

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF ADVENTURE TOURISTS IN PRETORIA

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ABSTRACT

It is difficult to examine different motivations and segment differentiations in niche markets such as adventure tourism seeing that it is not a well-defined segment in the discipline of tourism studies. In order to assist adventure tourism companies towards identifying and developing effective marketing strategies to attract or penetrate the adventure niche market, this study aims to contribute towards the current understanding of adventure tourists in Pretoria by compiling a demographic profile of such tourists. Two hundred and fifty adventure tourists participated in this study; however, the sample that realized was 234, providing a 93.6% response rate. The results gained from the self-completing questionnaire indicated that typical adventure tourists in Pretoria are generally Afrikaans speaking individuals born between 1960 and 1981. These individuals are mostly married with no children or have two children who are above the age of twelve years. Adventure tourists in Pretoria tend to be further educated Technicians and Associate Professionals whose gross individual income ranges between R10,001.00 and R29,999.00 per month. This study established that there is a need to further research comprehensive adventure tourist profiles in order to assist adventure tourism companies to promote and sell specific activities and experiences that will meet the specific needs and wants of identified target markets.

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KEYWORDS: Tourism; Adventure Tourism; Market Segmentation; Demographic Profiles

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the act of travel for predominantly recreational or leisure purposes and refers to the provision of services in support of this act. Tourists are people who travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year – for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (World Tourism Organization [WTO], 1991).

Adventure tourism, according to Andrews (2007:21), is a type of tourism involving exploration or travel to remote, exotic and possibly hostile areas where the tourist should "expect the unexpected". Adventure tourism is rapidly growing in popularity because tourists increasingly look for different kinds of vacations. According to the Adventure Travel and Trade Association (2005) of the United States of America, *adventure tourism* may be any tourist activity that can include two of the following three components: a physical activity, a cultural exchange or interaction, and an engagement with nature. While these characteristics might constitute the motivation for participation in adventure activities for some, it can also be a deterrent for others not to participate in adventure activities.

An exhaustive search of existing literature did not reveal any profiles of adventure tourists – the search only identified general classifications or definitions used to attract all possible adventure tourism groups. Furthermore, Heyniger and Consulting (2008:2) suggest that adventure tourism is not a well-defined segment in the discipline of tourism studies. Therefore, it is difficult to examine the different motivations

and segment differentiations in niche markets such as adventure tourism. As a result, adventure tourism companies need to include target marketing as a core element of strategic marketing management in order to identify the parts of the market it can best serve, rather than trying to compete in an entire mass market. This could assist adventure tourism companies to promote and sell specific activities and experiences that will meet the specific needs and wants of their identified niche target market.

Against this background, the primary objective of this investigation was to develop a demographic profile of adventure tourists in Pretoria with a view to assist adventure tourism companies to promote and sell specific activities and experiences that will meet the specific needs and wants of their identified niche target markets. More specifically, the secondary objectives of this investigation were to explore the notions of market segmentation, market targeting, and market positioning in order to explain how these elements contribute towards profiling consumers; and to identify the demographic descriptors applicable to adventure tourists.

This investigation starts by reviewing the literature applicable to demographic segmentation. Thereafter, the research methodology and data analysis techniques are identified and the results presented. This investigation concludes with a discussion of the results and the managerial implications, research limitations, and recommended directions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although tourism, as suggested by Kalbassi (2010:51), is one of the world's largest industries, it is still difficult to define its limits and decide what counts as tourism. As mentioned earlier, many tourism definitions derive within a leisure and recreational context. Therefore, tourism shares strong fundamental characteristics and theoretical foundations with the recreation and leisure field of study. The exact size of the adventure tourism market is still debated because of (1) the lack of a standard adventure tourism definition; (2) the fact that the phenomenon of adventure tourism is both new and complex; (3) the majority of available research on adventure tourism is kept confidential as it is collected for individual companies' marketing purposes; (4) government and industry awareness of adventure tourism is not equally developed worldwide; and (5) the available data on adventure tourism is difficult to use due to a lack of comparability.

Although it is difficult to measure the market, Fluker and Turner (2000:380) explain that the adventure tourism market is a newly emerging, fast-growing sector of tourism. Swarbrooke, Beard, Leckie and Pomfret (2003:55) further concur that although the adventure tourism market appeals to an expanding population who are seeking self-fulfillment and excitement through participating in physically and mentally stimulating activities, the patterns of consumer behavior are in a constant state of flux.

Loverseed (1997:93) suggested in the 1990s already that satisfaction and self-actualization appear to be crucial in understanding tourists' engagement with an activity or a product for a specific purpose to satisfy their specific interest and needs. However, Weber (2001:368-370) recommends that when analyzing the decision-making process, researchers should obtain information regarding tourists' characteristics and their consumer and travel behavior because anticipating and meeting tourists' needs are the key to success.

Adventure tourism research has received relatively little attention in academic literature and the focus of studies in this field tends to be on accidents or injuries. In addition, adventure tourism is mentioned in some texts of ecotourism, outdoor recreation and park management, but not explored in much detail. Authors such as Fennel and Eagles (1990), Fennel (1999), Page and Dowling (2001), as well as Weed (2008) include adventure tourism typologies within their publications. However, it appears only to be Hudson (2003), Swarbrooke et al. (2003), as well as Buckley and Cater (2007) whose publications

specifically focus on the concept of adventure tourism. In addition, research investigations with an adventure tourism focus have been published by Bentley, Page and Laird (2001), Beedie and Hudson (2003), Gyimothy and Mykletun (2004), Cater (2006), as well as Bentley and Page (2008). However, profiling adventure tourists does not form the focus of their research, as this investigation proposes to do.

Adventure tourism companies ought to recognize that they cannot appeal to all consumers in the same way (mass/undifferentiated marketing). Yang, Wall and Smith (2008:753) indicate that “consumers are too numerous, too widely scattered, and too varied in their needs and buying practices”. Furthermore, different companies vary widely in terms of their ability to serve different segments of the market. As a result, Kurtz (2008:281) suggests that every company should implement differentiated marketing strategies.

In order to implement an effective target-marketing strategy, companies should follow the three major steps of target marketing. Target marketing, as set out by Kotler (2000:256) coincides with the model of Rudra (2008:48). The *first* step, market segmentation, involves: (1) dividing a market into distinct groups of consumers with different needs, characteristics, or behaviors who might require separate products/services or marketing mixes (segmentation bases), as well as identifying different bases to segment the market, and (2) developing profiles of the resulting market segments. The *second* step, market targeting, involves: (3) developing measures for every market segment’s attractiveness and (4) selecting one or more of the market segments to enter. The *third* step, market positioning, involves: (5) developing the competitive positioning for the product/service and (6) developing a detailed marketing mix for every segment.

As developing profiles require the implementation of an identified segmentation basis, the following section will explore demographic segmentation as a sub-section of market segmentation, as well as how these elements contribute to developing a demographic profile of adventure tourists.

Market Segmentation

Markets consist of consumers and consumers, according to Waldfogel (2008:569-570), may differ in their wants, resources, locations, buying attitudes, and buying practices. Ideally, every consumer can be viewed as a potentially separate market because consumers have unique needs and wants (customization). The role of market segmentation, according to Kurtz (2008:281), is to divide the total market into smaller, relatively homogenous groups. This is necessary in today’s business world because there are too many variables in consumer needs, preferences and purchasing power to attempt attracting all consumers with a single marketing mix.

This does not necessarily mean that adventure tourism companies should change their products/services in order to meet the needs of different market segments, but it does suggest that adventure tourism companies should attempt to identify the factors that affect consumers’ purchase decisions; group consumers according to the presence or absence of these factors; and then adjust their marketing strategies in order to meet the needs of the selected group(s) of consumers. Market segmentation presents numerous advantages and disadvantages to adventure tourism companies. The *advantages* of using market segmentation, according to Musyoka, Mutyaulyu, Kiema, Karanja and Siriba (2007:633) are: easier marketing as it is simpler to address the needs of smaller groups of consumers if they have many characteristics in common; result niches (locating under-served or un-served markets will enable a new company or new product/service to target less contested marketplaces and helps a mature product/service to seek new consumers); and, efficiency (creating a more efficient use of marketing resources by focusing on the segments with the best potential). The *disadvantages* of using market segmentation, according to George (2001:121) are developing separate market products/services are expensive; it may be difficult for

the company to know how accurately or broadly to segment the market; and lastly, there is a tendency to appeal to markets that are not viable.

Taking the above into consideration it can be concluded that market segmentation is the process of breaking a larger target market into smaller groups with specific characteristics. Every group requires different promotional strategies and marketing mixes because every group has different wants and needs. An understanding of a group's characteristics such as personality, social class and lifestyle plays a vital role in developing a successful marketing strategy (Kurtz, 2008:283).

As previously indicated, there are two steps involved in market segmentation, namely: (1) identifying the bases for segmenting various markets; and (2) developing profiles of the resulting market segments. These steps formed the basis of this investigation and will now be further explored.

Bases of Market Segmentation

Companies can identify four different bases for segmenting markets, namely geographical, demographical, psycho graphical and behavioral. However, according to studies by Kotler, Bowen & Makens (2006:263), demographic characteristics should be known to assess the size of the market and to reach it effectively. Therefore, for the purpose of this investigation, the focus will be on exploring the demographical bases to segment a market. Following is a description of six demographic segmentation variables.

(1) *Gender*- Gender is a variable that helps define markets for certain products/services; yet, segmenting by gender can be tricky. Gender segmentation is in some cases obvious, according to Kurtz (2008:287). However, adventure tourism companies may have to segment their markets differently if a 'typical' male or female product/service is not clearly identifiable. Kotler, Bowen and Makens (2006:269) suggest that companies' marketing strategies should rather be aimed at consumer interests rather than gender as gender marketing is more effective when combined with lifestyle and/or demographics.

(2) *Age*- Age is another variable that adventure tourism companies could use to segment their markets. However, as with gender, age distinctions have become blurred as consumers' roles and needs change, as age distribution shifts, and as studied changes take place in every group. Adventure tourism companies can benefit from taking into consideration the sociological concept called the cohort effect. Kurtz (2008:288) describes this concept as "... the tendency of members of a generation to be influenced and bound together by significant events occurring during their key formative years."

The cohort effect helps to define the core values of the age group that eventually shape consumer preferences and behavior. In order for adventure tourism companies to be effective, they need to understand some basic characteristics of the cyber generation, generation Y, generation X, baby boomers and the silent generation.

(3) *Ethnic Group*- Companies are increasingly segmenting the market according to ethnic groups with a view to increase their market share. Companies then tend to target the largest and fastest growing ethnic groups (Kurtz, 2008:290-293), as well as ethnic groups with the most disposable income. The focus then is to inform and attract these groups as spending by these groups are rising at a faster pace than what is the case for general households.

(4) *Family Life Cycle Stages*- As people move from one life-cycle stage to another, they become potential consumers of different types of goods and services (Frash, Antun & Hodges, 2008:382). Therefore, adventure tourism companies should consider whether a consumer is a young single person, a young

couple, a full nester, an empty nester, a single parent, a blended couple or an older single person when developing their marketing approaches.

(5) *Household Type*-The average household size in South Africa, as indicated by the Health Systems Trust (2007), has decreased from 4.5 in 1995 to 3.9 in 2007. Hayami and Okada (2005:201) explain that the trend towards smaller households could include lower fertility rates, young people's tendency to postpone marriage, the frequency of divorce, and the ability and desire of many people to live alone. Today's households represent a wide range of diversity.

Households, according to Kurtz (2008:294), could include a household with a married couple and their children; a household that is blended through divorce, or the loss of a spouse and remarriage; a household with a single parent, same-sex parents or grandparents; couples without children; groups of friends; and single-person households. It is important for adventure tourism companies to identify household trends, should these be applicable, in order to modify their marketing approach, so that they will be able to meet the needs of different groups.

(6) *Income and Expenditure Rates*-Companies often target geographic areas known for the high incomes of their residents, and/or they might consider age or household types when determining potential buying power. In order to identify how expenditure patterns vary with income, adventure tourism companies could utilize Engel's Law. Ernst Engel, a German statistician, published what is known as the *Engel Curve*, or *Engel's Law*. This law states that the higher a family's income the smaller the proportion of it is spent on food; the percentage spent on housing, household operations and clothing remain constant; and the percentage spent on other items (education and recreation) increases (Engel, 2009). Engel's conclusion was based on a budget study of 153 Belgian families and was later verified by a number of other statistical inquiries into consumer behavior. It is evident that adventure tourism companies could utilize Engel's Law when segmenting their markets according to income and expenditure rates.

To conclude the discussion on demographic segmentation, it is important to keep in mind that demographic segmentation as a basis can be helpful, but it can also lead to stereotyping, as indicated by Kurtz (2008:287). Furthermore, it can alienate a potential market or cause adventure tourism companies to miss a potential market altogether. The idea is to use demographic segmentation as a starting point and not as an only alternative. The discussion on market segmentation addressed the first step of the market segmentation process; the next section will elaborate on how to develop profiles of the resulting market segments.

Profiles of Resulting Market Segments

Profiling is the second and last step of the market segmentation process and this concludes the first step of the target marketing process. Before a marketing program aimed at a specific market segment (differentiated marketing) can be developed, adventure tourism companies should understand the typical consumer in that market. According to Czinkota et al. (2000:225), a detailed picture of a market segment is called a *profile*. A profile, according to Hanson, Rauniyar and Herrmann (1994:303), should paint a clear picture of the typical consumer by using applicable segmentation variables. For the purpose of this investigation, the demographic variables were identified and discussed above. Although a profile is a generalized average of the typical consumer in a segment (Mostafa, 2009:11034), profiling is very important because the usefulness of market segmentation is precipitated upon accurate profiling. Relatively low accuracy in forecasting segment membership will result in ineffective marketing programs and may have a potential negative impact due to targeting unintended segment members.

As the primary research purpose of this investigation was to develop a demographic profile of adventure tourists, step one and two of the market segmentation (step one of the target marketing process) forms the

basis of this investigation. The resulting information gained through implementing this process will address the research problem of this investigation. In order to identify how this investigation's resulting information can be utilized by adventure tourism companies, companies should implement market targeting and market positioning strategies. Detailed discussions of these strategies fall outside the scope of this investigation but could form part of future research.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on applied research in order to attain the stated objectives and find a solution to the research problem. This paper is based on the descriptive research approach because of the specific information requirements. A quantitative methodology is used because the methodology of this paper is grounded in the positivist social sciences paradigm.

The target population consisted of all adventure tourists within Pretoria, and the sample consisted of adventure tourists using the products/services of adventure tourism companies within Pretoria. Non-probability sampling in the form of quota and convenience sampling was used to select the sample members. Quota sampling with predetermined parameters was used to ensure data comparability. The sample consisted of 250 adventure tourists of whom 50.0% were male and 50.0% female. However, because of incomplete questionnaires that could affect the outcome of this paper, the sample that actually realized was 234, providing a 93.6% response rate. Lastly, convenience sampling was applied because the selection of sample members was based on their proximity to the researcher and the ease with which participants could be accessed.

A list of adventure tourism companies presenting adventure tourism activities at their premises within Pretoria was compiled with the assistance of the Gauteng Tourism Authority (GTA), the GSA (industry magazine), the Indaba traders' catalogue, the Internet and personal interviews. The list consisted of 35 adventure tourism companies; however, due to a lack of cooperation by some of these companies, the final list comprised of 20 adventure tourism companies. The sample size was divided into the number of adventure tourism companies to ensure that an equal number of responses were obtained when these companies were visited. The aim was to include as many as possible adventure tourists participating at adventure tourism companies, in order to obtain a representative sample.

Prior to distributing the questionnaires, 30 first and second year adventure tourism students at the Tshwane University of Technology completed a pilot questionnaire in order to determine the analytical capability and the effectiveness of the questionnaire as a research instrument. Based on the feedback received from the pilot paper, adjustments were made to the questionnaire before it was distributed. Self-completing questionnaires were distributed among adventure tourists using the products/services of adventure tourism companies in Pretoria. To ensure that these tourists have participated in at least one adventure activity, the researcher approached them to participate in the study after they have completed their activities. This approach was necessary because the purpose of this paper was to profile *adventure* tourists and not tourists in general. The researcher administered the pilot and fieldwork.

The questionnaire was specifically designed for the purpose of this paper. Questionnaires used in previous profiling studies were consulted as a guideline during the construction of this questionnaire, such as (1) the questionnaire used by Tassiopoulos and Haydam (2008) for profiling golf tourists attending an international golf event in South Africa, and (2) the questionnaire used by Muthaya (2009) for segmenting the international market. Furthermore, the literature review served as a guideline to ensure that all the demographic variables were included in order to address the objective of this paper. The questionnaire followed a positivistic approach and consisted of closed-ended, dichotomous, multi-choice and two ranking scale questions that required the participants to rank their personality, social class and lifestyle.

The guidelines for constructing questions (Babbie, 2009:262-270) and the Code of Ethics (Jennings, 2001:98) were followed to aid the success of data collection and analysis.

Reliability is a complex issue in the social sciences because the fact that human nature changes over time and space means that consistency with previous research results is by no means a guarantee of reliability. The reliability of the questions in the questionnaire posted to the sample was tested by using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. According to the Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for all the items tested in the questionnaire, 0.7388 indicated raw variables and 0.7302 indicated standardized variables, which were more than the acceptable level of 0.70. Therefore, the questionnaire used for the purpose of this paper proves to be reliable and consistent.

Data validation is the process of ensuring that a program operates on clean, correct and useful data. Each variable was tested to fall within these boundaries. These boundaries were pre-programmed into the Microsoft Access database on which the pre-coded data was captured. Thereafter, the data was imported into the SAS (Statistical Analysis Software) format through the SAS Access module to perform a univariate and bivariate analysis. Data accuracy and correctness were ensured by capturing the data twice and comparing the two data sets for errors. Errors could be in the form of an invalid code or an unexpected missing value. By referencing back to the original questionnaires, all errors were traced in the data file and corrected. However, construct validation can only be taken to the point where the questionnaire measures what it is suppose to measure. As the questionnaire was suppose to develop a demographic profile of adventure tourists, construct validity was assured during the planning and development stage of the questionnaire. The final data outputs were validated and checked by the research statistician.

RESULTS

Demographic descriptors are those innate economic, geographical and social attributes that constitute an individual and describe the location of that individual in his or her social environment. Demographic characteristics provide the impetus for both tangible and intangible variations among the ways consumers think, feel and act. This study used pre-determined demographic descriptors in order to provide an overall picture of the respondents' gender, age, ethnic group, family life cycle stage, household type as well as their income and expenditure rates. The primary objective of this investigation was to develop a demographic profile of adventure tourists in Pretoria. In order to achieve this objective the demographic descriptors applicable to adventure tourists within this area were identified. A univariate and bivariate analysis was performed on all variables; displaying means, standard deviations, frequencies, percentages, cumulative frequencies and cumulative percentages. The univariate and bivariate statistics for the demographic variables enabled the development of the demographic profile of adventure tourists.

Gender- An equal number of respondents are male (49.4%) and female (49.4%), whereas 1.2% of the respondents did not stipulate their gender. This is an important factor to mention as it facilitated the comparison of adventure tourists' profiles.

*Age-*The age descriptors were divided into the sociological concept of the cohort effect. 32.1% of the respondents are part of the generation Y age group (born 1982-2001), 57.3% are from the generation X age group (born 1960-1981), 9.8% are from the baby boomers age group (born 1943-1960), and 0.4% are from the silent generation age group (born 1925-1942).

Ethnic Group- More than half of the respondents (51.7%) belong to the Afrikaans-speaking (linguistic) ethnic group, 23.9% of the respondents are from the English-speaking (linguistic) ethnic group and 24.4% of the respondents are from other ethnic groups. Not all the ethnic groups are specified because many companies tend to target the largest and/or fastest growing ethnic groups (Kurtz, 2008:290-293).

Family Life Cycle Stage- The majority of the respondents comprise of families (41.9%) and pre-families (26.9%) as they are married (49.6%) or single (30.8%) with no children (38.0%) or two children (35.0%) older than twelve years of old (64.1%). However, 17.1% of the respondents have one child that is under the age of twelve, 14.5% have two children under the age of twelve, 3.4% have three children under the age of twelve and 0.4% has four or more children under the age of twelve. This is an important factor to identify seeing that most adventure tourism companies provide special activities and discounted prices for children under the age of twelve.

Household Type-Adventure tourism companies should identify household trends in order to modify their marketing approach, so that they will be able to meet the needs of different groups. It is important to note that there are various household types within Pretoria, for example foster parents/children, but for the purposes of this study, the ten most common household types have been used. A large percentage of the respondents (24.4%) are married with children (the children would select the same option if their parents were married), and this exceeds single person households with only 9.0%.

Furthermore, a large number of households (25.6%) consist of two people and households consisting of four members (25.2%) closely follow this segment. This coincides with the results obtained in the family life cycle stage.

Income and Expenditure Rates-In order to identify how expenditure patterns vary in terms of income, adventure tourism companies should consider the level of education, current occupation, individual income and the number of income earners within a household of their target markets. For the purpose of this study, the respondents' responses to their education level are divided into the three levels of education used in South Africa. The *general* level of education comprises an NQF (National Qualification Forum) Level 1 (Grade R to Grade 9 school grades). The *further* level of education comprises the NQF Level 2 (Grade 10), NQF Level 3 (Grade 11) and NQF Level 4 (Grade 12). The *higher* level of education comprises the NQF Level 5 (Certificate, Higher certificate and First diploma), NQF Level 6 (Bachelor's degree, Professional first-degree post-graduate, General first degree), NQF Level 7 (Postgraduate diploma, Honors degree, Master's degree), and NQF Level 8 (Doctoral degree).

Based on the results, the respondents are normally *further* (67.1%) or *higher* (30.8%) educated Technicians and Associate Professionals (27.8%) or Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers (24.4%) whose gross individual income ranges between R10,001.00 and R19,999.00 per month (26.5%) or R20,000.00 and R29,999.00 per month (20.9%). Their households generally consist of one (32.5%) or two (58.6%) income earners per household.

To conclude, numerous adventure tourism companies should view marketing as a major tool to reach their target markets who in return needs to understand the nature and benefits of the adventure tourism companies' products and/or services. Adventure tourism companies should also use different marketing methods and techniques to meet the varying levels of understanding tourists. Moreover, they should further consistently analyze, plan, develop, deliver, evaluate and update their marketing campaigns to meet their marketing objectives whilst meeting the demand of their target markets.

DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this paper was to develop a demographic profile of adventure tourists in Pretoria; more specifically, the secondary objectives of this paper were to explore the notions of market segmentation, market targeting, and market positioning in order to explain how these elements contribute towards profiling consumers; and to identify the demographic descriptors applicable to adventure tourists.

Summary of Results and Managerial Implications

Technical definitions of tourism are commonly used by companies seeking to define their target markets. Although, the WTO definitions are applied by the majority of users to define tourism-related terms, Page and Connell (2006:12) indicated that there are different interpretations between countries where tourism statistics are gathered. They suggest that international comparisons can only be made if statistics are equally defined, collected and analyzed. This exemplifies a need for a tourism classification that can evolve and accommodate more complex forms of tourism, such as adventure tourism. According to Page and Connell (2006:16), a robust system is required to classify and measure tourism-related terms.

The importance of implementing target-marketing strategies when developing consumer profiles were identified. This study's empirical research identified that adventure tourism companies cannot appeal to all consumers in the market and they cannot successfully approach all consumers in the same way. It is recommended that adventure tourism companies should identify sections of the market they can serve best – niche target markets. This approach contributes towards identifying market opportunities and developing products/services that are more appealing.

The first step of target marketing, namely market segmentation is the act of dividing the market into distinct consumer groups who might merit separate products/services or marketing mixes. Markets can be segmented using different bases and adventure tourism companies should try several approaches, and even combinations of these, in order to determine which will yield the best opportunities. This addressed the second secondary objective, seeing that the development of demographic profiles require the implementation of the mentioned demographic segmentation bases, namely gender, age, ethnic group, family life cycle stage, household type, as well as their income and expenditure rates. In order for adventure tourism companies to utilize the profile, the last two steps of the target marketing strategy (market targeting and positioning) should also be implemented.

The steps of this process are reliant on the success of each other, in other words, every step needs to be implemented effectively in order to proceed and successfully complete the systematic process. Therefore, adventure tourism companies should consistently analyze, plan, develop, deliver, evaluate and update their marketing campaigns to meet their marketing objectives whilst meeting the demands and/or preferences of their target markets.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The structural limitations of this investigation include the limited available literature associated with adventure tourism. Adventure tourism has been industry-driven; therefore, the importance of theoretical constructs might not have been fully recognized as greater attention was paid to empirical applications. Adventure tourism studies are usually performed from a social science perspective, therefore exchanging research terms or application practices may violate assumptions across these two fields.

In addition, regarding the research methodology, the sample might raise the following concerns in terms of representativeness and the fact that the results of this investigation cannot be generalized. *Firstly*, this investigation could not be extended to include more or all provinces in South Africa, nor a bigger sample. *Secondly*, due to a lack of cooperation from some adventure tourism companies, all the adventure tourism companies based in Pretoria could not be included in this study. *Lastly*, non-probability sampling was used. Nevertheless, the target population of this investigation was not the public in Pretoria; rather, it comprised adventure tourists utilizing the products/services of adventure tourism companies within Pretoria.

Future research could include more extensive research to gain further insight into profiling adventure tourists; more geographic, demographic, behavioral and psychographic components (such as needs, motivations or benefits) should be considered. Further research is needed in terms of adventure tourism marketing because the full effect of this type of marketing will be beneficial to the entire adventure tourism industry.

CONCLUSION

An adventure tourism company's success is based on satisfying the specific needs and wants of a selected target market; however, it is difficult to target selected market segments as individuals' motives, behaviors, and experiences differ and change over time. The objective of this study was to develop a demographic profile of adventure tourists in Pretoria, South Africa. This profile included the gender, age, ethnic group, family life cycle stage, household type as well as income and expenditure rates of the respondents. The sample size was two hundred and fifty adventure tourists and the realized sample was 234, providing a 93.6% response rate. The research instrument used was a self-completing questionnaire.

The results indicated that the majority of the respondents are Afrikaans speaking individuals born between 1960 and 1981. These individuals are mostly married with no children or have two children who are above the age of twelve years. Adventure tourists in Pretoria tend to be *further* educated Technicians and Associate Professionals whose gross individual income ranges between R10,001.00 and R29,999.00 per month. This study presented a challenging but worthy task, particularly when little systematic research has previously been reported on the subject to date. Therefore, future research could include more comprehensive adventure tourist profiles that is equally accepted and interpreted. These results will help adventure tourism companies to be knowledgeable about adventure tourists and to conduct effective target marketing.

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