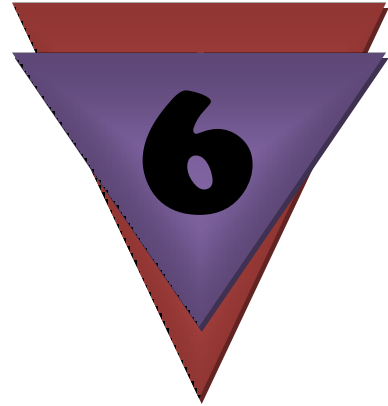


# **CHAPTER 6**

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter's main purpose is to provide conclusions and make recommendations regarding the research. The aim of this study was to determine the market profile of black visitors to a resort in the Vaal Region namely Abrahamsrust Resort. The aim of this research was achieved as described in paragraphs to follow.

The first secondary objective was to analyse marketing and the role of the consumer therein. This objective was achieved in Chapter 2 of the study. The exploration of marketing and marketing management philosophies (MMPs) was done by means of an in-depth discussion concerning the following aspects:

- Defining tourism marketing
  - Defining consumer orientation
  - Analysing personal characteristics affecting consumer behaviour
  - Analysing the buyers' decision-making process
  - Identifying the marketing process
- The second secondary objective was to analyse the market segmentation variables by means of literature review. This objective was achieved in Chapter 3 by means of an in-depth discussion concerning the following aspects:
    - Exploring the importance of market segmentation
    - Analysing the benefits of market segmentation
    - Defining the process of developing market segmentation
    - Defining market to be segmented and identify segment bases, for example the demographic, geographic, socio-economic and psychographic segments.

- The third secondary objective was to determine the demographic, psychographic, geographic and psychographic characteristics of black visitors to the Abrahamsrust Resort by means of cluster analysis. Chapter 5 focused on the empirical survey of the study by emphasising the following:
  - Demographic characteristics
  - Media preferences
  - Travel motivation of the respondents
  - The cluster analysis
  
- The fourth secondary objective was to draw conclusions and make recommendations with regard to the market segmentation of black visitors to Abrahamsrust Resort.

The following section of this chapter will elaborate on the conclusions and recommendations concerning the latter.

## **6.2 CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.2.1 Conclusions regarding the analysis of marketing and the role of consumers**

The following conclusions can be deduced from the literature of the analysis of marketing and role of the consumer therein:

- In tourism marketing, consumers are of more concern, the aim being “how to find them”, “how to satisfy them” and “how to keep them”. Tourism marketing is all about anticipating, finding and fulfilling market demands (c.f. 2.2).
- Marketing Management Philosophies (MMPs) can be dealt with from four perspectives: (c.f. 2.3), namely:
  - Manufacturing concepts focusing on needs, assessment of resources and services (c.f. 2.3.1).
  - Product concept focusing on improving existing products instead of developing new products (c.f. 2.3.2).
  - Marketing concept, which implies that the market is the driving force throughout the entire process of developing the product (c.f. 2.3.3).

- Societal Concepts acknowledging that tourism products are not only there to satisfy consumer needs and wants and destination objectives but should also to enhance the best interests of society (c.f. 2.3.4).
- Consumer orientation creates a clearly defined approach to the market. The better the understanding of the tourist market, the better the tourist destination can create value for customers (c.f. 2.4).
- There should be a fit between tourism product services and products. Hence this encourages the aims of tourists' decision making such as pleasure experience, seasonality, safety, transportation, pleasing accommodation and meals as well as leisure activities, of which all can be referred to as part of the tourism product (c.f. 2.4.2).
- Marketing can also be analysed by modelling consumer behaviour. Consumers can also be the initiators, meaning they can suggest the idea of the product purchase, the influencer, decider or the approver (c.f. 2.5).
- Individual factors and group factors influence the consumer buying behaviour process (c.f. 2.6).
- The following tourist-related factors influence the decision making:
  - Gender and age: Depending on the age of the tourist, certain destinations are ideal for providing attributes sought after by tourists.
  - Gender (male or female) can also influence travel decisions (c.f. 2.6).
  - Motivation: This refers to factors either pushing or pulling tourists to certain destinations. Knowledge of travel motivations can assist in developing effective marketing strategies (c.f. 2.6.1).
  - Lifestyle: The way people prefer to live their lives and spend time and the environments that define who they are, all influence travel decisions (c.f. 2.6.1).
  - Family life cycle: Travel decisions are determined by the stage or level at which a tourist is within the family life cycle. It is therefore important to take the family life cycle into consideration when dealing with marketing and product planning (c.f. 2.6.2).
  - Culture: Cultural background has a profound impact on the type of travel and destination chosen (c.f. 2.6.2).
  - Social class: The class to which a tourist belongs influences the decisions regarding the type of vacation to take and the destination to visit (c.f. 2.6.2).

- Reference groups: These are people who have close contact with tourists on a more or less personal basis. These groups are direct influencers of the travel decisions tourists make (c.f. 2.6.2).
- The buyer decision-making process focuses on whether to buy a product, which one to buy and how much to pay for it. It influences the decisions about where and when to go and what to do when at the destination. Travel decisions are made after tourists have progressed through a thorough perusal of information concerning different products to choose from (c.f. 2.7).

### **6.2.2 Conclusions regarding market segmentation variables and how it is conducted**

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the literature study on market segmentation done in Chapter 3:

- Segmentation assists marketers in selecting the right target market. It provides marketers with information that helps in designing marketing mixes specifically matching with the characteristics and desires of one segment or more (c.f. 3.1).
- Market segmentation is the way in which tourism organisations divide markets into smaller and more precise groups that share similar needs, wants and characteristics with the aim of gaining competitive advantage (c.f. 3.2).
- The recognition of tourist differences is the key aspect in market segmentation. Therefore segmentation assists marketers in clearly defining target market needs and wants (c.f. 3.3).
- Segmenting markets helps:
  - tourism organisations in becoming more precise when deciding which market segment it wishes to target with its products (c.f.3.3).
  - in gauging the destination market position and its image as a competitive advantage (c.f. 3.3).
- The process of market segmentation is determined by the definition and bases of segmentation (c.f. 3.4).
- Segmentation bases such as demographic, geographic, psychographic and behaviour provide tourism organisations with appropriate information needed (c.f. 3.4.2).
- Criteria for effective market segmentation include (c.f. 3.4.3): measurable, accessible, actionable, sustainable, substantial and defendable.

- Different steps can be followed when developing and selecting market segments (c.f. 3.5).
- It is therefore clear that market segmentation is an important marketing activity that leads to definite results and more effective marketing strategies.

### **6.2.3 Conclusions regarding the empirical analyses**

Based on the empirical study reported on in Chapter 5, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- From the survey, a complete demographic profile of an average visitor to Abrahamsrust Resort can be seen, including age, gender, language, marital status, educational level, occupation, number of members in a group, number of children, accompanying children, and provincial residence.
- A fairly equal distribution of male and female respondents participated in the study.
- These respondents were mostly not married (49%), between 21 and 30 years of age, have a diploma/degree (52%), speak Sesotho and reside in Gauteng (66%).
- Most respondents were traveling in a group of between three and five people (40%).
- The majority of the respondents have between one and two children (40%), but most of them were not accompanied by them (87%).
- The total average of respondents' spending per day reflected R752.00, with the highest spending on alcoholic drinks.
- The analyses on media preferences revealed that most respondents read Move magazine, watch Generations, read the Daily Sun newspaper and listen to Lesedi FM Radio.
- Most of them had heard about Abrahamsrust Resort from family and friends (40%).
- Respondents considered the following to be important aspects that motivated them to visit the resort, namely getting away from routine, spending time with family and friends, meeting new people, quality service delivered, unique experience, excellent facilities, a safe environment and it is easily accessible.
- To relax was considered to be extremely important.
- The cluster analysis revealed three clusters, namely Social Relaxers, Quality Seekers and Loyal Relaxers.

- Social Relaxers are motivated by social and relaxing needs, Quality Seekers focus on quality and value for money aspects and Loyal Relaxers seem to be the loyal visitors to the resort travelling for relaxation purposes.
- In terms of describing the three clusters it was found that the demographic segmentation variables did not differ significantly between the clusters with only a small difference in terms of gender.
- In terms of describing the behavioural segmentation variables it was also found that the clusters did not differ significantly but differences were found on number of days at the resort and recreation activities preferred for the children.
- Besides the differences in travel motivations it was thus found that the current market is very homogenous.

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations regarding market segmentation and marketing of tourism will be made in this section, as well as recommendations regarding further research in this field of study.

#### **6.3.1 Recommendations regarding market segmentation and marketing of tourism**

- Market segments have been identified; therefore marketing strategies can be developed with a view to improve relationships with these markets and to build loyalty.
- Knowledge of the needs and wants of these markets will lead tourism planners, developers and marketers to obtain a clear picture of what is important so as to increase fluctuation of visitors as well as to retain the current market.
- The Vaal Region, and specifically the Abrahamsrust Resort, should focus on awareness campaigns that will draw tourists to spend more of their annual weekend trips and day trips at the resort.
- Local visitors and what the resort can offer them should especially be focused on.
- Advertising campaigns of the resort should focus on the relaxing elements and the opportunity to have fun with family and friends.
- Since most of the respondents have children but were not accompanied by them it is important for the resort to emphasise its facilities and what it has to offer for the children, seeing that this could increase the number of visitors to the resort.

- The resort can definitely emphasise the riverfront at the resort and utilize that for activities (river cruises, swimming, and sightseeing) and in marketing campaigns.
- Attention should be paid to the safety of tourists to the resort as that was one of the important decisive factors in the travel motivation process.
- The resort can offer packages with other tourism products in the Vaal Region that can allow for discounts because it was found that people consider value for money to be an important element as well as finances.
- The location of the resort in close proximity to Gauteng should be explored and utilized.
- It is also recommended that since most respondents had known of the resort through family and friends, marketing can be improved through different media such as radio stations and newspapers.
- It is recommended that focus should be placed on areas such as shopping malls and tertiary institutions for their marketing campaigns.
- A personal observation is that the resort should firstly train their current staff members on how to deal with tourists from various target markets and also attend to developing and upgrading the facilities.
- The resort can focus on travel motivation as a distinction in terms of market segments. However, the current market is very homogenous and two approaches are recommended: to increase the marketing efforts for the current market and to increase these visitors and/or to diversify the product in such a way that other markets will also be attracted to the resort.
- It is also recommended that the resort implement market segmentation strategies in order to keep up with the changing needs of the market.

### **6.3.2 Recommendations regarding further research**

- It is recommended that this research be repeated at different tourism products within the Vaal Region so as to stay updated with the emerging trends within the market and improve relations with the current market.
- It is recommended that this research be compared with that of other events held in the Vaal Region in order to thoroughly analyse the market.
- It is also recommended that attention be given to the image of the Vaal Region as a tourism destination and be marketed as such.