinking does not end with the fieldtrip and this is where the supervisor needs to be aware that his/her role in fostering critical thinking extends beyond lecturing to act as a facilitator to encourage discussion and debate: there is a responsibility to create a climate for free-ranging thought processes where the students appreciate that their deliberations may lead to more questions rather than a 'right' answer (Halx & Reybold, 2005). Post-fieldtrip debriefing is also an important part of the educator's role as a facilitator since it encourages peer review that assists students in acquiring the capacity to formulate apposite rejoinders to differing assessments and ideas (Henderson-Hurley & Hurley, 2013). Immediately after the classroom presentations by each team, therefore, a specific time was allotted for observations of and discussions about each of the presentations by the cohort as a whole, and this engendered animated discussions that sometimes questioned and sometimes supported the arguments advanced by the individual teams. Sound logic and critical thinking was a characteristic of these discussions.

8. Building team work: Habermas and the concept of communicative action

Of the 218 students who have participated in the six fieldtrips from 2013 to 2018, 81% have been from mainland China, 18% from Hong Kong and 1% from elsewhere. They were divided into 38 teams to undertake the research. Table 8 below refers.

Most of the mainland Chinese students are products of China's one-child policy and they face the tensions on the one hand of being an only child brought up with the attention of six adults focused solely on them (parents plus two sets of grandparents), that has given rise to the "Little Emperor/Little Empress" syndrome characterized by some children who have been indulged and become rebellious and self-centred; and on the other hand with the sole responsibility for looking after potentially six adults in their old age once the child begins to earn an income (known colloquially in China as "the 4-2-1 problem"). The one-child family/social structure sits uneasily within the millennia-old

Table 8
Demographics of fieldtrip participants.

Annual Field Trip to Cheung Chau				
Year	Students Total	From Mainland China	From Hong Kong	Other	No. of Groups
2013	41	37	4		8
2014	40	33	6	1 from Ecuador	8
2015	31	23	7	1 from Macau	5
2016	37	23	14		6
2017	33	29	4		6
2018	36	32	4		5
Total	**218**	**177**	**39**	**2**	**38**
Percentage		**81%**	**18%**	**1.0%**	

entrenched values of a 'collective' societal system, epitomized in the philosophy of Confucius, that has emphasized harmony in social relationships and the good of the group over the individual (Ferrante, 2015). The Communist Party has now modified this policy and all couples are permitted to have two children (as 'replacements').

To induce the students to work as a team that would involve them in negotiations, conflict resolution and acceptance of group decisions through consensus, three main tactics were utilized:

(i) They were placed in groups of 5–7 (according to lesser or greater class sizes for any one year) that were randomly selected by the lecturer, thus deliberately splitting up any existing self-formed 'best friends' mini-groups;

(ii) Each group was tasked to compile a set of 8–13 photographs for a powerpoint (i.e. a number that did not equal the size of the group or a multiple of the group size). The number was specifically chosen so that the group members would be obliged to negotiate which photographs would be used for at least three to five or more slides of their presentation, rather than taking the simple way out by deciding that each group member would contribute one or two or three photographs each. At the end of the 6-h fieldtrip most teams had amassed between 200 and 300 photographs so they all had to engage in a major sorting-out exercise; and

(iii) Each photograph had to be interpreted. The interpretation had to move beyond simple descriptions to explain the underlying 'story', what the image represented in terms of sustainability and/or resilience (an example of Prosser and Loxley's (2008) 4th type visual data, representation, as applied to tourism research). While multiple interpretations (polysemic 'reading' of images: Edelheim, 2007) for any one image were acceptable, the teams were requested to provide interpretations satisfactory to the group as a whole rather than having the 'owner' of a particular photograph

determine its interpretation in isolation from group consideration. Where more than one interpretation was provided, again it required whole-of-group acceptance.

As part of the pre-trip briefing, the students were advised that they were to work in small groups to promote teamwork since this would be the environment they would encounter once they graduated and entered the workforce (Jain, Thompson, Chaudry, McKenzie, & Schwartz, 2008).

However the need for negotiation, conflict resolution and amendments to their own ideas, together with our reasoning behind the three points as set out in italics (above), were not divulged in any detail. We wanted the students to navigate their own way to achieve cohesion and present a group-accepted pictorial essay without any leading instructions from us that might short-circuit their own decision-making processes.

In effect we were placing the students in a 'pragmatic laboratory' that we constructed according to Habermas's theory of communicative action where stakeholders are directed or agree to orient their actions towards reaching a consensus on a problem/dispute/policy issue or similar (Habermas, 1989a; 1989b). It is a practice that is becoming increasingly common in societies where the ideal of good governance requires government officials, business representatives and communities to reach a consensus on how to move forward (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The consensus is 'satisficing', i.e. the result is 'sufficient to satisfy' all stakeholders involved in the consultations even when the final decision(s) fail to incorporate their optimal positions (Simon, 1978). In this case the aims and objectives were restricted: the stakeholders equated to members of different teams and their aim was collectively through consensus to co-create a visual essay of aspects of sustainability and resilience on Cheung Chau related to community and tourism. They were requested to enter into a social contract with each other member of their team to abide by Habermas' consensus-building approach.

There are two main stages in this approach to consensus building: (i) the *process* of knowledge sharing to allow participants to gain greater understanding or insights into the topic under discussion based on the different educational and life-experience paths; and (ii) to achieve a consensus on decision making (Habermas, 1989a). In the context of the Cheung Chau fieldtrip, both stages required collective acceptance by a group of a limited set of images taken by its members that were representational of a particular aspect of sustainability or resilience, and an interpretation of that image. With reference to knowledge from their own educational/life experience background the process of communicative action leads: (i) to enhancing the group's understanding as a whole, with their input accepted by other team members (or rejected or modified as the case may be); and (ii) they can use this knowledge to collectively define problems and propose solutions that fulfil, to the extent possible, the goals of the different participants. With reference to these two points, Habermas's (1989a,b) theory involves a pragmatist approach which is interested in the "validity" of knowledge, in the sense of "rational acceptability" rather than on "truth". Thus, persuasive reasoning also plays a relevant role since the acceptance of knowledge (in this case of a particular interpretation of an aspect of sustainability or resilience) is highly dependent on a speaker being able to provide cogent explanations for its validity, and for the hearer to accept that validity (Habermas, 1989a). Nevertheless, acting communicatively does not guarantee that the proposed solutions are adopted. When interests are opposed, participants often have to renounce certain individual wants to be able to make collective decisions. If they are not able to prioritize collective over individual goals, collaborative teamwork undertakings might end without agreements.

The relative ease with which a majority of the groups achieved teamwork despite the 'one-child' syndrome that we had perceived as a constraint was encouraging. Our feedback discussions with students post-fieldtrip presentations indicated that while there were the odd occasions where one or more members of a team were perceived by other team members to be 'difficult', over the six years and some 38 groups there was in fact only one individual in one team who found it impossible to participate with her fellow team-mates and withdrew from the process, although through peer assessment of each other (we carried this out each year as a standard procedure after the presentations were delivered in the classroom), there were 23 instances (approximately 10%) where team members perceived that one or other had not contributed satisfactorily to the group effort.

Discussions with our students revealed that the Chinese mainland students have for the most part developed a capacity to accept teamwork as a necessary component of higher education, and they have all experienced it at both the personal and pedagogical levels since the tertiary education system in China confronts them with this factor. They receive grounding in the Confucian values of a collectivist culture in compulsory classes in primary and secondary school which in modern China dates back to the 1980s′ project, "Education in Chinese Traditional Virtues" (Yu, 2008). This project is still ongoing. There are political, social and educational objectives behind this project which revived Confucianism in Chinese society and education after Mao's iconoclastic war on "the four olds" (old traditions, old religions, old imperial governance, old superstitions) during the Cultural Revolution (Deng, 2011; Yu, 2008). The pedagogical approach in China in the past decade has encompassed a greater level of team assignments in undergraduate courses, although the learning environment still remains highly competitive at the individual level because China's education system is based on meritocracy, a striving to be best. Mainland students adapt and at the postgraduate level accept teamwork as 'normal', partly because by the time they enter university they have all experienced many years of Government-promoted socialization in Confucian values. One manifestation of the effect of this social schooling is that on university campuses throughout China students now engage in numerous activities organized by themselves, thus enhancing self-motivated team work.

In short, Habermas' construct of consensus communications to advance teamwork was readily accepted as most of the students were experienced in working harmoniously together. Where small group dynamics are characterized by tensions over leadership, differential power and roles, the formation of coalitions (even in small groups), and a hierarchy of some sort is inevitable (Beebe & Masterson, 2006), we found that this framework empowers less forceful personalities since it stresses equity. Students said they appreciated the fact that through the Habermassian social contract participation was designed to operate evenly so that they could all voice their views in turn with other members prepared to hear each other out. For example, where different members reached different interpretations about the same characteristic on Cheung Chau (such as: 'bicycle hire by tourists is good for the environment, no pollution, and good for assisting tourists to 'fit' into local norms of transport/mobility and appreciate their life style' versus 'bicycle hire is bad for local residents because of congestion on the narrow streets that can result in instances of anti-social behaviour by both groups'), Habermas' communicative action process facilitated sorting out differences and accepting alternative points of view. The construct thus contributed to group cohesion and helped to create a positive "group climate" as it is termed (Marston & Hecht, 1988). In working with small groups in fieldwork elsewhere (e.g. Australia, Spain) we have also found Habermas' construct of communicative action an effective instrument with which to approach team building through consensus.

9. Discussion: contributions, limitations and conclusions

9.1. Contributions

In reviewing the results of six years of fieldtrips through the 38 visuals essays produced by the teams of students, allied with the debriefing sessions that elicited a wide range of comments from them, it is

considered that we achieved a satisfactory resolution of the two research questions. In short, the selected combination of different methods enhanced students' self-directed ability to work in small teams that produced quality analyses encompassing the sought-after cognitive and affective outcomes; and the utilization of Lew et al.'s sets of sustainability and resilience indicators (which resulted in a total of 127 discreetly identified examples) provided a balanced structure for the exercise that encouraged creativity without restricting the practical application of abstract concepts by the students of a real life setting. Since the socio-cultural and natural environment of a fieldtrip constitutes a perpetual and dynamic stimulator (Edlund, 2011), in this case Cheung Chau, students are provided with highly-focused opportunities for sensory exploration and creative expression in their student-centred learning and research though the application of our combined methodologies. In comparison with student-produced results from field trips prior to 2013, the combination of fieldwork methods generated a significantly stronger student-centred inquiry process of learning and research with visuals essays that included more relevant, and novel, information with stronger analytical critiques.

For the students, the four methods of visual anthropology, rapid appraisal, participant observation and Habermas' concept of communicative action constituted an integrated framework for three distinct stages of the fieldtrip: (i) pre-trip; (ii) on-trip; and (iii) post-trip. While some methodologies were employed concurrently by the students, others were separately utilized.

(i) Pre-trip, the theoretical foundations of the four methods were expounded in the briefings on Cheung Chau so that there was a universal understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and how to apply them. Each year, several (but not all) teams applied Habermas' consensus-building approach to agree in advance on respective roles for different team members. For example, some teams chose to 'appoint' one person as their 'official photographer', while other teams agreed that all members could take whatever images they considered applicable in terms of identifying one or more of the 32 indicators of sustainability and resilience they were tasked to analyze. Where there were Cantonese speakers in teams (noting that each year nine-tenths of the cohort were mainland Mandarin-speaking Chinese with very few fluent in Cantonese), most such mixed linguistics-skilled teams reached agreement that their one or two fluent Cantonese speakers would be responsible for engaging Islanders and as a *quid pro quo* other team members would take on the task of jointly preparing the first draft of their powerpoint presentation. In 2016 and in 2018, one team each year, cognizant of the impacts of overt and covert participant observation, reached consensus that in some circumstances they would adopt the covert approach and in others they would openly identify themselves as students to their informants (and in their presentations they identified which tactic they had adopted to gain information, arguing that their report benefited from the dual approach). In 2018 one team, after lengthy discussions, reached consensus on restricting their photographs to images of existing physical images on Cheung Chau, such as graffiti, signage, paintings, decorations, and so forth that would illustrate or demonstrate indicators of sustainability and resilience. We found this a powerful, creative and innovative application of semiotics where their entire powerpoint presentation was 'images-of-images' as symbols/signals of the abstract concepts of sustainability and resilience, rather than of scenery or people or activities or buildings, and as such it constituted a representation of the method of visual anthropology itself. It is conceivable that some teams would have reached agreement on how to proceed on the fieldtrip through semi-structured, pre-trip planning meetings without any knowledge or understanding of Habermas' concept of communicative action. But in reviewing the various manifestations of team work with the students in post-fieldwork debriefing it was evident that the social contract to observe Habermas' consensual approach was instrumental in striving for whole-of-team accord in their planning deliberations (as well as in other aspects of the fieldwork).

(ii) On-trip: During the field work on Cheung Chau, while visual anthropology through the taking of many hundreds of photographs was a primary method of data gathering, all teams used participant observation to contribute to fact-finding. Each year, three to four teams (a total of 25 teams over the six years) specifically mentioned that they had applied the truncated form of Rapid Appraisal methodology to collect information. Our own observations of the students in action testified to avid note-taking by all 38 teams throughout the fieldwork. Interestingly, when there were disagreements among team members while on the fieldtrip, on several occasions in some years we became aware that other members of teams had used the Habermas 'contract' to try and pull them into line; but we have no statistics to be able to say whether this was common or isolated to just a few instances.

(iii) Post-trip: The preparation of the powerpoints involved each team in an application of Habermas as they strove to reach consensus on which photographs were to be included in their presentations, and what interpretation should accompany each slide. They also had to agree on how to present their findings to the class, some opting for just one or two speakers, others deciding that each team member would participate.

(iv) Post post-trip analysis by staff: As mentioned previously, the results of six years of fieldtrip research by a total of 207 students provided a mass of information to be mined for further more detailed research on various aspects of visitation to Cheung Chau.

The annual fieldtrips to Cheung Chau by small teams of students from the Masters in Sustainable Tourism Management programme thus incorporate multi-modes of student-centred action learning. In themselves, none of the various methodologies that we have employed are new: indeed, some of them (e.g. visual anthropology) have been applied in research across a number of disciplines for decades (Collier & Collier, 1986; Prosser 1998). What is somewhat novel however is their fusion into one integrated entity to reinforce and/or achieve a number of pedagogical outcomes, with the use of Habermas' (1989a,b) concept of communicative action to build teamwork as a particularly effective instrument for fieldtrips when implemented with the sort of features that we built into the exercise to establish the need for members of teams to negotiate collectively-agreed outcomes. We also note that when Habermas formulated his concept he did not include visual literacy, whereas the idea of using photographs in our current study could be seen as an innovation that enriches the original Habermassian concept: technological developments in electronic image-taking, unavailable in 1989 but globally common today, have facilitated our introduction of this as novel element aspect in applying his concept.

The consensus-based assemblage of photographs taken by researchers to co-create jointly authored visual essays as a key tool in tourism field research is also a departure from the norm. It sits in contrast to the focus of the majority of tourism studies drawing on visual material that analyzes sets or collections of photographs most often taken by others. Our approach is more akin to the methodology of 'visual anthropology' employed in that discipline for many decades in order to elicit different perceptions of human behavior, places and events and generating new knowledge for the researchers who take the photographs and interpret them. As Prosser (1998, p. 3), states, image-based research, as "*a contemporary form of structured investigation*" has the capacity to teach students to be discerning, filtering out irrelevant or immaterial information as they grow in acuity and advance their skills in critical thinking. In other words, tourism students who familiarize themselves with visual literacy methodology and learn to integrate photography into their field research situate themselves to become competent in representing, analyzing and communicating incipient knowledge with others and with self (Whiting, 1979). In this

context, the co-creation of visual essays by student teams using a mix of methodologies for fieldwork generates new knowledge for the students themselves as they analyze the meanings behind the surface images, and this critical thinking activity heightens their understanding of the concepts of sustainability and resilience as applied to real life.

The application of a modified form of rapid appraisal, using both visual anthropology and ethnographic participant observation as major tools for identifying key aspects of the research topics (community sustainability and resilience), also demonstrates its validity for enhancing research outcomes in tourism - as amply evidenced by the enumeration of more than 300 items in five main themes over the six year period by the 38 teams of students. The amount of RA data gathered by the 5–8 teams in any single year is significant but nevertheless fragmented. However, when six such annual data banks are consolidated:

(i) the volume of information is very substantial;
(ii) a comprehensive, holistic perspective of sustainability and resilience on Cheung Chau is revealed;
(iii) the information has a high degree of validity because over the years each individual example of the indicators has been verified a number of times by different teams acting in isolation;
(iv) different applications for each indicator have also been identified over the years thus enlarging the scope of analysis; and
(v) the time that has elapsed between the first and sixth years establishes an element of longitudinality that is lacking in any Rapid Appraisal that is not repeated annually over a number of years.

This is an outcome of the iterative process referenced by Beebe (1995) – see Table 5 above - where the student-gathered information is consolidated, assessed and analyzed in order to identify potential in-depth follow-up research projects and/or material which could be transformed into publications. We suggest that the opportunity to systematically expand data from the annual field trips, facilitated by our multi-methods approach and RA in particular, makes a contribution to the overall value of field trips that is uncommon.

(i) The value of this multi-methods approach thus rests not only on its innovation but rather more on the fact that it has produced a richness of results that have exceeded the outcomes from previous fieldtrips where only one or two methods were applied. It is of interest that one piece of information from one team over a period of years can be expanded in serendipitous manner to generate an entirely new area for research. In this context we refer to the way in which, initially through a single photograph of a nonagenarian, a new research project began to unfold concerning ageing populations and tourism (Section 2 above). Tentatively titled: "*Aging and tourism: Cheung Chau*" it proposes a comprehensive survey of the impact of aging in various and diverse ways on tourism to a destination, including on employment in the service industries where casual observation suggests many staff in Cheung Chau are old rather than young. There are a growing number papers on aging and wellness tourism, and quite a few articles on seniors (older people) and retirees in market segmentation studies, but not on examining a destination holistically from the point of view of aging as a 'pull' factor for visitation, as previously outlined (Section 3 above refers). Among the issues that we have identified to be researched are the following components:
(ii) the supposition that there is likely to be a steady and continuous flow of VFRs year-round especially on weekends because of geographical proximity to Hong Kong city and because of Chinese respect for old relatives, especially parents (a strong cultural trait);
(iii) that VFR flows would significantly mitigate the seasonality that accompanies non-VFR tourism to Cheung Chau;
(iv) That this VFR traffic would comprise two distinct segments: (a) relatives of ageing island residents who had migrated out to Hong Kong city and who return on 'home' visits; and (b) relatives of

residents of Seniors' Homes who are retirees originating from Hong Kong city and whose families would thus visit them from time to time;
(v) a serendipitous outcome might find that Seniors' Homes not only support tourism through VFR, e.g. via ferry schedules that are more frequent than would be justified without this volume of patrons, as well as additional restaurants, but perhaps counter to a limited extent the 'rural-urban' drift through retention of younger people on the island as necessary staff for the proliferation of Seniors Homes and support services;
(vi) conflict between the thousands of younger tourists who flock to the island in the high seasons and the more slowly-moving older residents (student observations each year report instances of younger tourists renting hundreds of bicycles, congesting narrow laneways and obstructing older residents (some in wheelchairs) trying to go about their daily affairs) – a version of 'overtourism' perhaps;
(vii) a decline in commercial fishing with many younger people leaving Cheung Chau's fishing industry so that many of the boats, (perhaps a majority now?), in the harbour are no longer in constant use, but opening up hiring opportunities by elderly residents to take visitors out for far less physically tiring day-fishing trips or scenic visits around Cheung Chau and/or to nearby islands. (This latter seems to be happening but requires research to validate).

The data generated by the student research teams' multi-methods fieldwork thus reveals that Cheung Chau offers an interesting 'test tube' case for opening up an interesting, infrequently-researched area of tourism investigation. With ageing populations all around the world, Cheung Chau could prove a useful 'pioneer' study in this area of tourism.

9.2. Limitations

In general, it is of course possible that a combination of other and/or additional methods (such as the inclusion of survey questionnaires), or an approach which used the same four methods we utilized but gave prominence to say, Rapid Appraisal over visual anthropology and photo elicitation, would also produce superior student-obtained research analyses. Current research into outcomes of field trips for environmental science students for example, extend to 'play' simulations, experiments in the field utilizing naturally-available resources outside the classroom, and on-task behaviour designed to change attitudes towards the environment (Dhanapal & Lim, 2013; Tal, 2001). The results are thus not exclusively conditioned on adoption of our design for increasing the quality of post-graduate student field trips, but this approach does offer a constructive way to achieve improved cognitive and affective outcomes. These outcomes clearly reflect the four pillars of Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle as refined by Beckendorff & Zehrer (2017), i.e. concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (of which the visual essay that consisted of photographic images of images is a prime example). The results from our multi-faceted fieldtrip methodology reinforce Griffin's (2017) view that for benefits to be maximized from fieldtrips, "pedagogical considerations are central to the participants' planning and undertaking of such experiential trips" and must be carefully formulated in advance.

One of the limitations of our study is that we did not build into our restructuring of field trips a more systematic method for monitoring and measuring outcomes. For example, an application of the Classification and Regression Trees (CART) method, using self-reporting by the students, would have produced quantitative data that could have covered the extent to which preparation for the field trip, its connection to the course curriculum, the multiple methodologies employed in the field, and outcomes in cognitive and affective (and possibly behavioral) domains, were perceived as effective and improving
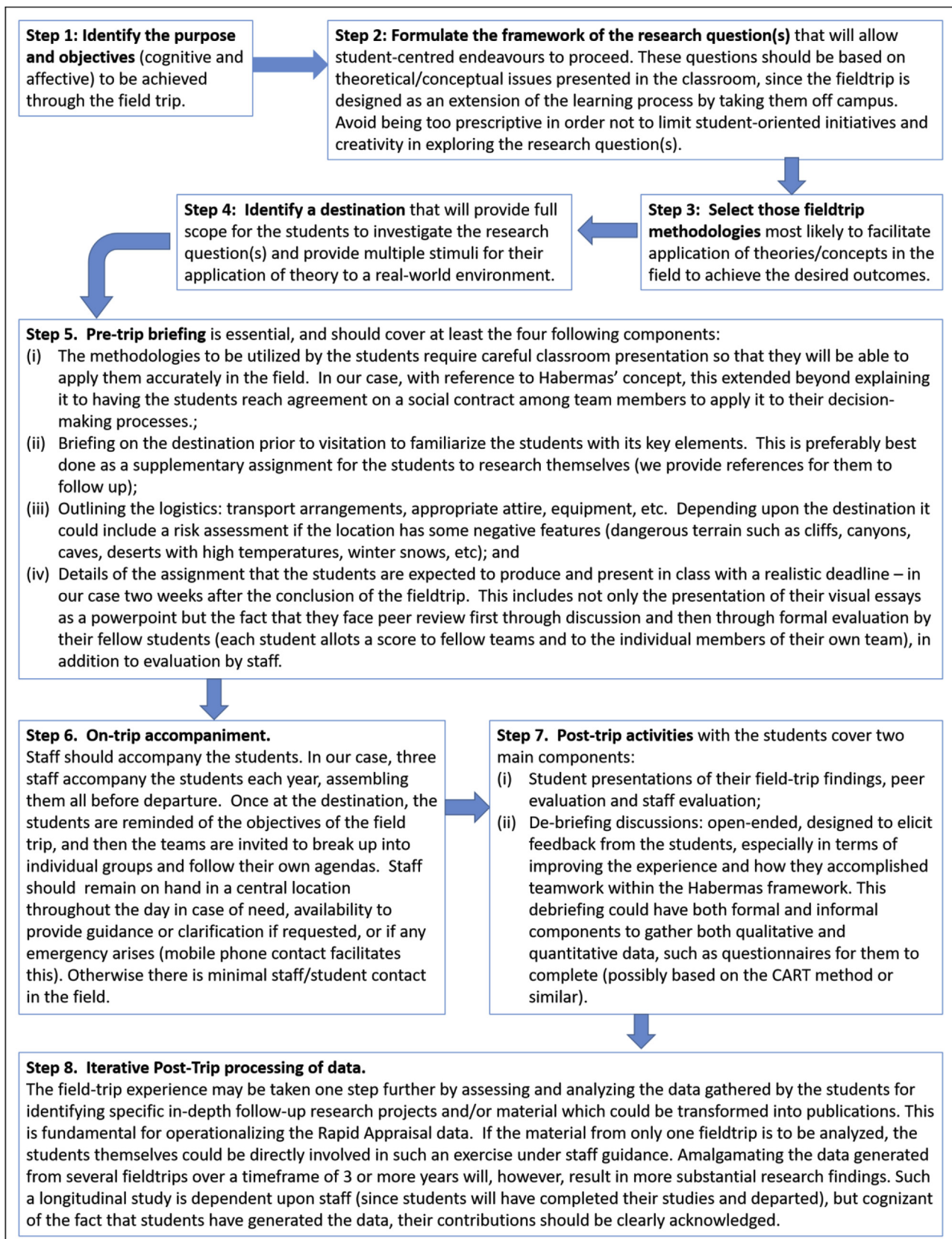
Step 1: Identify the purpose and objectives (cognitive and affective) to be achieved through the field trip.

Step 2: Formulate the framework of the research question(s) that will allow student-centred endeavours to proceed. These questions should be based on theoretical/conceptual issues presented in the classroom, since the fieldtrip is designed as an extension of the learning process by taking them off campus. Avoid being too prescriptive in order not to limit student-oriented initiatives and creativity in exploring the research question(s).

Step 4: Identify a destination that will provide full scope for the students to investigate the research question(s) and provide multiple stimuli for their application of theory to a real-world environment.

Step 3: Select those fieldtrip methodologies most likely to facilitate application of theories/concepts in the field to achieve the desired outcomes.

Step 5. Pre-trip briefing is essential, and should cover at least the four following components:

(i) The methodologies to be utilized by the students require careful classroom presentation so that they will be able to apply them accurately in the field. In our case, with reference to Habermas' concept, this extended beyond explaining it to having the students reach agreement on a social contract among team members to apply it to their decision-making processes.;

(ii) Briefing on the destination prior to visitation to familiarize the students with its key elements. This is preferably best done as a supplementary assignment for the students to research themselves (we provide references for them to follow up);

(iii) Outlining the logistics: transport arrangements, appropriate attire, equipment, etc. Depending upon the destination it could include a risk assessment if the location has some negative features (dangerous terrain such as cliffs, canyons, caves, deserts with high temperatures, winter snows, etc); and

(iv) Details of the assignment that the students are expected to produce and present in class with a realistic deadline – in our case two weeks after the conclusion of the fieldtrip. This includes not only the presentation of their visual essays as a powerpoint but the fact that they face peer review first through discussion and then through formal evaluation by their fellow students (each student allots a score to fellow teams and to the individual members of their own team), in addition to evaluation by staff.

Step 6. On-trip accompaniment.
Staff should accompany the students. In our case, three staff accompany the students each year, assembling them all before departure. Once at the destination, the students are reminded of the objectives of the field trip, and then the teams are invited to break up into individual groups and follow their own agendas. Staff should remain on hand in a central location throughout the day in case of need, availability to provide guidance or clarification if requested, or if any emergency arises (mobile phone contact facilitates this). Otherwise there is minimal staff/student contact in the field.

Step 7. Post-trip activities with the students cover two main components:

(i) Student presentations of their field-trip findings, peer evaluation and staff evaluation;

(ii) De-briefing discussions: open-ended, designed to elicit feedback from the students, especially in terms of improving the experience and how they accomplished teamwork within the Habermas framework. This debriefing could have both formal and informal components to gather both qualitative and quantitative data, such as questionnaires for them to complete (possibly based on the CART method or similar).

Step 8. Iterative Post-Trip processing of data.
The field-trip experience may be taken one step further by assessing and analyzing the data gathered by the students for identifying specific in-depth follow-up research projects and/or material which could be transformed into publications. This is fundamental for operationalizing the Rapid Appraisal data. If the material from only one fieldtrip is to be analyzed, the students themselves could be directly involved in such an exercise under staff guidance. Amalgamating the data generated from several fieldtrips over a timeframe of 3 or more years will, however, result in more substantial research findings. Such a longitudinal study is dependent upon staff (since students will have completed their studies and departed), but cognizant of the fact that students have generated the data, their contributions should be clearly acknowledged.

Diagram 2. Generic steps to establish a multi-methods student-centred research fieldtrip.

students' understandings of the specific concepts of sustainability and resilience. Our debriefing sessions were too qualitatively-oriented, although specific questions about how each team reached consensus on the various issues and decision-making with which they were confronted, have allowed us to be confident that the application of the social contract through a modified version of Habermas' concept of communicative action worked well.

A future paper arising from this approach to field work could focus on developing a comprehensive 'toolkit' of suggestions/educational implications for tourism lecturers who wish to implement this pedagogical and research activity in their modules. This would include a detailed analysis of the data content gathered from the fieldwork to demonstrate the power of applying the various methodologies in unison, within an integrated framework; and in this context the brief outline of the '*Ageing and tourism*' research project provides an example. For the purposes of this paper, we provide the following schematic diagram of the steps that we consider are necessary to achieve a student-centred fieldtrip of pedagogical high quality (Diagram 2 refers).

9.3. Conclusions

In summary, our annual visits to Cheung Chau demonstrate attributes common to many field trips, but with added value, i.e. they constitute significant exercises in student-centred learning through research and they provide a collective social environment that affords the opportunity for participants as small teams to identify and investigate a range of novel phenomena in a real-world location (Dhanapal & Lim, 2013; Knutson, 2016). Where they venture away from orthodoxy and explore new territory with enhanced outcomes is the fusion of a range of different methodologies in a relatively novel way in tourism-oriented fieldtrips, especially through visual anthropology, photo elicitation, the application of a modified Rapid Appraisal, and the use of Habermas' concept to facilitate teamwork. Our approach results in "double-reflexivity" (O'Gorman et al., 2014, p. 46), where there is on the one hand "the specific situational nature" of the fieldtrip itself with the students as field researchers confronting reality but also drawing on the broader catalogue of socio-cultural theory as they pursue their quest for examples of sustainability and resilience. The students' final visual essays are a manifestation of this dual reflexivity. And as noted the co-creation of visual essays by student teams using a mix of methodologies for fieldwork generates new knowledge for the students themselves and heightens their understanding of the concepts of sustainability and resilience in a real world environment. In short, the data gathered by students through the multiple methodologies make a contribution to the research agenda that rarely eventuates from student-centred fieldtrips, and when these data are assembled and collated over a number of years the consequent analysis represents a longitudinal form of Rapid Appraisal. We suggest that these features combine to make the whole exercise more meaningful pedagogically, cognitively and affectively, and more interesting and challenging for the students, while simultaneously equipping the participants with skill sets that can be applied (with discrimination) to any future research that the students may undertake in their careers, particularly where a sustainable tourism initiative is being undertaken.

Authors' note on photographic plates

Consistent with the idea of images as visual texts that are polysemic, open to multiple interpretations and able to be 'experienced' by different observers in different ways, we have as a matter of deliberative reflection not provided individual captions for any of the 87 separate photographs that are displayed in the eight montages. Each plate is in effect a visual essay of itself. We invite readers to use their own frames of reference to entice meaning from the ambiguity inherent in the diversity of images. Plate 5, photographs of three photographs in an exhibition in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, is an exception - it utilizes the author's photos of the explanatory captions of those images as prepared by the Museum itself.

All photographs taken by the lead author.

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