

The perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination

**Kiéra Seymour, BA, BA (Hons),
21184046**

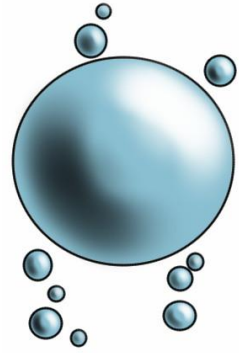
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Study Leader: Prof P. van der Merwe

Co – Study Leader: Prof E. Slabbert

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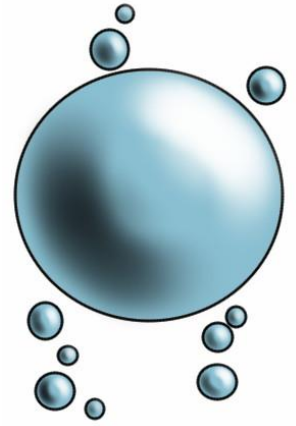
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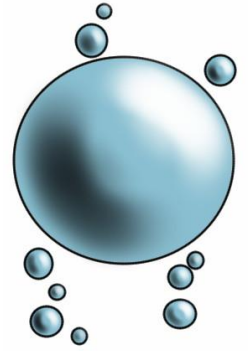
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Dedicated to my sister Esthé Schoeman!

'The future belongs to those
who believe in the beauty of
their dreams'



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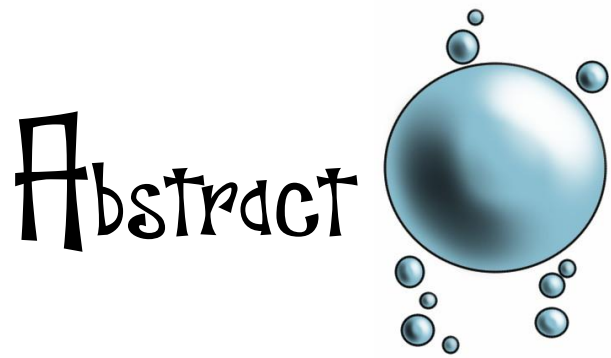


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WHAT IS THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF SCUBA DIVING TOURISTS AT A MARINE DESTINATION?

Tourism activities set in coastal and marine environments have evolved far beyond the traditional passive leisure experiences of the classic resort holiday. While the traditional beach holiday remains a contemporary mass tourism phenomenon. Marine tourism now extends far beyond beach activities to a wide spread spectrum of activities including scuba diving with over 20 million certified divers worldwide. The tourism product carries both the characteristics of the service product and the characteristics unique to the tourism industry, which makes the tourism product different from physical/ tangible goods. Therefore tourism destinations involve a multiple of industries (e.g. hospitality, transportation, entertainment) that contribute through their value-added activities to the overall competitive position in the marketplace. Tourism value can be seen as a combination of a product's (destination's) perceived quality and associated price which a visitor will summarize as the value received. Value in tourism has been seen as a definite option to improve a destination's competitive edge. Tourism development is about adding value in a way that is consistent with market demand. As tourism value is created within the destination it holds various benefits including that destinations will achieve high market growth and hence become more competitive due to successful value-added programmes. Destinations are winning competitive battles by careful analysis and response to the core values and needs of the segmented travel marketplace.

This study was based on four distinct value dimensions developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) that are termed emotional, social, quality/ performance and price/ value for money.

Sweeney and Soutar's model (2001:211) was examined to determine its appropriateness for an intangible product in the service sector namely scuba diving. Two modifications to Sweeney and Soutar's model (2001:211) were required for this study. The modifications which were used in this study included perceived risk value which was introduced by Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:350) and epistemic value developed by Sheth, Norman and Gross (1991:160).

The primary goal of this dissertation was to determine the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination. A literature study was undertaken to contextualise Marine Tourism and perceived value since a review of existing literature on perceived value provides insight as to why the value concept is so crucial for the success of marketing researchers. Thereafter an empirical study was undertaken to obtain relevant data for analysis. A non-probability sampling method namely convenience sampling was used to conduct the survey due to the absence of a structured list of divers visiting Sodwana Bay during this time. A destination-based survey was undertaken at Sodwana Bay from the 29th of March to the 8th of April 2012. Five hundred (500) self-administered surveys were distributed by field workers among scuba divers who were available and willing to complete the questionnaire. Of the 500 questionnaires distributed a total of 402 were completed and could be used for collation of data. Microsoft[™] Office[™] Excel 2007 was used to capture the data, which was then statistically analysed and processed by means of descriptive statistics using the SPSS 20.0 programme. More specifically, factor analysis and ANOVAs were done to analyse the value created. In order to achieve the goal, the study was divided into two articles.

Article 1 aimed to determine the perceived value of a tourism experience, in this case for the scuba diving tourists at a marine destination, namely Sodwana Bay. Results revealed that the demographic profile of the scuba divers, are middle aged Afrikaans speaking men who are well educated, earn a high income, and originate from Gauteng. To examine the factors underlying the value scale, a principle axis factor analysis with oblique rotation (direct oblimin) was undertaken. The twenty-two factor aspects yielded five factors with eigen values greater than 1.0. These factors explained 64% of the variance and were labelled: 'Emotional value', 'Functional value', 'Social value', 'Perceived risk value' and 'Epistemic value'. Twenty-one aspects had loadings of over 0.418, with only one item having a factor loading of 0.251. With the highest mean (3.43) Epistemic value revealed that respondents consider curiosity, acquiring knowledge, providing novelty and broadening knowledge as key in a valued

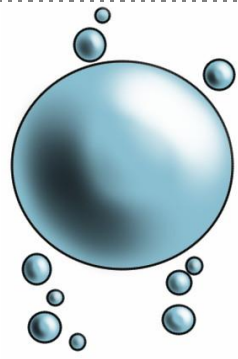
experience. Reliability (Cronbach's α) was computed to verify the internal consistency of aspects with each factor. All factors with a Cronbach Alpha above 0.63 were deemed acceptable for the purposes of this exploratory study. Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure sampling adequacy (KMO) was 0.874, which are acceptable for the purpose of this study.

Article 2 aimed to determine the factors which influence perceived tourism values of scuba divers at a marine destination, namely Sodwana Bay. To achieve this, ANOVAs were developed and correlations were drawn between age, gender, province, income, level of education, marital status, number of times dived, number of nights stayed in the area, travel group size and media (including, websites, shows, friends, radio, T.V., magazines, previous visits and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter). Correlations were discovered between language, province, marital status, income and media (including, websites, shows, friends, radio, T.V., Magazines, Previous visits and Social Networks such as Facebook and Twitter). The perceived values which were rated highest in each case were emotional value, perceived risk value and perceived functional value.

Since this is the first study of its kind in South Africa, it can benefit marine destinations all across the country. The perceived values which were rated highest in both articles should be of high priority in marketing efforts for marine destinations, especially where scuba diving activities are taking place. Assessing and understanding these values will help scuba diving destinations to gain a competitive advantage and provide a more tailor-made product which will improve the value experienced. It is recommended that this study is repeated at other diving sites and also various other tourism products to determine difference and/or similarities between tourism values. Marketing strategies can be utilized through the identification of these and various other values which will improve current marketing efforts.

Keywords: *Perceived Value, Perceived Tourism Value, Tourism Marketing, Marine Tourism, Scuba Diving, Socio-Demographic Variables and Media.*

Opsomming



WAT IS DIE WAARGENOME WAARDE WAT SKUBADUIK-TOERISTE BY 'N MARINEBESTEMMING AAN HUL ERVARING HEG?

Toerismebedrywighede wat in kus- en marine-omgewings geleë is, het ver verby die tradisionele passiewe ontspanningservaring van die klassieke oordvakansie ontwikkel. Terwyl die tradisionele strandvakansie 'n hedendaagse massa toerismeverksynsel bly, brei Marine-toerisme nou ver verby strand-aktiwiteite uit tot 'n wydverspreide spektrum aktiwiteite, insluitend skubaduik met meer as 20 miljoen gekwalifiseerde duikers wêreldwyd. Die toerismeproduk besit die eienskappe van sowel die diensproduk as dié wat uniek is aan die toerismebedryf, wat die toerismeproduk anders maak as fisiese/tasbare goedere. Toerismebestemmings behels dus veelvuldige bedrywe (bv. gasvryheid, transport, vermaak) wat deur middel van hul waardetoegevoegde aktiwiteite tot die hele mededingende posisie in die mark bydra. Toerismewaarde kan beskou word as 'n kombinasie van produk se (bestemming se) waargenome gehalte en prys daaraan verbonde wat 'n besoeker as die waarde wat hy/sy ontvang het, sal opsom. Ten opsigte van toerisme is waarde beskou as 'n besliste opsie om 'n bestemming se mededingende voordeel te verbeter. By toerismeontwikkeling gaan dit om waardetoevoeging op 'n wyse wat ooreenstem met markaanvraag. Namate toerismewaarde binne die bestemming geskep word, hou dit velerlei voordele in, onder andere dat bestemmings hoë markgroei sal behaal en gevolglik meer mededingend sal word weens geslaagde programme wat waarde toevoeg. Bestemmings is besig om mededingende wedywerings te wen deur oorwoë analisering en deur op die kernwaardes en behoeftes van gesegmenteerde reismarkte te reageer.

Hierdie studie is op vier duidelike waardedimensies wat deur Sweeney en Soutar (2001:211) ontwikkel is, gebaseer, by name emosionele, sosiale, gehalte/prestasie en prys/waarde vir geld. Sweeney en Soutar se model (2001:211) is ondersoek om die toepaslikheid daarvan vir

'n ontasbare produk in die dienssektor, by name skubaduik, te bepaal. Vir hierdie studie was dit nodig om twee wysigings aan te bring by Sweeney en Soutar se model (2001:211). Die wysigings wat in hierdie studie benut is, bevat waargenome risikowaarde, wat deur Hall, Robertson en Shaw (2001:350) ingevoer is, en epistemiese waarde wat deur Sheth, Norman en Gross (1991:160) ontwikkel is.

Die primêre doel van hierdie skripsie was om die waargenome waarde wat skubaduiktoeriste by 'n marinebestemming aan hul ervaring heg, te bepaal. 'n Literatuurstudie is onderneem om Marine-toerisme en waargenome waarde te kontekstualiseer, aangesien 'n oorsig van bestaande literatuur oor waargenome waarde insig gee in die rede waarom die waardebeginsel van deurslaggewende belang is vir die sukses van bemarkingsnavorsing. Daarna is 'n empiriese studie onderneem om relevante data vir analisering te bekom. 'n Nie-waarskynlikheid-steekproefnemingsmetode, naamlik gerieflikheid-steekproefnemings is gevolg om die opname te doen weens die feit dat 'n gestruktureerd lys duikers wat Sodwanabaai gedurende hierdie tydperk besoek, nie bestaan het nie. 'n Bestemminggebaseerde opname is van 29 Maart tot 8 April 2012 gedoen. Vyf honderd (500) self ingevulde vraelyste is deur veldwerkers onder skubaduikers versprei wat beskikbaar en gewillig om die vraelyste in te vul. Uit die 500 vraelyste wat versprei is, is 402 in totaal ingevul en kon vir die vergelyking van data benut word. Microsoft™ Office™ Excel 2007 is gebruik om die data vas te lê, wat toe statisties ontleed en geprosesseer is deur middel van beskrywende statistiek met die gebruik van die SPSS 20.0-program. Meer spesifiek is faktoranalise en ANOVA's gedoen om die waarde wat geskep is, te analiseer. Om die doel te bereik is die studie in twee artikels verdeel.

Artikel 1 was daarop gemik om die waargenome waarde van 'n toerisme-ervaring te bepaal – in hierdie geval van die skubaduik-toeriste by 'n marine-bestemming, naamlik Sodwanabaai. Resultate het aan die lig gebring dat die demografiese profiel van die skubaduikers middeljarige Afrikaans-sprekende mans is wat goed geletterd is, 'n hoë inkomste verdien en van Gauteng afkomstig is. Om die faktore wat onderliggend is aan die waardeskaal na te gaan is 'n hoofas faktoranalise met skuinsrotasie onderneem. Die twee en twintig aspekte het vyf faktore opgelewer met eigenwaardes groter as 1.0. Hierdie faktore verklaar 64% van die variansie en is bestempel: “Emosionele waarde”, “Funksionele waarde”, “Sosiale waarde”, “Waargenome risikowaarde” en “Epistemiese waarde”. Een en twintig aspekte het ladings groter as 0.418 gehad, met slegs een item wat 'n faktorlading van 0.251 gehad het. Met die

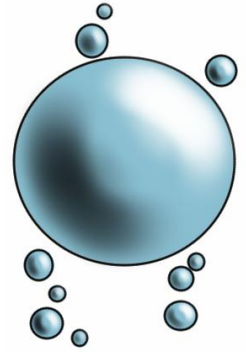
hoogste gemiddelde (3.43) het Epistemiese waarde laat blyk dat respondente nuuskierigheid, kennis opdoen, nuwe ervarings opdoen en kennisuitbreiding as die sleutel tot 'n gewaardeerde ervaring beskou. Betroubaarheid (Cronbach's α) is gerekenariseer om die interne konsekwentheid van aspekte binne elke faktor te verifieer. Alle faktore met 'n Cronbach Alpha hoër as 0.63 is as aanvaarbaar vir die doelwitte van hierdie verkennende studie beskou. Bartlett se toets van sferisiteit was betekenisvol ($p < 0.001$) en die Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure sampling adequacy (KMO) was 0.874, wat beide aanvaarbaar is vir die doel van hierdie studie.

Artikel 2 was daarop gemik om die faktore wat waargenome toerismewaarde van skubaduikers by 'n marinebestemming, naamlik Sodwanabaai te bepaal. Om dit te bereik is ANOVA's ontwikkel en verbande getrek tussen ouderdom, geslag, provinsie, inkomste, onderwysvlak, huwelikstatus, aantal kere geduik, aantal nagte in die omgewing oorgeslaap, grootte van reisgroep en media (insluitend webwerwe, vertonings, vriende, radio, TV, tydskrifte, vorige besoeke en sosiale netwerke soos *Facebook* en *Twitter*). Korrelasies is gevind tussen taal, provinsie, huwelikstatus, inkomste en media. Die waargenome waardes wat die hoogste in elke geval aangeslaan is, is emosionele waarde, waargenome risikowaarde en waargenome funksionele waarde.

Aangesien hierdie die eerste studie van sy soort in Suid-Afrika is, kan dit tot voordeel strek van marinebestemmings oor die hele land. Die waargenome waardes wat die hoogste in beide artikels aangeslaan is, behoort hoë prioriteit in bemarkingspogings vir marinebestemmings te geniet, veral waar skubaduik-aktiwiteite plaasvind. Deur hierdie waardes te assesser en te verstaan sal dit skubaduikbestemmings help om 'n mededingende voordeel te verkry en 'n meer pasklaarproduk te lewer wat die waarde wat ervaar word, sal verbeter. Daar word aanbeveel dat hierdie studie by ander duikterreine en ook verskeie ander toerismeprodukte herhaal moet word om verskille en/of ooreenkomste tussen toerismewaardes te bepaal. Bemarkingstrategieë kan benut word deur die identifisering van hierdie en verskeie ander waardes, wat huidige bemarkingspogings kan verbeter.

Sleutelwoorde: *Waargenome Waarde, Waargenome Toerismewaarde, Toerismebemarking, Marine-toerisme, Skubaduik, Sosiodemografiese Veranderlikes en Media.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS



CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Problem Statement	1
1.1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	4
1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT	14
1.4. GOAL OF THE STUDY	15
1.4.1. Goal	15
1.4.2. Objectives	15
1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	16
1.5.1. Literature study	16
1.5.2. Empirical survey	17
1.5.2.1. Research design and method of collecting data	17
1.5.2.2. Development of the availability test plan/ sampling	18
1.5.2.3. Sampling method	19
1.5.2.4. Development of the questionnaire	19
1.5.2.5. Data analysis	20
1.6. DEFINING CONCEPTS	21
1.6.1. Tourism Value	21
1.6.2. Value	22
1.6.3. Marine Tourism	22
1.6.4. Dive Tourism	22
1.6.5. Scuba Diving	22
1.7. CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION	23
 CHAPTER 2: Marine Tourism in Context and the Perceived Value Thereof	 25
2.1. INTRODUCTION	25
2.2. MARINE TOURISM AND RELATED ASPECTS	26
2.2.1. Marine/ Coastal Environments and their importance in this niche	32
2.2.2. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs): A managerial approach to Marine Tourism	34
2.2.3. Marine Activities: The core function of Marine Tourism	36
2.2.4. Defining Dive Tourism and the significance thereof	38
2.2.5. Scuba diving as a growing marine activity	39
2.2.6. Scuba diving and Sodwana Bay (South Africa)	40
2.3. DEFINING PERCEIVED VALUE	42
2.4. UNDERSTANDING VALUE FROM A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE	46

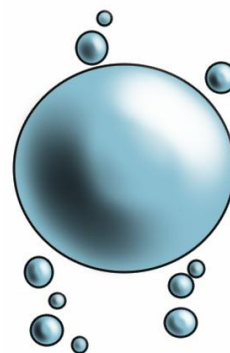
2.5.	THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERCEIVED VALUE RESEARCH	48
2.6.	THEORIES RELATED TO VALUE	56
2.6.1.	Holbrook 1994 “Interactive Relativistic Preference Experience”	56
2.6.2.	Sheth, Newman and Gross proposed theory of Consumption Value	59
2.6.3.	Sweeney and Soutar’s PERVAL Scale	62
2.6.4.	Application of Sweeney & Soutar’s PERVAL Scale	64
2.7.	ANALYSING THE VARIOUS VALUES	71
2.7.1.	Perceived Emotional Value	71
2.7.2.	Perceived Social Value (enhancement of social self-concept)	71
2.7.3.	Perceived Functional Value (price/ value for money)	72
2.7.4.	Perceived Functional Value (performance/ quality)	72
2.7.5.	Perceived Epistemic (novelty) Value	74
2.7.6.	Perceived Risk Value	74
2.8.	UNDERSTANDING VALUE FROM A TOURISM PERSPECTIVE	75
2.9.	ADVANTAGES OF KNOWING PERCEIVED VALUES	81
2.10.	CONCLUSION	84

CHAPTER 3: The Perceived Value of a Tourism Experience	86
3.1. INTRODUCTION	88
3.2. LITERATURE REVIEW	89
3.2.1. Perceived Value in Marketing	89
3.2.2. Perceived Value and its importance in a Tourism Environment	92
3.3. METHOD OF RESEARCH	98
3.4. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS	100
3.4.1. Demographic profile of respondents	100
3.4.2. Perceived Tourism Value of Scuba Divers at Sodwana Bay	102
3.4.3. Correlation Analysis of Perceived Tourism Values	109
3.5. FINDINGS	111
3.6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS	112
3.7. CONCLUSIONS	114

CHAPTER 4: Factors influencing Tourism Values		116
4.1.	INTRODUCTION	118
4.2.	LITERATURE REVIEW	119
4.2.1.	Perceived Value as a tool for marketing	119
4.2.2.	Socio-demographic characteristics	122
4.2.3.	Marketing Media	125
4.3.	METHOD OF RESEARCH	127
4.4.	DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	128
4.4.1.	Demographic profile of respondents	129
4.4.2.	Relationships between perceived tourism values and socio-	131

demographics characteristics	131
4.4.2.1. Comparison by Language	132
4.4.2.2. Comparison by Province	135
4.4.2.3. Comparison by Marital Status	136
4.4.2.4. Comparison by Income	139
4.4.3. Relationships between perceived tourism values and media variables	139
4.4.3.1. Comparison by Websites	140
4.4.3.2. Comparison by Shows (For example: Get-a-way)	141
4.4.3.3. Comparison by Friends (Word-of-mouth)	142
4.4.3.4. Comparison by Radio	143
4.4.3.5. Comparison by T.V.	144
4.4.5.6. Comparison by Magazines	145
4.4.5.7. Comparison by Social Networks (such as Facebook & Twitter)	146
4.5. FINDINGS	147
4.6. MANAGERIAL/ MARKETING IMPLICATIONS	151
4.7. CONCLUSION	
 CHAPTER 5: Conclusions and Recommendations	 153
5.1. INTRODUCTION	153
5.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY	155
5.3. CONCLUSIONS	156
5.3.1. Conclusions regarding the literature review	157
5.3.1.1. Marine Tourism	157
5.3.1.2. Perceived Value	161
5.3.2. Conclusions regarding the results	164
5.4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	164
5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS	164
5.5.1. General Recommendations	170
5.5.2. Recommendations for Future Research	
 REFERENCES	 171

LIST OF TABLES



CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Problem Statement

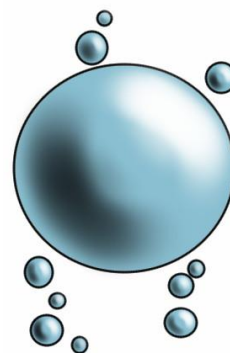
Table 1.1:	Previous studies done on value in the tourism industry	8
Table 1.2:	Perceived Value Model of Sweeney and Soutar	13
Table 1.3:	Material used for the analysis of tourism value	16

CHAPTER 2: Marine Tourism in Context and the Perceived Value Thereof

Table 2.1:	Definitions of Marine Tourism	27
Table 2.2:	Definitions of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)	34
Table 2.3:	Top 20 Dive Sites in the World	40
Table 2.4:	Various definitions of value	43
Table 2.5:	Previous perceived value studies done for the retail and marketing industry	49
Table 2.6:	Holbrook's Typology A	56
Table 2.7:	Holbrook's Typology B	57
Table 2.8:	Holbrook's Typology of Customer Value	58
Table 2.9:	Proposed Five Consumer Values	60
Table 2.10:	The PERVAL Scale	63
Table 2.11:	A contribution to Sweeney's model	65
Table 2.12:	Categorisation of values measured in previous studies	67
Table 2.13:	Definitions of quality	73
Table 2.14:	A summary of previous perceived value studies done in the tourism/services industry	77
Table 2.15:	Benefit and Sacrifice components of Perceived value	82

CHAPTER 3: The Perceived Value of a Tourism Experience

Table 3.1:	The PERVAL scale	91
Table 3.2:	Previous Perceived Value Studies in the Tourism Industry	96
Table 3.3:	Description of survey respondents (n = 402)	100
Table 3.4:	A Factor Analysis for Perceived Value of scuba divers	103
Table 3.5:	Factor Correlation Matrix	105
Table 3.6:	Spearman Rank Order Correlations between Perceived Tourism Value Factors	110



CHAPTER 4: Factors influencing Tourism Values

Table 4.1:	Description of survey respondents (N = 402)	129
Table 4.2:	ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Language	132
Table 4.3:	ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Province	134
Table 4.4:	ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Marital Status	135
Table 4.5:	ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Income	138
Table 4.6:	<i>t</i> -test for the comparison of perceived values by Media: Websites	139
Table 4.7:	<i>t</i> -test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Shows	140
Table 4.8:	<i>t</i> -test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Friends	141
Table 4.9:	<i>t</i> -test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Radio	142
Table 4.10:	<i>t</i> -test for comparison of perceived values by Media: T.V.	143
Table 4.11:	<i>t</i> -test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Magazines	144
Table 4.12:	<i>t</i> -test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Social networks (Facebook & Twitter)	145

LIST OF FIGURES

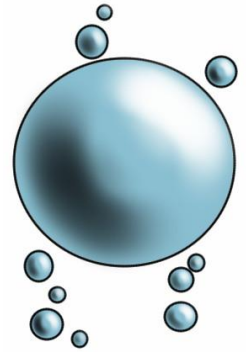
CHAPTER 2: Marine Tourism in Context and the Perceived Value Thereof

Figure 2.1:	Marine Tourism	26
Figure 2.2:	A graphical representation of the diverse types of Marine Tourism	28
Figure 2.3:	Marine Activities	37
Figure 2.4:	Certified scuba divers worldwide 1967-2011	39
Figure 2.5:	The Core Marketing Concepts	47
Figure 2.6:	The five values influencing consumer choice	60

CHAPTER 3: The Perceived Value of a Tourism Experience

Figure 3.1:	Mean values of perceived values	108
-------------	---------------------------------	-----

LIST OF MAPS



CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Problem Statement

Map 1.1:	A map indicating the location of Sodwana Bay	3
----------	--	---

CHAPTER 2: Marine Tourism in Context and the Perceived Value Thereof

Map 2.1:	An indication of the location of Sodwana Bay	41
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APPENDIXES

Appendix A:	Visitors questionnaire	190
Appendix B:	Language editor's certificate	194

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Problem Statement

‘A vision without action is merely a dream.

Action without vision just passes time.

Vision with action can change the world!’

‘Joel Barker, 1992’

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been acknowledged as one of the key economic sectors, becoming a booming industry in South Africa. The growth of domestic tourists in South Africa has increased annually, with 11.2 million domestic travellers in 2011 (STATS SA, 2011:7). According to Statistics South Africa (2011:7) these domestic tourists travel for various reasons including: visiting family and friends (53%); for leisure/ vacation or holidaying purposes (21%); to attend funerals (12%) and for religious reasons (8%).

One major attraction for these tourists is South Africa’s marine life, that can be found at many resorts along a coastline stretching over 3000 kilometres (Tinley, 1985:10), thus providing many opportunities for both local and foreign visitors to enjoy their leisure experiences.

The marine environment encompasses two-thirds of the surface of the planet (Higham & Lück, 2008:1), from inshore environments such as estuaries, lagoons, atolls and reef systems, mud flats and mangroves, to the pelagic environments of the open oceans.

The marine environment is a major venue for tourism and recreation activities (Orams, 1999:1). Marine Tourism is seen as one aspect of tourism making a significant contribution to global economies (Asafu-Adjaye & Tapsuwanb, 2008:1122). Countries with coral reefs attract millions of scuba divers who bring with them significant economic benefits to the host country (Casar, Burke & Pet-Soede, 2003:1). For example, Sodwana Bay in South Africa receives a direct spending by scuba divers of approximately R200 million per annum (Saayman & Seymour, 2012:14).

Higham and Lück, (2008:1) stated that Marine Tourism has become the focus of tourist attention in New Zealand. Nulty, Annett, Balnaves, Joyce and Teyssedre (2007:18) defined Marine Tourism as the sector of the tourism industry that is based on tourists and visitors taking part in active and passive leisure and holidays pursuits or journeys on (or in) coastal waters, their shorelines and their immediate coastal lands. These leisure pursuits or marine activities include watching whales, dolphins, other marine mammals and fish; bird watching; scuba diving; beach walking; rock pooling; snorkelling; walking on coastal footpaths and sightseeing trips by surface boat, submarine and aircraft (Garrod & Wilson, 2003:3). Of these activities, scuba diving became one of the most popular and was been noted as a rapidly developing branch of the tourism business (Van Treeck & Schuhmacher, 1998:499). Currently, the number of certified divers worldwide is in excess of 20 million (PADI, 2012:2).

Garrod and Gössling (2008:3) note that “scuba” is an acronym standing for Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus that, according to the WTO (2001:85), is utilised by people travelling to a destination with the main purpose of their trip being to partake in scuba diving. The attraction of the destination is almost exclusively related to its dive quality rather than to other factors such as the quality of accommodation or land-based attractions (WTO, 2001:85).

Dive Tourism is considered a type of niche tourism in South Africa (Mograbi & Rogerson, 2007:85). Sodwana Bay in Maputaland, KwaZulu-Natal (refer to Map 1.1), has been rated as the 20th best site to dive in the world (Scuba Travel, 2012:1), with 58 868 dives being launched in 2011 (Emzemvelo KZN Wildlife, 2012:2). Sodwana Bay lies in the Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park (iSimangaliso) (SA Venues, 2012:online) and was listed as South Africa’s first World Heritage site in December 1999 in recognition of its superlative, natural beauty and unique, global values (South Africa info, 2012:online). The wetland stretches

over 332 000 hectares and contains three major lake systems, eight interlinking ecosystems, 700 year old fishing traditions, most of South Africa's remaining swamp forests, Africa's largest estuarine system, 526 bird species and 25 000 year old coastal dunes – among the highest dunes in the world (Emzemvelo KZN Wildlife, 2012:1).



Map 1.1: A map indicating the location of Sodwana Bay

Source: Accommodation (2012: online)

Appreciation of, and demand for marine wildlife experiences, are developments that have resulted in a growing appreciation of the need to protect fragile marine ecologies (Higham & Lück, 2008:1). With this in mind, it becomes necessary to analyse the perceived value of tourism (particularly, that of scuba diving tourism) in these protected marine environments. Levy (1999:5) noted that tourists are value-driven, and so perceived value could be expected to be a high priority of this service sector and noted that a valued-experience would contribute to the competitiveness of a marine destination.

Thus, there exists a need to determine the perceived value of tourism and of the potentially limitless benefits it holds for the national economy. To truly understand, measure, analyse and sell tourism; it is therefore necessary to go beyond traditional thinking and to offer new insights into tourist consumer behaviour as it is related to perceived value.

Various studies have been done on the creation of value (for example, the works of Zeithaml, 1988; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991; Oliver, 1996; Sweeney, Soutar & Johnson, 1996; Patterson, Johnson & Spreng, 1997; Grewal, Monroe & Krishnan, 1998; Oh, 1999; Oliver, 1999). Since the turn of the Millennium, many other researchers (for example, Swait & Sweeney, 2000; Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000; Caruana, Money & Berthon, 2000; Tam, 2000; Oh, 2000; McDougall & Lévesque, 2000; Teas & Aragwal, 2000 and Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) have all researched the field, although very few have focused closely on value creation and the use thereof in the tourism industry, specifically referring to tourism in a Marine Environment. Scuba diving companies are particularly vulnerable to business fluctuations as competition among these companies is fierce. Hence, delivered value and customer satisfaction are crucial to establishing long-term relationships, earning word-of-mouth recommendations and to winning repeat business.

This dissertation aims to evaluate the perceived values of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination. Therefore, the purpose of Chapter 1 is to discuss the research process that will be followed in this study. This explanation will be clarified by discussing the background to the study, analysing the problem statement, stating the goals and objectives, introducing the research methodology, discussing key concepts and finally, by offering a synopsis of the various chapters.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Tourists evaluate their tourism experience holistically, thus making perceived value a high priority in this service sector. Since only limited knowledge exists concerning tourism value, it becomes a cause for concern considering that the tourism industry is such a highly competitive arena. This brief background offers a foundation for the purpose of this study, which is to assess the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination.

The concept, 'value', has been revisited and redefined over the past 30 years (Gallarza & Soura, 2008:4). In fact, most theoretical proposals on value take the discussion to a higher order, where, for instance, value becomes a super-ordinate concept subsuming quality (Oliver, 1999:58). In the 20th century, consumers are much more value conscious than they were historically (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:204) as more people seek a fuller sense of value from various services or products. Hartnett (1998:21) noted that when retailers satisfy people-based needs, they are seen as delivering the desired value, which puts them in a stronger position in the long-term. In their work, Gallarza and Soura (2008:16) indicated that their study proved that value is the key to creating/sustaining a competitive advantage.

Since the tourism product carries the characteristics of both service products and the unique characteristics (intangible, perishable and so on) of the tourism industry, value will be experienced in a different manner than when dealing with physical or with tangible goods. von Friedrichs Grängsjö (2003:427) stated that the tourism product is produced by interaction with the customer and that the customers have first to be imported to the arena of production, to the destination. Morrison (1996:9) offers that the mental estimates that consumers make of the travel product are where perceptions of value start to be drawn from personal cost/benefit assessment. Stevens (1992:46) also noted that value perceptions arise from an assessment of the goods and services purchased at the destination and thus represent a portfolio of different experiences. As such, tourism development is about adding perceived value in a manner that is consistent with market demand (Hassan, 2000:240).

Kuo, Wu and Deng (2009:888) stated that customer's perceived value could be defined from the perspectives of money, quality, benefit and of social psychology. Boksberger and Melsen (2011:233) stated that the perceived value of services was a combined assessment of consumers' perceptions of benefits and sacrifices, including quality and price, for a variety of perceived value dimensions. They noted that the customers' original behavioural intentions and customer satisfaction played a role in overall evaluation (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011:233).

Thus, perceived value can be defined as:

"the overall assessment, perceptions, mental estimates, interpretation of information or enduring beliefs of product attributes, attribute performances and consequences of

the cognitive-trade off or value received between consumers, the product source and the benefits received”.

Gallarza and Soura (2006:441) indicate that Tourism value models adopted a functional perspective, either where value was quality relative to the price paid (as did Bojanic, 1996:10; Jayanti & Ghosh, 1996:22) or the very simple view of value for money (as adopted by Murphy, Prichard & Smith, 2000:48).

As perceived value is created at the destination (Braun, 2005:6), this holds various benefits including that the destinations will achieve higher market growth and hence become more competitive due to the successful perceived value-added programmes (Hassan, 2000:242). Oh (2000:136) states that in the tourism industry, by offering new insights into consumer behaviour surrounding price-quality trade-offs, customer value may unveil the deep-seated driving forces of purchase decisions and brand quality. Destinations are also winning competitive battles by careful market analysis and the ensuing response to the core values and needs of the segmented travel marketplace (Hassan, 2000:240).

Various studies surrounding the evaluation and application of value have been done in the tourism industry focusing on perceived value, customer value or the concept of value (refer to Table 1.1). In 2000 Caruana *et al.* (2000:1348) determined the moderating role of value and indicated the constraints thereof. In their study, they found that the effect of quality on satisfaction was not just direct but was also moderated by value. Value did not appear to have a strong effect on satisfaction. However, the negative regression coefficient for the interaction between service quality and value implied that this factor could have a negative effect on satisfaction. These variables have increasingly played a key role in service marketing and are currently believed to have a significant effect on customer retention and so ultimately on long-term profitability (Caruana *et al.*, 2000:1348).

Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:352) investigated the perceived value of wine consumption, based on the PERVAL scale of Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211). They found that there was evidence of a relationship between perceived value and wine consumption. Hall *et al.* (2001:352) sought to establish if a relationship between perceived value and wine consumption was evident. The factor analysis of Hall *et al.* (2001:352) indicated that the social and emotional variables were intrinsically intertwined in wine consumption, with all of the variables loading on one factor. Therefore, and as indicted by Hall *et al.* (2001:352), although

not independent, both values are a dimension of perceived value for wine purchasing/consumption. Price/ value for money remains an important factor in establishing perception of value. Performance and quality are both important dimensions of perceived value. Versatility, for wine, was not proven an important factor of functional value as a dimension of perceived value (Hall *et al.*, 2001:352).

In their study, Gallaraza and Soura (2006:438) confirmed the existence of a quality–value–satisfaction–loyalty chain and illustrated the complexity of value dimensions that had been shown to be highly sensitive to the tourism experience. Oh (2000:136) found the traditional customer value process to be useful for lodging research and marketing, finding that purchase intention was rated the highest. Al-Sabbath, Ekinci and Riley (2004:226) suggest that perceived acquisition value rather than transaction value was a valid construct when evaluating hospitality services. The acquisition value has considerable influence on consumers' intention to purchase and recommendation behaviour at the post -consumption phase. Customers aimed to balance the benefits of the consumption against the money paid. One of the most important elements of the benefits is quality.

Chen and Chen (2010:29) discovered that experience quality had a positive effect on perceived value. Perceived value and quality are direct determinants of satisfaction. The results found in the study done by Jamal, Othman and Muhammad (2011:5) suggested that home stay visitors' value perceptions are not only dependent on functional aspects of value but also on emotional and experiential features. Because the emotional and experiential dimensions were shown to be the main sources of value derived from tourists' experiences, host providers and marketers should continue to emphasise value in terms of fun, memorable experiences, new and different experiences, new knowledge, the variety of tradition-oriented activities, entertaining culturally-oriented performances and accommodating and friendly hosts. Highlighting such affective dimensions is critical to promoting this industry because these are all important determinants of perceived value that influence tourists' future behavioural intentions. Lee, Bendle, Yoon and Kim's (2012:71) results identified emotional, functional and economic values as core elements that directly affected guest satisfaction, which influence intentions to recommend and revisit.

The studies discussed above have been tabulated below (Table 1.1) for easier reference.

Table 1.1: Previous studies done on value in the tourism industry

Topic/ Impact	Author(s)	Title	Value aspects	Findings
Role of value	Caruana <i>et al.</i> (2000)	Service Quality and Satisfaction – the Moderating Role of Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Quality • Satisfaction • Value 	The constraints of service quality, satisfaction and value are discussed.
Customer value	Oh (2000)	The effect of Brand Class, Brand Awareness and Price on Customer value and Behavioural Intentions.	<p>Endogenous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived quality • Price fairness • Perceived value • Purchase intention • Search intention <p>Exogenous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand class • Brand awareness • Price 	This study found the traditional customer value process to be useful for lodging research and marketing. Purchase intention was rated highest.
Perceived value	Sweeney & Soutar (2001)	Consumer perceived value: the development of a multiple item scale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional value • Social value (enhancement of the social self-concept) • Functional value (price/ 	The authors indicate that the PERVAL scale has a variety of potential applications and can serve as a framework for further empirical research in this important area.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> value for money) Functional value (performance/ quality) 	
Perceived value	Hall <i>et al.</i> (2001)	An Investigation of Perceived Value and Consumable Goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional value Social value (acceptability) Functional value (price/value for money) Functional value (performance/quality) Functional value (versatility) 	<p>Findings indicated a relationship between perceived value and wine consumption.</p> <p>The factor analysis done in the study indicates that the social and emotional variables were intrinsically intertwined in wine consumption.</p>
Perceived value	Al-Sabbathy <i>et al.</i> (2004)	An Investigation of Perceived value Dimensions: Implications for Hospitality Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition value Transaction value 	<p>The study suggests that perceived acquisition value rather than transaction value is a valid construct in evaluating hospitality services.</p> <p>The acquisition value has considerable influence on consumers' intention to purchase and recommend behaviour at the post consumption phase.</p>

				Customers aim to balance the benefits of the consumption against the money paid. One of the most important elements of the benefits is quality.
Concept of value	Gallaraza & Soura (2006)	Value Dimensions, Perceived Value, Satisfaction and Loyalty: An Investigation of University Students' Travel Behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived value • Satisfaction • Loyalty 	The results confirm the existence of a quality–value–satisfaction–loyalty chain and illustrate the complexity of value dimensions that have been shown to be highly sensitive to the tourism experience.
Perceived value	Chen & Chen (2010)	Experience Quality, Perceived Value, Satisfaction and Behavioural Intentions for Heritage Tourists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience quality • Perceived value • Satisfaction • Behavioural intention 	Experience quality has a positive effect on perceived value. Perceived value and quality are direct determinants of satisfaction.
Perceived value	Jamal <i>et al.</i> (2011)	Tourist Perceived Value in a Community-Based Home-Stay Visit: An Investigation into the Functional and Experiential Aspect of Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional value (establishment) • Functional value (price) • Experiential value (host-guest interaction) • Experiential value (activity, culture and 	The results of this research suggest that home stay visitors' value perceptions are not only dependent on functional aspects of value but also on emotional and experiential features.

			knowledge) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional value 	
Perceived value	Lee <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Thana-tourism or Peace Tourism: Perceived value at a North Korean Resort from an Indigenous Perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional value • Functional value • Economic value 	Results identified emotional, functional and economic values as core elements that directly affected guest satisfaction, which influenced intentions to recommend and revisit.

Source: Author's own compilation

Tourism providers, managers and marketers all currently acknowledge the significance of value in driving tourists' evaluations of destinations, services and experiences that will shape their future behavioural intentions (Al-Sabbathy *et al.*, 2004:226). Managers and marketers alike need to understand the dimensions that contribute to tourists' evaluations to meet the demands of increasingly value-conscious tourists (Duman & Mattila, 2005:311).

It can be deduced from Table 1.1 that no model/framework yet exists that would address and explain the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination. However, it was found in the literature that various models and approaches to the concept of value had been developed. These developments include the work of Sheth *et al.* (1991:160); Oh (1999:72); Murphy *et al.* (2000:46); Sweeney and Soutar, (2001:203) and that of Petrick (2002:134). These models have each been carefully evaluated and analysed. However, for the purpose of this study, it was decided that the value model developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) was best suited to test the tourism value of scuba diving at a marine destination, as Hall *et al.* (2001:350) believed that this model could be adapted and tested on intangible products (see Table 1.2) such as tourism experiences. It would seem to follow that Marine Tourism, specifically, Scuba Diving Tourism, was such an intangible product.

Weiermair (2003:11) stated that the intangibility of the tourism product implies a large amount of risk and uncertainty of customer value. Zikmund and D'Amico (2002:527) described a service as a task or activity performed for buyer that is intangible and so cannot be handled or examined before purchase. Kandompully, Mok and Sparks (2004:6) define a service as any activity or benefit one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Intangibility has been defined as something that cannot be seen, touched or felt (Page & Connell, 2009:644). Ali (2007:40) pointed out that since evaluating the quality of something intangible is problematic, service-marketing professionals have to employ a strategy to make the intangible somewhat tangible. This can be achieved by attempting to reduce consumers' uncertainties and reservations by enhancing certain perceived values (emotional value, social value, functional value, perceived risk and epistemic value). Thus, various models have been developed that measure and analyse the perceived values experienced by consumers.

In 1991, Sheth *et al.* (1991:159) identified five consumption values which they believed influenced consumer choice behaviour. These were functional value, conditional value, social

value, emotional value and epistemic value. Then in 2001, Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) developed a PERVAL (PERceived VALue) scale based on the consumption values identified by Sheth *et al.* (1991:161). Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) created this model to show four distinct value dimensions that are termed emotional, social, quality/performance and price/value for money.

Table 1.2: Perceived Value Model of Sweeney and Soutar

Values	Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional value 	The perceived utility derived from the feelings or affective states that a product generates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social value (enhancement of social self-concept) 	The perceived utility derived from the product's ability to enhance social self-concept.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional value (price/ value for money) 	The perceived utility derived from the product due to the reduction of its perceived short term and longer-term costs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional value (performance/ quality) 	The perceived utility derived from the perceived quality and expanded performance of the product.

Source: Adapted from Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211)

Tangible products are those products that can be seen, smelled, felt or touched (Page & Connell, 2009:644). Since this model (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:211) has only been tested on tangible products, Hall *et al.* (2001:350) indicated that a modification of the model was required for intangible products. The modification that Hall *et al.* (2001:350) made to Sweeney's model (2001:211) was labelled perceived risk value and was defined as the perceived utility derived from factors that reduce risk and are highly sought after.

Though numerous studies have been done in the general tourism industry (for example, Wakefield & Barnes, 1996; Murphy *et al.*, 1999; Kashyap & Bojanic, 2000; Babin, Lee, Kim, & Griffin, 2005; Petrick, Morais & Norman, 2001; Petrick & Backman, 2001; Petrick, 2003; Oh, 2003; Al-Sabbathiy *et al.*, 2004; Gallarza & Soura, 2006; Gallarza & Soura, 2008; Chen & Chen, 2010; Jamal *et al.*, 2011; Lee *et al.*, 2012), no study could be found regarding marine tourism, in this case, scuba diving tourism. From this, it was evident that there is a gap in

research pertaining to tourism value in a marine environment. Thus, this study is vital and is the first of its kind.

This leads to the next section of this proposal: The Problem Statement.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The limited knowledge that exists regarding tourism value is a cause for concern. Scuba diving companies are particularly vulnerable to the economic downturns (for scuba diving is often seen as a discretionary purchase) and to the whims of their clients. Hence, delivered value and customer satisfaction are considered crucial to establishing long-term relationships and to winning repeat business (Patterson *et al.*, 1997:4). In the past, insufficient research has led to a number of issues, such as the negative perceptions of the impact that marine tourism poses to the environment; strong competition levels in the tourism industry and lack of knowledge to correctly market intangible (service) products.

With value being a key to long-term sustainable tourism practices and one of the most important measures for gaining a competitive edge, research in this regard is therefore essential (Hassan, 2000:239). Tourists are value driven (Levy, 1999:5). Yet, despite the accepted importance of value, there has been relatively little research done (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:204) concerning marine destinations that host activities such as scuba diving (Mograbi & Rogerson, 2007; Orams, 1999; Garrod & Gössling, 2008). While recent, multidimensional scales have been created for measuring the value of **tangible** products, a multidimensional scale for the measurement of the perceived value of **intangible** products (services) does not exist (Petrick, 2002:134). According to Hall *et al.* (2001:350), there is a need to develop a scale that can measure these intangible products. As the tourism sector delivers intangible products and services, the need to measure the value provided to tourists in this highly competitive industry is crucial. Indeed, value can regretfully be said to be a most neglected aspect in the discussion of customers' evaluation of services (Caruana *et al.*, 2000:1338).

From the above paragraph, it is clear that more tourism-context information is needed. A study of this kind, that measures the value of marine tourism, holds a number of pertinent benefits for the tourism industry. By undertaking this study at Sodwana Bay, scuba diving

companies and other small enterprises in the surrounding area will benefit significantly, as they will be able to inform themselves of the value that scuba diving bestows on their target market and then to utilise that information effectively. In turn, this will enable them to undertake marketing that is more accurate, to utilise their marketing strategies to their full potential and so gain a competitive advantage. By fully understanding the value of scuba diving, marketers will discover and utilise the value-driven needs of scuba divers and so improve the scuba experience created at the destination.

Thus, the question remains: **“What is the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination”?**

1.4 GOALS OF THE STUDY

To further the purpose and aim of this study, the following goals and objectives have been formulated.

1.4.1 GOAL

The goal of this dissertation is to assess the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination.

1.4.2 OBJECTIVES

To achieve the goal, the following objectives need to be realised:

Objective 1:

To contextualise marine tourism and perceived value.

Objective 2:

To assess the perceived value of a marine tourism experience.

Objective 3:

To analyse the factors influencing perceived value evaluations by scuba diving tourists.

Objective 4:

To draw conclusions concerning the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination and make recommendations accordingly.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This was a quantitative study that made use of self-administered questionnaires to collect problem-specific data (primary data) and collated secondary data from topic relevant sources.

1.5.1 LITERATURE STUDY

Sources including the following were consulted for the approach to enable the analysis of the tourism value of a marine destination: Books, articles, journals and internet sources (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3: Material used for the analysis of tourism value

Type of Resource	Resource Name	
Scientific Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Science Direct▪ Ebscohost▪ Metacrawler▪ Sage Journals▪ A to Z	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Emerald▪ ProQuest▪ Jstor▪ Scopus▪ SAE Publications
Books	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Tourism focused books▪ Marine Environments focused books▪ Marketing focused books	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Research focused books▪ Consumer Behaviour focused books▪ Value focused books.
Internet Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Google	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Google Scholar
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Services of the Ferdinand Postma Library, North West University, Potchefstroom	

	Campus, Potchefstroom, South Africa.	
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Source: Author's own compilation

Using the resources tabulated above, a thorough analysis of tourism value literature could be undertaken.

Keywords: Perceived value, value analysis, marine tourism, dive tourism, scuba diving and marketing.

1.5.2 EMPIRICAL SURVEY

The following highlights the methods chosen to conduct the empirical analysis:

1.5.2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD OF COLLECTING DATA

Descriptive research was used to analyse the tourism value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination. This structured research method led to a deeper understanding of the relationships found between tourism and the five, specified values (emotional, social, functional, perceived risk and epistemic value). Quantitative research data was collected by means of a survey utilising questionnaires.

The advantages of utilising quantitative research, as pointed out by Slabbert (2004:63), are:

- It is suitable for the collection of demographic variables including age, gender, home language, income;
- Quantitative research is inexpensive to conduct; and
- It is relatively easy to collate, tabulate and analyse the data using statistical software.

This study attempted to determine the perceived values of a marine destination and the factors influencing the various perceived values.

1.5.2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE AVAILABILITY TEST PLAN/ SAMPLING

A destination-based survey was conducted at Sodwana Bay from the 29th of March to the 8th of April 2012. The most recent and available data that was conducted by Emzemvelo KZN Wildlife (2012:2) indicated that 5 885 dives were launched in March 2011 and 8 386 dives in April 2012. Sodwana Bay received an average of 1 635 divers per month in 2011. As there is no information available indicating specifically who these divers are, it was decided to conduct the survey by implementing convenience sampling.

According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970:608), the recommended sample size for a population of (N) 1 000 000 respondents is 384 for general research activities. For the purpose of this study, to ensure definite, adequate and relevant analysis, it was decided that 500 surveys would be distributed amongst scuba divers at Sodwana Bay. Divers who were willing to participate in the research and uphold honesty were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire.

Survey: Field workers (Clifford, 1997:67) were trained to ensure that they understood the importance of the study, as well as the goals and objectives of the questionnaire. The field workers were divided into research teams who worked on the beach during the mornings and at various campsites during the evenings. Of the 500 questionnaires distributed, 402 (n) were completed and could be used for the compilation of data.

Other factors were also considered when asking scuba divers to participate in this research study, as noted by Steyn (2010:89):

1. Participation was voluntary and respondents were prepared to dedicate time to the questionnaire (Neumann, 2006:29).
2. Respondents were assured that their identity was to be held anonymous and they could withdraw from the survey at any time (Neumann, 2006:29).
3. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the research (Rousseau, 2003:31).
4. The respondents were assured that there were no incorrect answers to the questions, thus removing the apprehension of “failure” (Schiffman, Kanuk & Wisenblit, 2010:58).

5. The researcher and fieldworkers were amiable but respectful throughout the study and built a relationship of trust with the respondents. The relationship between the researcher and respondents was thus based on trust, cooperation and mutual respect (Strydom, 2007:192).

1.5.2.3 SAMPLING METHOD

A non-probability sampling method, convenience sampling, was used to conduct the survey because of the absence of a structured list of divers visiting Sodwana Bay during this time. A destination-based survey was undertaken at Sodwana Bay. The survey took place during the 10 days scheduled (29 March to 8 April 2012).

Mostert and du Plessis (2007:68) indicated that non-probability sampling describes a situation where the probability of including a member of the target population in a sample is not guaranteed and relies purely on either personal judgement or, often, on convenience. Convenience sampling is where the selection of the respondents or objects is based on the respondents being readily available or accessible (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:68).

1.5.2.4 DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was designed to reveal the characteristics and lifestyles of the respondents, as well as to establish their feelings, values and beliefs towards the values that scuba diving held for them. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Each section is briefly discussed below:

Section A: Socio-Demographic Detail: In this section, both open and closed questions were asked to reveal the demographic characteristics of respondents. Questions were adapted from the previous demographical questionnaires developed by TREES (Tourism Research in Economic and Environ Studies) at the North-West University.

Section B: Value Perception: Respondents were asked to rate questions revealing values and travel motives on a four-point Likert scale. Sweeney's model (2001:211) was examined to determine its appropriateness to an intangible product in the service sector, here, scuba

diving. Two modifications to Sweeney's PERVAL (PERceived VALue) model (2001:211) were required for this study. One that was introduced by Hall *et al.* (2001:4) is perceived risk value, which the researchers believe links emotional and social values. Along with its intangibility, tourism (particularly, scuba diving tourism) carries a certain amount of perceived risk to the functional, emotional and social aspects (Hall *et al.*, 2001:4). The second dimension that was added to this model, namely, epistemic value, was developed by Sheth *et al.* (1991:160) and refers to the novelty of the activity and of the destination. A more detailed definition of each value component is given below:

- Emotional value: The utility derived from the feelings or affective states that a product generates.
- Social value: The utility derived from the product's ability to enhance social self-concept.
- Functional value (price/value for money): The utility derived from the product due to the reduction of its perceived short term and longer term costs.
- Functional value (performance/ quality): The utility derived from the perceived quality and expanded performance of the product.
- Perceived risk value: Factors reducing risk are highly sought.
- Epistemic value: Includes the novelty of the activity and the destination.

Each of these values would therefore be assessed for an intangible tourism product, namely, scuba diving.

1.5.2.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Microsoft™ Office™ Excel 2007 was used to capture the data, which was then statistically analysed and processed into descriptive statistics using the SPSS 20.0. Specifically, factor analysis and t-tests were done to analyse the values created.

Factor analysis: According to Pieterse and Maree (2007:219), the purpose of a factor analysis is to determine those items that “belong together” in the sense that they are answered similarly and therefore measure the same (or similar) dimension or factor. They continue that, as the factor is common to the items measuring it, this technique is also known as common factor analysis. A factor analysis was conducted as described in Chapter 3. The

purpose thereof is twofold. Firstly, to determine the underlying factors of the perceived value of scuba diving and secondly, to determine which perceived value was considered to be the most important by these divers (refer to Table 3.5).

ANOVA'S: This technique (also referred to as Analysis Of Variance) is used when there are more than two independent groups that need to be compared on a single quantitative measure or score. Pieterse and Maree (2007:223) have that an ANOVA is appropriate if:

- The quantitative variable is normally distributed in each population; and
- The spread (variance) of the variable is the same in all populations.

ANOVAs were conducted as described in Chapter 4 to draw comparisons between socio-demographic and media variables that influenced the way in which scuba diving tourists perceived certain values (that is, the perceived emotional value, perceived social value, perceived functional value, perceived risk value and perceived epistemic value).

t-tests: This technique, according to Pieterse and Maree (2007:223), is used when two independent groups need to be compared based on their average score on a quantitative variable. *t*-tests are discussed in Chapter 4. They were conducted to determine if any correlations were to be found between gender and perceived values.

1.6 DEFINING THE CONCEPTS

The following concepts are defined and clarified, as they will be used throughout the study.

1.6.1 TOURISM VALUE

Tourism value can be seen as value perceptions that arise from an assessment of the goods and services purchased at a destination (Stevens, 1992:46). It can also be seen as a combination of a product's (a destination's) perceived quality and associated price that a visitor will summarise as the value received (Chang & Wildt 1994:16). Morrison has that tourism value are the mental estimates that consumers make of the travel product, where perceptions of value are drawn from personal cost/benefit assessment (Morrison, 1989:9).

1.6.2 VALUE

Value is a dynamic variable, experienced before purchase, at the moment of purchase, at the time of use and after use (Sánchez, Callirisa, Rodrigues & Moliner, 2006:394). It can thus be regarded as a consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) based on perceptions of what is received and what was given (Zeithaml, 1988:14). Perceived value has also been defined as a process through which an individual receives, organises and interprets information to create a meaningful and coherent picture of the world (Kotler & Keller, 2006:185).

1.6.3 MARINE TOURISM

Marine Tourism can be defined as those recreational activities that involve travel away from one's place of residence, that have their host or focus on the marine environment, where the marine environment is defined as those waters that are saline and tide-affected (Orams, 1999:9). It is that sector of the tourism industry that is based on tourists and visitors taking part in active or passive leisure and holidays pursuits or journeys on (or in) coastal waters, their shorelines and their immediate coastal lands (Nulty *et al.*, 2007:18).

1.6.4 DIVE TOURISM

Dive Tourism has been described as a major recreational activity worldwide (Buckley, 2004:44). It has been defined as individuals travelling from their usual place of residence, spending at least one night away and actively participating in one or more diving activities, such as scuba diving or snorkelling (Garrod & Gössling, 2008:7).

1.6.5 SCUBA DIVING

Garrod and Gössling (2008:3) offer that scuba is an acronym that stands for Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus that, according to the WTO (2001:85), is used by people travelling to a destination with the main purpose of their trip being to partake in scuba diving. The attraction of the destination is almost exclusively related to its dive quality rather than to

any other factors such as the quality of accommodation or land-based attractions (WTO, 2001:85).

1.7 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

A detailed description of each chapter and their contents is given below:

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION & PROBLEM STATEMENT

This chapter included an introduction, background information to the problem, the problem statement, main aims and objectives, method of research and defined key concepts. The aim of this chapter was to analyse value and the need for assessment thereof in the tourism industry. Further, it proposed to give an overview of marine and dive tourism as well as of the importance of the value that dive tourism brings to the tourism industry. This was needed to accomplish the main goal, which was to assess the Marine Tourism value (activities) of scuba diving at Sodwana Bay.

CHAPTER 2: MARINE TOURISM AND VALUE ASPECTS

The purpose of this chapter was to contextualise Marine Tourism and discuss the importance of perceived value aspects thereof. In this section, a review of the marketing literature on the perceived value construct was examined. A review of existing literature on perceived value provides insight why the value concept is so crucial for the success of marketing researches.

Studies focused on perceived value in the marketing and retail industries were examined and various models were analysed. The importance and role of perceived value in tourism was scrutinised and perceived values pertaining to tourism were discussed.

CHAPTER 3: THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF A TOURISM EXPERIENCE

The purpose of this chapter was to determine the Perceived Value of a tourism experience, in this case for scuba diving tourists at a marine destination, Sodwana Bay. Since tourists such as scuba divers experience value through scuba diving activities and the environment in which it takes place, assessing and understanding these values will help scuba diving destinations gain a competitive advantage and provide a tailor-made product that will ultimately improve the value experienced.

The factor analysis supports the modified model of Sweeney and Soutar, and revealed five distinct values: perceived epistemic value; perceived risk value; perceived functional value; perceived social value and perceived epistemic value with the highest mean (3.43). epistemic value was examined to reveal that respondents consider curiosity, acquiring knowledge, providing novelty and broadening knowledge as key for an individual experience of value.

CHAPTER 4: FACTORS INFLUENCING TOURISM VALUE

The purpose of this chapter was to determine the factors that influence the perceived tourism values of scuba divers in a Marine Protected Environment, Sodwana Bay, South Africa. Correlations were drawn between age, gender, province, income, level of education, marital status, number of times dived, number of nights stayed in the area, travel group size and media (including, websites, shows, friends, radio, T.V., magazines, previous visits and social networking such as Facebook and Twitter). Correlations discovered between language, province, marital status, income and media will be discussed.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This closing chapter will restate the purpose of this study by examining at the goals and objectives that were listed in Chapter 1. After the importance of this study has once more been quantified, conclusions will be drawn with regard to each objective. The managerial implications of this study will be discussed, the, limitations of the study will be noted and recommendations for future study will be recommended.

CHAPTER 2

Marine Tourism in Context and the Perceived Value Thereof

‘Tropical reefs are to scuba diving what Alpine peaks are to backpacking. Reefs are the highlights, the places where equipment manufacturers strut their stuff and photographers shoot magazine covers.’

– Karen Berger 2000

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has grown into a booming industry in South Africa with the growth of tourist arrivals increasing yearly. The growth of domestic tourists in South Africa has increased annually, with 11.2 million domestic travellers in 2011 (STATS SA, 2011:7). According to Statistics South Africa (2011:7) these domestic tourists travel for various reasons including: visiting family and friends (53%); for leisure/vacation or holidaying purposes (21%); to attend funerals (12%) and for religious reasons (8%). A major attraction for these tourists is South Africa’s 3000 kilometres coastline (Tinley, 1985:10) which provides ample opportunities for both local and foreign visitors to enjoy the leisure experiences provided.

Along the country’s lengthy coastline lie numerous marine destinations and attractions that offer various activities to tourists, such as scuba diving, snorkelling, swimming, world-class surfing and whale watching. When trying to capitalise on these assets, marketers state clearly that it is necessary to understand the market that uses them, the reasons why people travel and what the visitors would like to gain from their trip (Hung & Petrick, 2011:386). It is also

important to understand the way in which these marine tourists, in this case, scuba divers (the market to be researched as indicated in Chapter 1) perceive the value gained from these marine protected environments, as marine destinations can then build on these values and increase or improve the values attached to such destinations.

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise Marine Tourism and to discuss the importance of perceived value aspects thereof. This will be dealt with by firstly analysing Marine Tourism.

2.2 MARINE TOURISM AND RELATED ASPECTS

The following framework (Figure 2.1) is a representation of the proceedings of this literature review. To start with, a definition of marine tourism will be given, after which the subsets dependent on marine tourism will be discussed in detail.

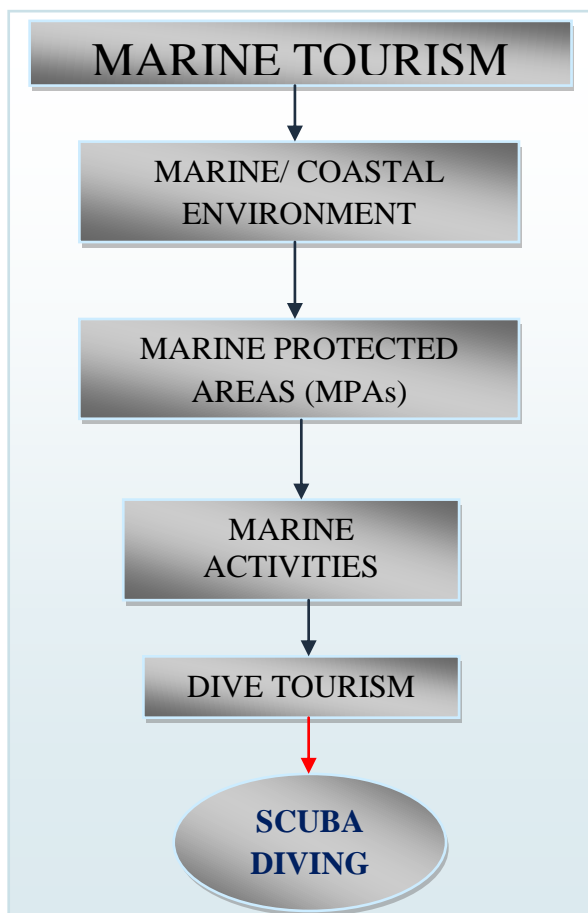


Figure 2.1: Marine Tourism

Source: Author's own compilation

As seen on the previous page, Marine Tourism comprises of a number of different aspects (for example, marine/coastal environments, marine protected areas and marine activities) which together contribute to its existence. Marine coastal areas offer some of the most desirable resources for tourism on the globe, as sun, sand and sea (the so-called “3 S’s”) remain of the most significant type of holidays in the world (Page & Connell, 2009:513). It has been observed, though, that the ocean and the marine environment as a whole has become one of the new frontiers and fastest growing areas of the world’s tourism industry (Hall, 2001:601) thus making a significant contribution to the global economy (Asafu-Adjaye & Tapsuwan, 2008:1122). This is not surprising, given that the 70% of the earth’s surface is ocean (Page & Connell, 2009:514). Marine Tourism is defined as the sector of the tourism industry that is based on tourists and visitors taking part in either active or passive leisure and holidays pursuits or journeying on (or in) coastal waters and their shorelines (Nulty, Annett, Balnaves, Joyce & Teyssedre, 2007:18). Various definitions surrounding the concept Marine Tourism are tabulated below (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Definitions of Marine Tourism

Author	Definition
Basiron (1997:3)	The temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside their normal environment and activities within a marine setting.
Orams (1999:9)	Marine Tourism has been defined as those recreational activities that involve travel away from one’s place of residence, which have their host or focus on the marine environment, where the marine environment is defined as those waters, which are saline and tide-affected.
Hall (2001:602)	Marine Tourism is closely related to the concept of coastal tourism and includes ocean-based tourism such as deep-sea fishing and yacht cruising.
Nulty, Annett, Balnaves, Joyce & Teyssedre (2007:18)	Marine Tourism is defined as the sector of the tourism industry that is based on tourists and visitors taking part in active and passive leisure and holidays pursuits or journeys on (or in) coastal waters, their shorelines and their immediate coastal lands.
Page & Connell (2009:645)	Tourism activities that take place in a marine environment.

Source: Author’s own compilation

From these definitions of Marine Tourism, the following can be deduced:

When analysing Orams (1999:9) definition of Marine Tourism, it can be inferred that Marine Tourism has its own unique sector of tourism that also involves travel away from the tourist's place of residence, but the emphasis is on the focus of the marine environment that incorporates oceanic or marine activities. In agreement with this definition, Page and Connell (2009:645) define Marine Tourism as tourism activities that take place in a marine environment. Hall (2001:602) adds to this definition by citing that Marine Tourism is closely related to the concept of coastal tourism but includes ocean-based tourism such as deep-sea fishing and yacht cruising. Marine Tourism comprises an extensive variety of different sectors including Cruise Tourism; Beach Tourism; Marine Ecotourism; Marine Events; Special Interest Tourism; Aquatic Tourism and Island Tourism (Figure 2.2).

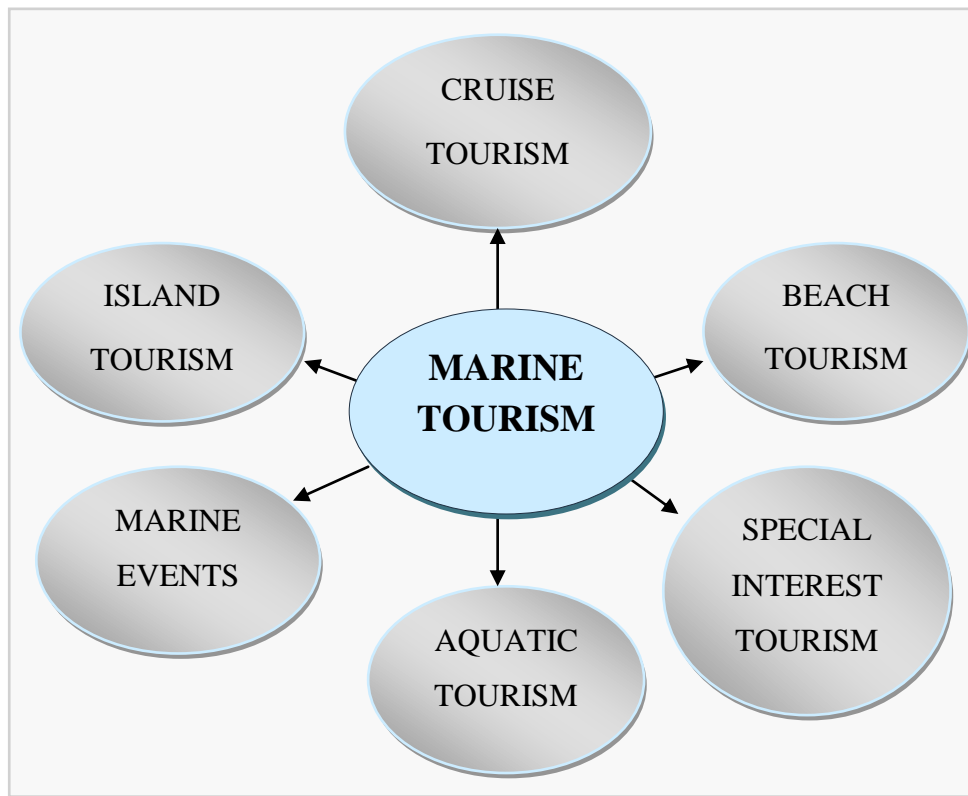


Figure 2.2: A graphical representation of the diverse types of Marine Tourism

Source: Author's own compilation

Since there are numerous and diverse sectors (Figure 2.2) forming marine tourism, each needs to be discussed in more detail:

- **Island Tourism:**

Conlin and Baum (1995:4) state that islands are places where people go to for relaxation and rejuvenation. Butler (1993:71) offers that islands provide a feeling of separateness and difference while the pursuit of leisure, different climates, physical environments and cultural experiences can be expected to further the attractiveness of islands as tourism destinations. According to Basiron (1997:5), a significant number of marine tourism activities are also associated with islands, either as mass tourism activities or as more specialised pursuits. He continues by implying that, with the availability of activity options, and from the point of view of tourism planners, development options will make island tourism an essential element of the tourism industry (Basiron, 1997:5). Examples of successful tourism islands are Palm Island in Dubai (the palm-shaped man-made island); Cyprus in Europe and Bali in Asia.

- **Cruise Tourism:**

The concept of cruising as a tourist activity only started in the 1980's even though ships and sailing have been in existence for centuries (Marquez, 2006:10). As one of the fastest growing sectors of global tourism (Mak, Sheehey & Toriki, 2010:18), Cruise Tourism has been defined as a multi-centre holiday where you take your hotel with you from centre to centre (Cartwright & Baird, 1999:23). Examples of successful cruise companies include Seabourn Cruises; Crystal Cruises; Celebrity Cruises; Azamara Cruises; Oceania Cruises and the MSC.

- **Beach Tourism:**

Hall (2001:601) states that the selling of 'sun, sand and surf experiences' and the development of beach resorts has led to increasing popularity of marine tourism (for example, fishing, scuba diving, windsurfing, and yachting). Perhaps one of the most important elements in the beach experience is the opportunity it gives for tactile, close-up contact with the natural, physical world. It is unfortunately true that there are now very few natural environments where children, and even adults, are allowed, indeed encouraged, to poke about, pick up, touch, shape and play with its physical material and the creatures it supports – crabs, shellfish and worms (Tunstall & Penning-Roswell, 1998:329). Examples of coastal destinations that offer such a nature experience in South Africa include amongst others: Sodwana Bay; Maphelane; Mkambathi; Dwesa; Cape Vidal; St. Lucia and Storms River Mouth.

- **Aquatic Tourism:**

According to Karydis (2011:369), many public aquaria have been designed and constructed all over the world during the last three decades and the serial arrangement of relatively small, rectangular, concrete tanks has been replaced by fewer large, irregularly shaped tanks, aimed at replicating natural habitats. Aquarium missions have also been broadened to include research, conservation and education (Karydis, 2011:369). Aquaria are ideal places for research into husbandry, life cycles, reproduction, behaviour, autecology and fish pathology (Karydis, 2011:369). Examples of aquaria tourism include the facilities at Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta; Monterey Bay Aquarium in California; Osaka Aquarium in Japan; uShaka Marine World in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal and the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town, Western Cape.

- **Marine Events:**

Although event and cruise tourism can be the special focus of activity, events and cruises are further specialised by themes and interests such as sports events (for example, World Masters, America's Cup), classical music events (for example, Salzburger Festspiele), and health and wellness cruises (Dimmock & Tryce, 2001:355). South Africa hosts a large variety of these marine events including the Billabong Pro 2012 Surfing Event at Jeffery's Bay and The South Atlantic Yacht Race.

- **Special Interest Tourism:**

It has been recognised that Special Interest Tourism (SIT) is fast gaining a place within the overall context of tourism and marine tourism (Basiron, 1997:10).

Barison (1997:10) divides Special Interest Tourism into four categories, each of which is listed and discussed below:

- **Nature Tourism:** Nature tourism involves experiencing natural places, typically through outdoor activities that are sustainable in terms of their impact on the environment (Tourism New South Wales, 2012:1). This includes everything from bushwalking and adventure tourism experiences to sightseeing, scenic driving, beach experiences and wildlife viewing (Tourism New South Wales, 2012:1).

- McLaren (1998:97) states that Eco-travel involves activities in the great outdoors – nature tourism, adventure travel, birding, camping, skiing, whale watching, and archaeological digs that take place in marine, mountain, island or desert ecosystems. The majority of tourists will only participate in ‘nature tourism’ if contact with nature is part of their discovery (Bouchet, Lebrun & Auvergne, 2004:131). Natural areas (sea, lakes, deserts, mountains) or picturesque sites (caverns, waterfalls and glaciers) have become major attractions of sport tourism (Duhamel & Sacareau, 1998:65), where individuals can relax, admire or traverse them.
- **Yachting, boating and sailing:** The purchase of leisure crafts constituted a large portion of the amount spent on water sports equipment over the past few years (Basiron, 1997:11). Large sums have also been invested in the facilities such as marinas and harbours necessary to support the growing number of yachts and boats (Basiron, 1997:11). There are many marinas in South Africa including Zululand Yacht Club, TuziGazi Moorings and the Royal Cape Yacht Club.
- **Scuba Diving:** There has been tremendous growth experienced by the scuba-diving industry. This growth was partially encouraged by an increased accessibility to training, equipment as well as increased availability of dive spots, and partially because of the minimal investment involved in taking up scuba diving, or catering to scuba divers, as opposed to the activities described earlier (Barison, 1997:12).
- **Sports Fishing:** This can be defined as fishing done with a rod and reel for sport or recreation and has been noted as one of the latest additions to the marine-based recreation market (Wang, 1996:71). Examples of sport fishing competitions in South Africa include The Algoa Bay Tuna Classic in Port Elizabeth, The Bass Equaliser Tournament Trail and Extreme Angler.

Another sector that can be added to Special Interest Tourism is Marine Ecotourism.

- **Marine Ecotourism:**
Defining Marine Ecotourism is not a simple process (Garrod & Wilson, 2003:1). The very least that can be said of Marine Ecotourism is that it is a subset of both marine nature-based tourism and sustainable marine tourism.

The concept of Marine Tourism embraces the full range of tourism, leisure and recreationally-orientated activities that take place in the coastal zone and offshore coastal waters (Hall, 2001:602). These include coastal tourism developments (accommodation, restaurants, food industry and second homes), and the infrastructure supporting coastal developments (for example, retail businesses, marinas and activity suppliers).

According to Myburgh and Saayman (1999:175), Marine Ecotourism can be seen as responsible travel to natural marine environment areas that can serve the environment and sustain the welfare of local people. Marine Ecotourism activities can include watching whales, dolphins and other marine mammals and fish; bird watching; scuba diving; beach walking; rock pooling; snorkelling; walking on coastal footpaths and sightseeing trips by surface boat, submarine or aircraft (Garrod & Wilson, 2003:3). Marine ecotourism should be nature-based and activities involved should focus predominantly on the natural environment (Garrod & Wilson, 2003:1). Garrod and Wilson (2003:1) further offer that this is the fundamental 'eco' element of the term 'ecotourism' and it can potentially relate to the fauna of a destination area, its flora or, in many practical situations, both.

Thus, Marine Ecotourism can be seen as travel to a relatively undisturbed area, in a marine environment where various marine activities are hosted, such as scuba diving.

From the above, it is clear that Marine Tourism consists of various diverse aspects. It thus becomes vital to understand the environment in which these different types of Marine Tourism take place.

2.2.1 MARINE/COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN THIS NICHE

Coastal environments have been defined as the part of the land affected by its proximity to the sea, and that part of the sea affected by its proximity to the land as the extent to which man's land-based activities have a measurable influence on water chemistry and marine ecology

(Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF, 2004:ix). The coastal environment is a magnet for tourists, although its role in leisure activities has changed over time and space, as coastal destinations have developed, declined, been re-imaged and redeveloped in the twentieth century. The coastal environment is a complex system that is utilised by recreationists for day trips, while juxtaposed to these visits are those made by domestic and international tourists (Page & Connell, 2009:514).

Marine environments include estuaries, coastal marine and near-shore zones and open-ocean deep-sea regions (DWAF, 2004:xii). The marine environment can be defined as those waters that are saline and tide-affected (Asafu-Adjaye & Tapsuwan, 2008:1122).

The International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN's, 1994:56) definition of the marine environment as 'Any area of intertidal or sub tidal terrain, together with its overlying water and associated flora, fauna, historical and cultural features' reflects the enormous complexity and diversity present in this realm. This is hardly surprising since the area of sea and seabed is over two-and-a-half times as great as the total area of landmasses of the world (IUCN, 1994:56). Marine ecosystems vary from coral reefs (the most species-diverse of all marine habitats, approaching tropical rainforests in their species richness) to coastal mangrove wetlands; while the different species range from sperm whales to sea horses; and Marine Tourism embraces a multiplicity of activities from whale-watching to scuba-diving (Carter & Carter, 2001:265).

The meeting of land and sea creates biologically and geologically diverse environments as well as attractive and unique landscapes that may form the basis for tourism (Page & Connell, 2009:514). Coastal and marine environments are popular settings for tourism and recreation activities, especially those with coral reefs, which are increasingly being used as a setting for tourism activities, particularly scuba diving and snorkelling (Orams, 1999:8).

According to Page and Conell (2009:514), coastal areas are usually defined as those regions influenced by the proximity of the sea. However, they also indicate other definitions that have more specific meanings (Page & Conell, 2009:514) are in frequent use:

- The coastline refers to the boundary between the land and the sea.
- The coastal strip is a narrow piece of land up to 1km which borders the sea.

- The coastal zone, a term that is often used in management context, includes land and sea up to a width of 50km – this takes in the coastal area through to the open sea.

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT, 1998:4) states that our coast is thus an area with a landward and a seaward boundary that includes:

- **Coastal waters**, which extend from the low water mark into the sea, up to the point where they are no longer influenced by land and associated activities.
- The **coastline or seashore**, which is the area between the low and high water marks.
- **Coastlands**, which are inland areas above the high water mark that have an influence on, or are influenced by coastal waters.

The relationship between coastal areas and tourism is as old as tourism itself (Page & Connell, 2009:514); hence, travel for recreational purposes is not a new phenomenon. A number of approaches for managing these areas have been implemented; one of these is the creation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

2.2.2 MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (MPAs): A MANAGERIAL APPROACH TO MARINE TOURISM

Definitions with regard to MPAs are tabulated in Table 2.2:

Table 2.2: Definitions of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

Author	Definition
Dixon & Sherman (1990:8)	Any area of the marine environment that has been given special status in order to provide lasting protection on part, or all, of the natural and cultural resources within that specific region/ area.
Fabinyi (2008:898)	MPAs are established by several organisations and institutions over several years, in particular scuba diving sites, with a system of user fees.

Barker & Roberts (2008:180)	Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) provide a focus for conservation management and regulatory oversight of visitor activities that is welcome from the perspective of environmental management.
Page & Connell (2009:645)	A water-based reserve with protective policies for marine life.

Source: Author's own compilation

When considering the above definitions, the following characteristics of an MPA are evident:

- Dixon and Sherman (1990:8) define a MPA as any area of the marine environment that has been given special status in order to provide lasting protection. This status applies to part, or all of, the natural and cultural resources within that specific region/ area (Dixon & Sherman, 1990:8).
- Harriott, Davis and Banks (1997:173) cited that MPAs are declared to protect and maintain biotical values and ensure ecological sustainability, while also keeping human use options open.
- Barker and Roberts (2008:180) agrees with the above statements, but adds that the supervision of visitor activities is welcome from the perspective of environmental management.

Marine activities, and in particular the dive industry, depend heavily on MPAs (Harriott *et al.*, 1997:173). Recreational scuba diving has generally been perceived as an activity with low environmental impact (Harriott *et al.*, 1997:173). It has been stated that MPAs are often viewed as an excellent tool by both conservationists and tourists (Fabinyi, 2008:902). Having an MPA therefore gives a destination a competitive edge (Barker & Roberts, 2008:180).

The scientific purpose of MPAs is simple (Fabinyi, 2008:899). The overall aim of MPAs is, that while different stakeholders such as local governments, conservationists, dive operators and fisheries may have different motivations for creating MPAs, their end goal should be the same and so the interests of all stakeholders will be satisfied (Fabinyi, 2008:899).

As marine activities are the core function of Marine Tourism and take place in Marine Environments/ MPAs, it is important to examine the different types of marine activities that exist.

2.2.3 MARINE ACTIVITIES: THE CORE FUNCTION OF MARINE TOURISM

Marine activities are a form of recreation, where recreation is defined as:

- Any action that refreshes the mental attitude of an individual is recreation. Recreation is a wholesome activity that is engaged in for pleasure; therefore, it is play (Douglass, 1982:6).
- Recreation embraces a wide variety of activities that are undertaken during leisure (Matheison & Wall, 1982:7).
- Any activity of leisure time undertaken by choice and for pleasure would constitute recreation (Phelps, 1988:34).

According to Jennings (2007:10), water-based tourism relates to any tourist activity undertaken on, in or in relation to, water resources such as lakes, dams, canals, creeks, streams, rivers, waterways, marine coastal zones, seas, oceans and ice-associated areas.

Marine environments serve as perfect hosts for various marine-based activities practised in Marine Tourism; and as not all Marine Tourism activities occur on, in or under the water (Orams, 1999:10), Figure 2.3 indicates these various activities and their categories.

Nulty *et al.* (2007:18) clearly divide marine activities into different categories, with each category appealing to different sections of the tourism market. Garrod and Wilson (2003:3) noted that marine ecotourism activities can also include watching whales, dolphins, other marine mammals and fish; bird watching; **scuba diving**; beach walking; rock pooling; snorkelling; walking on coastal footpaths and sightseeing trips by surface boat, submarine and aircraft.

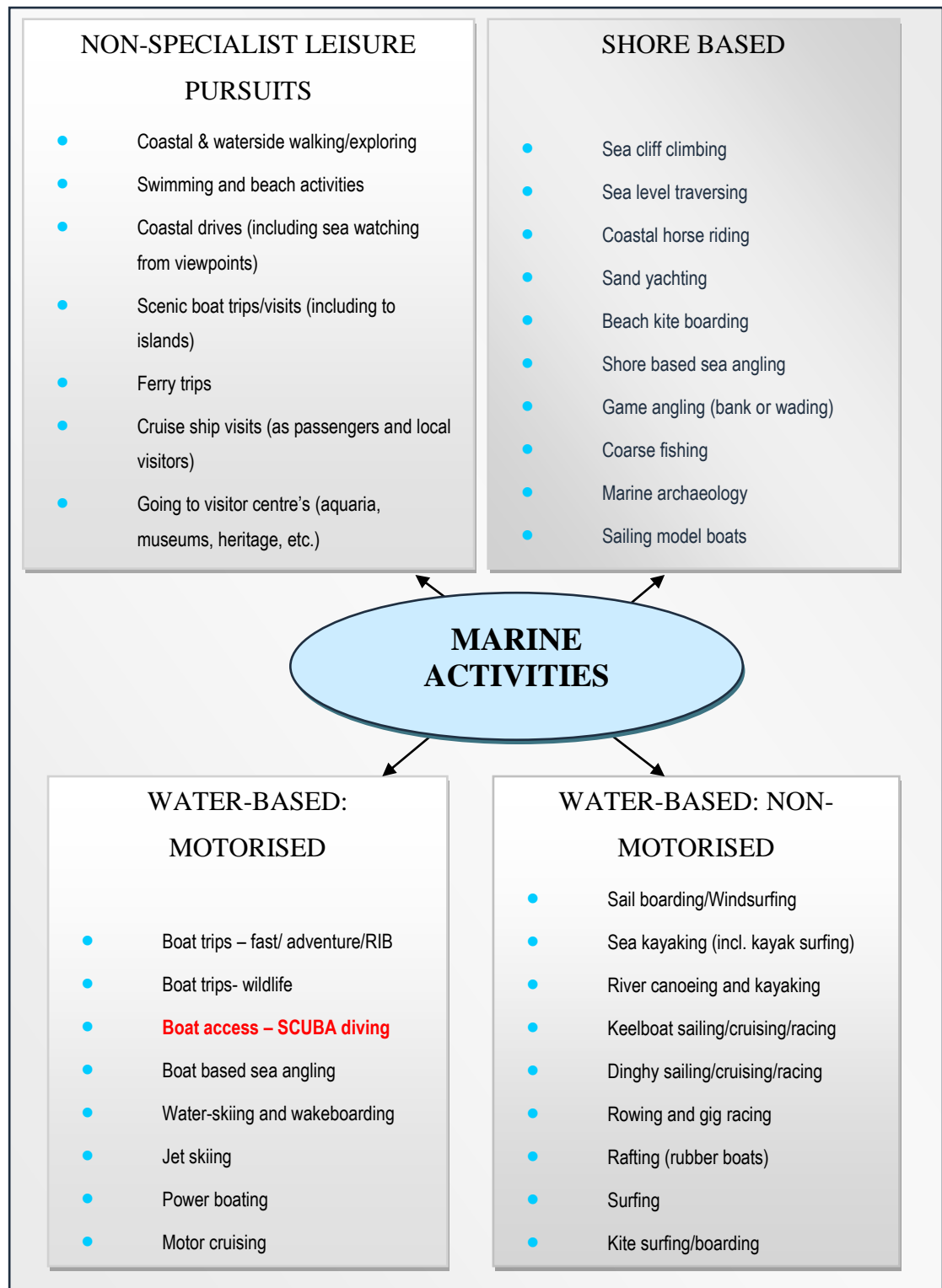


Figure 2.3: Marine Activities

Source: Nulty, Annett, Balnaves, Joyce and Teyssedre (2007:18)

2.2.4 DEFINING DIVE TOURISM AND THE SIGNIFICANCE THEREOF

As the world is increasingly explored and fewer previously unknown destinations are left for tourists to discover, there is a trend to travel to unusual 'territories'. Underwater tourism is therefore gaining appeal in the market place (WTO, 2001:88).

Diving forms a niche within the tourism industry (Townsend, 2008:143). Diving tourism involves individuals travelling from their usual place of residence, spending at least one night away, and actively participating in one or more diving activities, such as scuba diving, snorkelling or using some form of breathing apparatus (WTO, 2001:85).

There are many different types of dive tourism, some of which have been defined as discussed below:

- **Free diving and snorkelling:** These are two basic forms of diving. Free diving (or 'breath-hold' diving) and snorkelling require minimal equipment, usually just a mask, snorkel, fins, and some weights (Garrod & Gössling, 2008:3). Garrod and Gössling (2008:3) note that the difference between free diving and snorkelling is that snorkelers remain primarily on the surface of the water, while free divers descend, holding their breath for one or two minutes.
- **DPV (Diver Propulsion Vehicle):** Other and newer technologies include the DPV or scooter and sled, which are pulled along the surface of the water by a boat (Garrod & Gössling, 2008:4). Divers hang on to such devices, enabling them to travel faster and thus further underwater.
- **Scuba diving:** SCUBA is the acronym for Self-containing Underwater Breathing Apparatus and has become the generic term to describe diving with air support (Dimmock, 2008:297). Scuba diving involves portable air supplies to remain underwater for longer periods and to attain great depths (Garrod & Gössling, 2008:3).

As this study is based on scuba diving activities in particular, its importance and definition are noted and discussed below.

2.2.5 SCUBA DIVING AS A GROWING MARINE ACTIVITY

The WTO (2001:85) indicates that scuba diving is utilised by people who travel to a destination with the main purpose of their trip being to partake in scuba diving. The attraction of the destination is almost exclusively related to its dive quality rather than to any other factors, such as the quality of accommodation or land-based attractions (WTO, 2001:85).

Scuba diving, and the related activity of snorkelling, continue to be popular water-based experiences (Dignam 1990; Tabata 1992, as cited in Jennings, 2007:7). PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) has indicated that the number certified divers worldwide is in excess of 20 million (PADI, 2012:2).

Figure 2.4 gives a clear indication of the growth in the number of registered divers from 1967 to 2011.

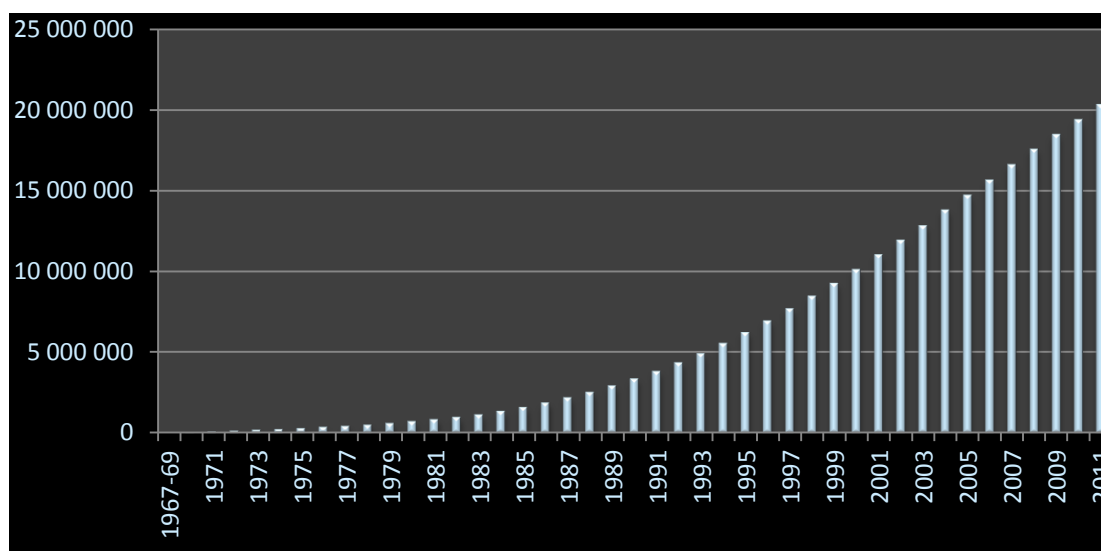


Figure 2.4: Certified scuba divers worldwide 1967-2011

Source: PADI (2012:3)

A concave line indicates that excellent and sustainable growth has taken place during the past 40 years of PADI's existence. This is good news for scuba diving destinations for it indicates that more and more people are becoming involved in diving activities and that the demand for scuba diving activities is on the rise.

There are many diving destinations across the globe. The Top 20 sites as given by Scuba Travel (2012:online) have been listed in Table 2.3:

Table 2.3: Top 20 Dive Sites in the World

No.	Name
1.	Yongola, Australia
2.	Blue Corner Wall, Palau, Micronesia
3.	Barracuda Point, Sipadan Island
4.	Thistlegorm, Egyptian Red Sea
5.	Shark and Yolanda Reef, Egyptian Red Sea
6.	Great Blue Hole, Belize
7.	Navy Pier, Western Australia
8.	Big Brother, Egyptian Red Sea
9.	Manta Ray Night Dive, Kailua Kona, Hawaii
10.	Liberty, Bali, Indonesia
11.	Richelieu Rock, Thailand
12.	Elphinstone Reef, Egyptian Red Sea
13.	President Coolidge, Vanuatu
14.	Ras Mohammed, Egyptian Red Sea
15.	Bloody Bay Wall, Little Cayman
16.	Osprey Reef, Coral Sea, Australia
17.	Tubbataha, Palawan, Philippines
18.	Great White Wall, Tavieuni Fiji
19.	Sha'ab Rumi South, Sudan
20.	Sodwana Bay, South Africa

Source: Scuba Travel (2012: online)

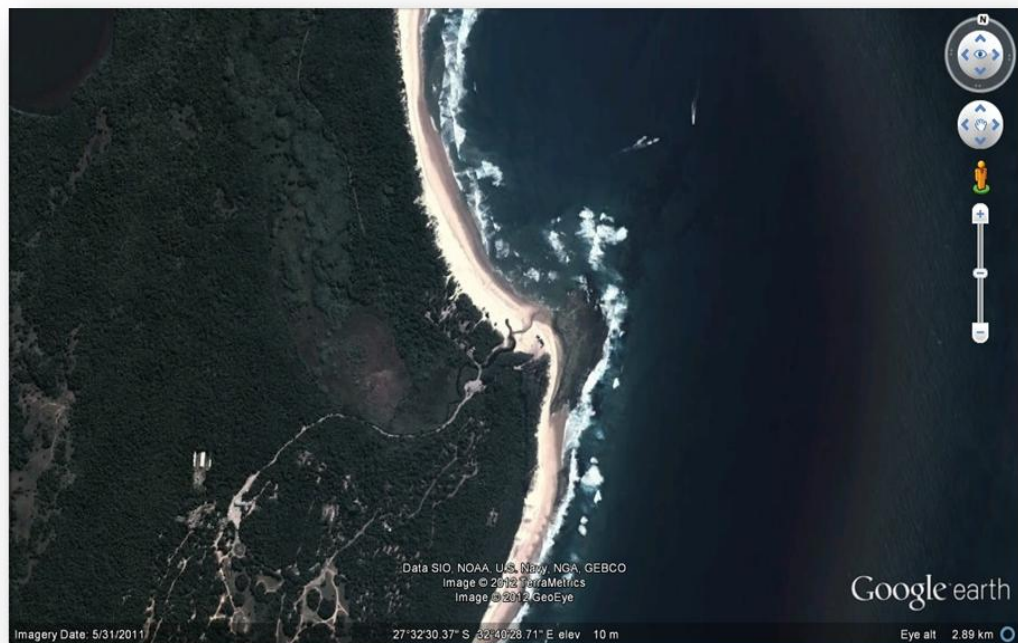
Sodwana Bay, which is located in South Africa, is ranked 20th on the top 100 dive sites globally (Scuba Travel, 2012: online). Sodwana Bay hosts scuba diving activities throughout the year and is the most popular dive site in South Africa (Scuba Travel, 2012: online).

2.2.6 SCUBA-DIVING AND SODWANA BAY (SOUTH AFRICA)

President Nelson Mandela made a statement in his message to the Advisory Committee of the Protection of the Sea, held in Cape Town in December 1998, as follows: 'Africa's long and

beautiful coasts and the abundance of marine resources can contribute to providing economic, food and environmental security for the continent' (DEAT, 1998:4).

South Africa's long summers make its coastline very attractive to tourists from around the world (Van der Merwe, Slabbert & Saayman, 2011:457). Along this lengthy coastline of 3 000km (Tinley, 1985:10) lie numerous marine destinations that are transforming the country's coast into major marine tourism attractions. Attractions and marine activities offered by these destinations include, inter alia, activities such as snorkelling, scuba diving, fishing, boating, surfing and whale watching. These destinations are heavily reliant on the revenue that these activities generate.



Map 2.1: A map indicating the area that of Sodwana Bay

Source: Map of Sodwana Bay (2012: online)

One of the world's southernmost coral reef systems, Sodwana Bay (known as 'little one on its own' in the Zulu language) lies in the Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park (iSimangaliso) in South Africa (SA Venues, 2012:online). The park was listed as South Africa's first World Heritage site (UNESCO, 2012:online) in December 1999 in recognition of its superlative natural beauty and unique global values. The wetland stretches over 332 000 hectares and contains three major lake systems, eight interlinking ecosystems, 700 year old fishing traditions, most of South Africa's remaining swamp forests, Africa's largest estuarine system, 526 bird species

and 25 000 year old coastal dunes – among the highest in the world (Emzemvelo KZN Wildlife, 2012:1).

Sodwana Bay has a wide variety of diving sites that are open to public diving. These include 2-mile Reef, 4-mile Reef, 7-mile Reef and 9-mile Reef. Sodwana Bay is a perfect example of a marine environment and has a wide variety of recreational activities, including scuba diving. Tourists attracted to this area are in search of an adventure holiday that, according to Travel and Tourism Analyst (Segments, 1992:38), can be defined as one that contains an element of personal challenge, through controlled risk, daring and/or excitement, often in an inaccessible (wilderness) environment (for example, Sodwana Bay). Scuba diving, according to Meisel and Cottrell, (2003:393) fits this definition context and has seen a major rise in popularity with the growth of adventure activities.

Thus the question arises – what do these divers perceive of value at Sodwana Bay? How can the reasoning behind their decision to travel long distances and stay for long periods be better understood? What are the values that can be detected from such a scuba diving marine-based holiday, and what are the implications thereof for Sodwana Bay? In the following section, perceived value will be analysed and discussed in detail.

2.3 DEFINING PERCEIVED VALUE

The concept of value has been revisited and redefined over the past thirty years. In fact, most modern theoretical proposals take discussion to a high level, where value becomes a super ordinate concept subsuming quality (Oliver, 1999:58). Some authors even propose a superiority of value over satisfaction (Lovelock, 1996; Woodruff, 1997; Sweeney, Soutar & Johnson, 1999).

This move to value in retailing, in marketing and in tourism seems to be a global phenomenon as the most compelling opportunities are at the value end of the market (Treadgold, 1999:81). As consumers become more value conscious (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:204) the role thereof is of major and increasing concern to consumers and marketers. The construct of perceived value has been identified as one of the more important measures for marketing (Holbrook, 1999:5; Cronin *et al.*, 2000:194) and continues to be of increasing importance (Vantrappen, 1992 & Woodruff, 1997, as cited in Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:203).

Value has thus become an important concept among consumers, retailers and producers and, for many organisations, it represents the ultimate test of business success (Albrecht, 1992:2) because creating outstanding customer value is the only secure route to achieving sustainable financial and market success (Sweeney *et al.*, 1999:78). There is a myriad of competing definitions of value in the literature (see Table 2.4). Some of these definitions are tabulated below (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4: Various definitions of value

Author	Definition
Rekeach (1973:5)	Defined value as enduring beliefs that particular end states of existence are personally or socially preferable to other studies.
Zeithaml (1988:14)	Perceived value is the consumers overall assessment of the utility of a product based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given.
Dodds, Monroe & Grewal (1991:316)	A cognitive trade-off between perceived quality and sacrifice.
Stevens (1992:44)	The notion of value for money refers primarily to the relationship between price, quality and quantity.
Chang & Wildt (1994:16)	Value can be seen as a combination of a product's (destination's) perceived quality and associated price that a visitor will summarise as the value received.
Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha & Everitt (1996:9)	Perceived level of productivity relative to the price paid.
Woodruff (1997:142)	Customer's perceived preference for and evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from use that facilitate (or block) achieving the customer's goals and purposes in use situations.
Patterson, Johnson & Spreng (1997:4)	Value is an abstract concept with meanings that vary according to context.
Keller (1998:178)	Consumers combine quality perceptions with cost

	perception to arrive at an assessment of perceived value.
Holbrook (1999:5)	Customer Value as an interactive relativistic preference experience.
Oliver (1999:45)	Value is a positive function of what is received and a negative function of what is sacrificed.
Hightower, Brady & Barker (2002:697)	Value conscious consumer's profligate today's changing society forcing managers of retail outlets to realise that emphasising product and service quality is not sufficient to sustain a competitive advantage
Zikmund & D'Amico (2002:524)	Consumer perspective represents the process of interpreting sensations and giving meaning to stimuli
Cravens & Piercy (2003:14)	Perceived value is the benefits and costs resulting from the purchase and use of products.
Iglesias & Gillien (2004:374)	Perceived value represents an exchange of what is received and what is given.
Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodrigues & Moliner (2006:394)	Perceived value is also a dynamic variable, experienced before purchase, at the moment of purchase, at the time of use and after use
Kotler & Keller (2006:185)	Perception is a process through which an individual receives, organises and interprets information inputs to create a meaningful and coherent picture of the world.
Kuo, Wu & Deng (2009:888)	Customer's perceived value can be defined from the perspectives of money, quality, benefit, and social psychology
Boksberger & Melsen (2011:233)	Perceived value is neither a simple trade-off between quality and price nor merely an outcome of any other single factor.

Source: Author's own compilation

As seen in Table 2.4, value can be seen from different perspectives and applied to different situations. However, a common ideal shared by all these definitions is that the consumer is the

key factor to gaining a competitive advantage (Zeithaml, 1988:14; Woodruff, 1997:142; Holbrook, 1999:5; Hightower *et al.*, 2002:697; Kuo, Wu & Deng, 2009:888). Hartnett (1998:21) noted that when retailers satisfy the basic needs of people, they are delivering value. This puts the “value-deliverers” in a much stronger position in the long term.

Many authors have recognised a lack of interest in understanding and measuring perceived value. This can be attributed to the intangible nature thereof, particularly in the tourism industry where the experience elements also contribute to the perceived value.

In the 1980’s: The most common definition of value in marketing in the 1980s was the ratio of quality to price. Thus, value could be defined as a comparison between what customers received and what they gave, suggesting that value is a comparison of benefits and sacrifices (Zeithaml, 1988:14). However, Richins (1994:505) suggested that value could be derived from the consumption experiences associated with objects.

In the 1990’s: several authors interested in service quality recognised that perceived value was at the very heart of customers’ service assessment (Cronin & Taylor, 1992:65; Bolton & Drew, 1991:383). Reddy (1991:14) gave an economic definition of value by including use value and value in use, that related to functionality and sustainability. Albrecht (1992:7) argued that the only thing that mattered in the new world of quality was delivering customer value. From the consumers point of view, it was believed that obtaining value was a fundamental purchase goal and pivotal to the successful exchange of transactions (Holbrook, 1994:22). Olivier (1996:143) stated that personal values reflected desirable end-states in life sought by individuals. Woodruff (1997:142) defined perceived value as the customer’s perceived preference for, and the evaluation of, those product attributes, attribute performances, and the consequences arising from the use that facilitated (or blocked) achieving the customer’s goals and purposes in use situations. Value thus becomes a super ordinate concept subsuming quality (Olivier, 1999:58) as more people are seeking value in the modern world while simultaneously becoming more conscious of the way in which they spend their leisure time and the benefits they can draw from these services. Perceived benefits, perceived price, monetary price, psychological price and behavioural price are all concepts that are associated with conceptualisation of perceivable value. To these can be added stimulus and personal response factors such as perceived characteristics of product, interest in product, individual needs, motives, expectations, personality and social status (Ateljevic, 2000:381).

At this point in time: Perceived value is now seen as a dynamic variable, experienced before purchase, at the moment of purchase, at the time of use and after use (Sánchez *et al.*, 2006:394). Kotler and Keller (2006:185) state that perception is a process through which an individual receives, organises and interprets information inputs to create a meaningful and coherent picture of the world. Kuo *et al.*, (2009:888) state that the customer's perceived value can be defined from the perspectives of money, quality, benefit and social psychology. Boksberger and Melsen (2011:233) offer that the perceived value of services is a combined assessment of consumers' perceptions of benefits and sacrifices, including quality and price, for a variety of perceived value dimensions, with original behavioural intentions and customer satisfaction playing a role in overall evaluation (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011:233).

Thus, perceived value can be defined as the overall assessment, perceptions, mental estimates, interpretation of information or enduring beliefs of product attributes, attribute performances and consequences of the cognitive-trade off or value received between consumers, the product source and the benefits received.

From the above, it is clear that the value concept demands a broader definition, one that includes experiential outcomes associated with consumption. Further, value must be extended beyond the traditional concept of product value (PV) to incorporate other components that contribute to value in the retail setting (Diep & Sweeney, 2008:59) as in the tourism industry, and more specifically, the marine tourism industry.

2.4 UNDERSTANDING VALUE FROM A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE

In this section, a review of the marketing literature on the perceived value construct is analysed. A review of existing literature on perceived value provides insight why the value concept is so crucial for the success of marketing researches and lays the foundation of the theoretical framework for this study.

Perceived value was labelled as the new marketing mania and the way to sell in the 1990s (Sinha & DeSarbo, 1998:236). It has retained its importance in the twenty-first century (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:203). Indeed, with the explosive growth of the service sector in recent times, increasing emphasis has been placed on the continued development of

knowledge related to service marketing and numerous articles have been written in this regard (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011:229).

Previous studies of marketing point out that the key of corporate success and competitive advantage is the enhancement of service quality, perceived value and customer satisfaction (Patterson *et al.*, 1997; Khatibi, Ismail & Thyagarajan, 2002; Landrum & Prybutok, 2004; Wang, Lo & Yang, 2004; Yang & Person, 2004). The construct of perceived value is thus identified as one of the more important measures in marketing (Holbrook, 1999:xiii; Cronin *et al.*, 2000:194).

Kotler and Keller (2006:16) indicate that marketing is an on-going process as customers and competitors change over time. Figure 2.5 illustrates the core concepts of marketing, described by Kotler and Keller (2006:13).

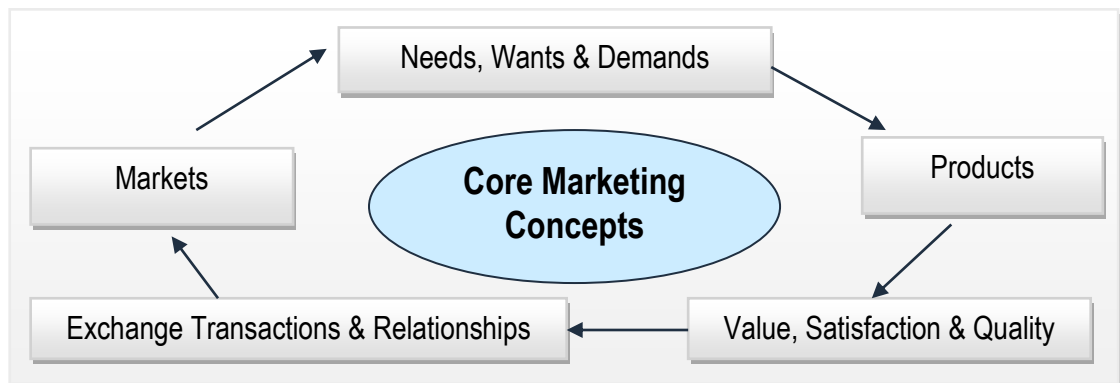


Figure 2.5: The Core Marketing Concepts

Source: Kotler & Keller (2006:13)

Kotler and Keller (2006:13) suggest that core marketing concepts involve achieving organisational goals, by determining the needs and wants of target markets as well as achieving market satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than do the competitors. Figure 2.5 illustrates that marketers need to understand the needs, wants and demands of their customers in order to produce a product that will lead to value, satisfaction and quality. Through this exchange of transactions, a relationship is built up with these consumers thus forming a loyal market, and encouraging a repetition of the cycle from the beginning once more.

Marketing is a process, described by Kotler and Keller (2006:914) as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and

exchanging products and value with others. Marketing is about customers (who could be individuals or organisations): how to find them, how to satisfy them and how to keep them (George, 2001:3). Levitt's definition of marketing (1986:112) highlights the fact that organisations must provide consumers with added value appeal. A truly marketing-minded company tries to create value satisfying goods and services that consumers want to buy. Today, tourism marketers emphasise the value of individual experience and promote images of the emotional experience of the customer in their advertising.

George (2001:3) indicates that all successful organisations are customer led and marketing orientated, and that the two go hand-in-hand. According to Komppula (2005:84), the most important challenge in travel and tourism marketing in the future will be the creation of an expectation of an experience.

von Friedrichs Grängsjö (2003:427) states that the tourism product is produced in interaction with the customer and that customers have to be imported to the arena of production, in other words, the destination. Consumer marketing orientation is a more recent business philosophy that is being increasingly adopted by tourism organisations in South Africa (George, 2001:7). As Levitt claimed in 1960, selling focuses on the needs of the seller, and marketing on the needs of the buyer (Levitt, 1960:45). Marketing seeks to make the exchange process between organisations and their customers, a mutual rewarding transaction (Ali, 2007:1).

It is clear that marketing researchers have recently been grappling with the concept of perceived value and are seeking to study it in greater depth. Therefore, the theory of value is, potentially, of tremendous relevance to the fields of marketing and consumer research.

2.5 THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERCEIVED VALUE RESEARCH

Although the concept of perceived value is well-known and endemic to consumer behaviour, there remain existing research gaps and unexplored opportunities. Gallarza and Soura (2006:441) indicated that tourism value models adopt a functional perspective, where value is just quality relative to the price paid (Jayanti & Ghosh, 1996:22; Tam, 2000:1) or the very simple view of value for money (Murphy *et al.*, 2000:48).

Various studies analysing perceived value have been done for the retail and marketing industry (as examples, Zeithaml, 1988; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Sheth *et al.*, 1991; Oliver, 1996; Sweeney *et al.*, 1997; Patterson, Johnson & Spreng, 1997; Grewal *et al.*, 1998; Oh, 1999; Oliver, 1999. More recent examples could include Cronin *et al.*, 2000; Caruana *et al.*, 2000; Tam, 2000; Oh, 2000; McDougall & Lévesque, 2000; Teas & Aragwal, 2000, Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) as indicated in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Previous perceived value studies done for the retail and marketing industry.

Author(s)	Title
Zeithaml (1988)	Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence.
Bolton & Drew (1991)	A multistage model of customers' assessments of service quality and value.
Sheth <i>et al.</i> (1991)	Why we buy what we buy
Oliver (1996)	Varieties of value in the consumption satisfaction response.
Sweeney <i>et al.</i> (1997)	Retail service quality and perceived value.
Patterson, Johnson & Spreng (1997)	Modelling the relationship between perceived value, satisfaction and repurchase intentions in a business-to-business, services context: an empirical examination.
Grewal <i>et al.</i> (1998)	The effects of price-comparison advertising on buyers' perceptions of acquisition value, transaction value and behavioural intentions.
Oh (1999)	Service quality, customer satisfaction and customer value: a holistic perspective.
Oliver (1999)	Value as excellence in the consumption experience.
Swait & Sweeney (2000)	Perceived value and its impact on choice behaviour in a retail setting.
Cronin <i>et al.</i> (2000)	Assessing the effects of quality, value and customer satisfaction on consumer behaviour intentions in service environments.
Caruana <i>et al.</i> (2000)	Service quality and satisfaction – the moderating

	role of value.
Tam (2000)	The effects of service quality, perceived value and customer satisfaction on behavioural intentions.
Oh (2000)	The effects of brand class, brand awareness and price on customer value and behavioural intentions.
McDougall & Lévesque (2000)	Customer satisfaction with services: putting perceived value into the equation.
Teas & Aragwal (2000)	The effects of extrinsic product cues on consumers' perceptions of quality sacrifice and value.
Sweeney & Soutar (2001)	Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale.

Source: Author's own compilation

The following can now be deduced from Table 2.5 and from the studies discussed:

In the 1980's:

Zeithaml conducted a study entitled 'Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: A means end model and synthesis of evidence'. This study focused on evidence taken from past research and insights from an exploratory investigation that were combined in a conceptual model that defining and relating price, perceived quality and perceived value (Zeithaml, 1988:2). In this study, the importance of price and quality as value attributes was identified.

In the 1990's:

Sheth, Newman and Gross developed a study entitled: 'Why we buy what we buy'. This study, true to its title, sought to explain why consumers made the choices they did. Sheth *et al.* (1991:159) propose a theory that identifies five consumption values influencing choice behaviour, functional value, conditional value, social value, emotional value and epistemic value (c.f. Figure 2.6). The illustrations examined include the choice to buy or not to buy (or to use or not use) cigarettes, the choice of one type of cigarette over another, and the choosing of one cigarette brand over another. Results of the theory suggest that it could be used to predict consumption behaviour, as well as to describe and explain it (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:159).

Bolton and Drew undertook a study entitled 'A multistage model of customers' assessments of service quality and value'. This article developed a model of how customers, having prior experiences and expectations, assessed service performance levels, overall service quality and service value. The model was applied to residential customers' assessments of the local telephone service. The results indicated that residential customer' assessments of quality and value are primarily a function of disconfirmation arising from discrepancies between anticipated and perceived performance levels. However, perceived performance levels were also found to have an important direct effect on quality and value assessments (Bolton & Drew, 1991:372).

Sweeney, Soutar and Johnson undertook a study entitled 'Retail service quality and perceived value'. Their study examined the way in which service quality at the point of purchase influenced consumers' perceptions of value and willingness to buy. The results indicated that a salesperson's knowledge influenced consumers' perceptions of product quality. While the manner of the salesperson, although influencing willingness to buy also has a direct effect, the salesperson's knowledge, independent of product evaluation, indirectly influenced the customers' willingness to purchase. Further, it was found that perceptions of service quality during a service encounter influenced consumers' willingness to buy more than did perceptions of product quality (Sweeney *et al.*, 1996:39).

Patterson *et al.* (1997:4) developed a study entitled 'Modelling the relationship between perceived value, satisfaction and repurchase intentions in a business-to-business, service context: an empirical examination'. This study sought to investigate the nature of the relationships between value, satisfaction and repeat purchase intentions of professional business services in a causal path frame framework. They hypothesised that perceived value and satisfaction were important antecedents of repurchase intentions. A secondary aim of the study was to delineate the number and nature of dimensions of perceived performance and, thirdly, to assess the relative impact of each service performance dimension on both perceived value and satisfaction. The study found linkages between the constructs and their results supported the model they developed and generally confirmed the seven hypotheses developed (Patterson *et al.*, 1997:4).

Grewal, Monroe and Krishnan (1998:46) authored a study called: 'The effects of price-comparison advertising on buyers' perceptions of acquisition value, transaction value and

behavioural intentions'. The authors expanded and integrated price-perceived value models within the context of price comparison advertising. The results across these two studies, both individually and combined, supported the hypothesis that buyers' internal reference prices were influenced by both advertised selling and reference prices as well as by the buyers' perception of the product's quality. The authors also found that the effect of advertised selling price on buyers' acquisition value was mitigated by their perceptions of transaction value. In addition, the effects of perceived transaction value on buyers' behavioural intentions were mediated by their acquisition value perceptions (Grewal *et al.*, 1998:46).

A study conducted by Oh in 1999 entitled 'Service quality, customer satisfaction and customer value: A holistic perspective', proposed and tested an integrative model of service quality, customer value and customer satisfaction. Using a sample from the luxury segment of the hotel industry, this study provided preliminary results supporting a holistic approach to hospitality customers' post-purchase decision-making process. The model appeared to possess practical validity as well as explanatory ability (Oh, 1999:67).

Oliver completed a study entitled 'Varieties of value in the consumption satisfaction response'. Here, the relation between value and the quality component of value embedded in the Holbrook Typology was investigated with reference to the satisfaction response. Oliver (1996:143) concluded that quality provided both value and satisfaction to consumers and that the consumption value enhanced satisfaction.

When examining the value studies written up during the 1990's, it is clear that the focus of value studies lay on service quality and customer satisfaction. Significant progress was made during that period concerning the way in which perceived value studies were approached. Various other factors such as emotional and social value that broadened the focus of perceived value emerged from the studies.

In the 2000's:

Swait and Sweeney developed a study entitled 'Perceived value and its impact on choice behaviour in a retail setting' in 2000. This paper discussed an approach to modelling consumer choice behaviour (buy/not buy/leave the store) based on consumers' value orientation concerning durable goods. They also found that perceived value is an important concept influencing consumers' purchase decisions. Swait and Sweeney (2000:77) continued

that it can be considered not merely as a product or channel characteristic that is employed in the valuation of the overall utility of a market transaction, but can also be used to develop consumer segments based on value orientation.

Cronin *et al.* (2000:193) completed a study entitled, 'Assessing the effects of quality, value and customer satisfaction on consumer behaviour intentions in service environments'. This study reported an empirical assessment of a model of service encounters that simultaneously considered the direct effects of variables on behavioural intentions. The study builds on recent advances in services marketing theory and assesses the relationships between the identified constructs across multiple service industries. A number of notable findings were reported including the empirical verification that service quality, service value and satisfaction might all be directly related to behavioural intentions when all of these variables are considered collectively. The results further suggested that the indirect effects of the service quality and value constructs enhanced their impact on behavioural intentions.

Caruana, Money and Berthon undertook a study in 2000 entitled 'Service quality and satisfaction – the moderating role of value'. The constructs of service quality, satisfaction and value were discussed. Instruments were identified and exploratory research was undertaken among customers of an audit firm to determine whether value played a moderating role between service quality and satisfaction. Results from a moderated regression confirming such a role for value were reported (Caruana *et al.*, 2000:1338).

Tam did a study called 'The effects of service quality, perceived value and customer satisfaction on behavioural intentions'. The research presented in this article examined the crucial role certain variables played in shaping post-purchase behaviour within the context of the restaurant industry. Customer satisfaction was found to be more strongly correlated with perceived performance than with disconfirmation. In addition, the results of structural equations modelling revealed that customer satisfaction had the strongest effect on behavioural intentions, followed by perceived value (Tam, 2000:1).

Oh developed a study entitled 'The effect of brand class, brand awareness and price on customer value and behavioural intentions'. The author introduced a comprehensive customer framework and tested an extended value model with lodging products. The extended value model in this study newly incorporated the concepts of brand awareness, as compared to

brand or product class, and price fairness. This study found the traditional customer value process to be useful for lodging research and marketing. In addition, brand awareness and price fairness concepts were found to play significant roles in the customer value process (Oh, 2000:136).

McDougall and Lévesque authored 'Customer satisfaction with services: putting perceived value into the equation' in 2000. This research investigated the relationship between three elements – core service quality, relational service quality- and perceived value – and customer satisfaction and future intentions across four services. The results revealed that core service quality (the promise) and perceived value were the most important drivers of customer satisfaction with relational service quality (the delivery) a significant but less important driver. A direct link between customer satisfaction and future intentions was established. The relative importance of the three drivers of satisfaction varied among services. Specifically, the importance of core service quality and perceived value was reversed depending on the service. A major conclusion was that both perceived value and service quality dimensions should be incorporated into customer satisfaction models to provide a more complete picture of the drivers of satisfaction.

Teas and Aragwal drafted a study in 2000 entitled 'The effects of extrinsic product cues on consumers' perceptions of quality sacrifice and value'. The authors reported the results of two experiments designed to test the effects of extrinsic cues - price, brand name, store name and country of origin - on consumers' perceptions of quality, sacrifice and value. The results of the experiments supported hypothesised linkages between (a) each of the four experimentally manipulated extrinsic cues and perceived quality, (b) price and perceived sacrifice, (c) perceived quality and perceived value, and (d) perceived sacrifice and perceived value. The results also indicated that the linkages between the extrinsic cues and perceived value were mediated by perceived quality and sacrifice (Teas & Aragwal, 2000:278).

In 2001, Sweeney and Soutar conducted a study of 'Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale'. They developed a 19-item measure, PERVAL, that could be used to assess customers' perceptions of the value of consumer durable goods at brand level. The measure was developed for use in a retail purchase situation to determine what consumption values drive purchase attitude and behaviour. Four distinct, value dimensions emerged that were termed emotional, social, quality/ performance and price/ value

for money. They indicated that the PERVAL scale had a variety of potential applications and could serve as a framework for further empirical research in this important area. Sweeney and Soutar (2001:216) believe their study displayed that multiple value dimensions explain consumer choice better.

Customer satisfaction, price and quality were proven to have a great effect on consumer perceptions and repurchase intentions as may be seen from the following results obtained from the studies above. The attributes that played the biggest role in determining perceived value are price and quality (Zeithaml, 1988:2). Although results from Bolton and Drew (1991:372) indicated that perceived performance levels were found to have an important direct effect on quality and value assessments, Sweeney *et al.* (1996:139) stated that perceptions of service quality during a service encounter influenced consumer's willingness also, but more than did perceptions of product quality. Quality was thought to provide both value and satisfaction to consumers and that the consumption value enhanced satisfaction (Oliver, 1996:143). Brand awareness and price fairness concepts were found to play significant roles in the customer value process (Oh, 2000:136). Cronin *et al.* (2000:193) indicated that indirect effects of the service quality and value constructs enhanced their impact on behavioural intentions.

Tam (2000:1) stated that customer satisfaction had the strongest effect on behavioural intentions, followed by perceived value. McDougall and Lévesque (2000:392) concluded that both perceived value and service quality dimensions should be incorporated into customer satisfaction models to provide a more complete picture of the drivers of satisfaction.

As may be seen from the above, perceived value is an important concept influencing consumer purchase decisions (Swait & Sweeney, 2000:87). However, although consumer value has been widely studied in the marketing and retail industry, there is yet room for further study, as motivated by the following authors:

Patterson *et al.* (1997:4) indicated that little empirical research had been conducted on buyer's perceptions of value in either consumer or industrial settings. In 2001, Sweeney and Soutar (2001:204) emphasised that, despite the importance of values, there has been relatively little empirical research undertaken to develop an in-depth understanding of the concept particularly for intangible products such as tourism. Boksberger and Melsen (2011:229)

recommended that future research and application of perceived value with relevance to the service industry be done. Gallarza and Soura (2008:16) indicated that their study proved that value was a key to gaining competitive advantage and that this understanding would be of great benefit to the service industry. With this in mind, the following section evaluates the theories related to value.

2.6 THEORIES RELATED TO VALUE

Various models have been adapted and changed throughout the history of marketing to adapt to the changing and developing consumer behaviours. The most important aspects of the following models will be analysed and discussed. Value has been categorised in numerous ways and it is clear that no standard set of values are available. A wide variety of different models designed to measure perceived value have been postulated in the past, most of which focus on the retail and marketing aspects. The theories of the following researchers will be discussed: Holbrook (1994:22); Sheth *et al.* (1991:160); Sweeney and Soutar, (2001:203), together with the theories of Hall *et al.* (2001:352).

2.6.1 HOLBROOK 1994 “INTERACTIVE RELATIVISTIC PREFERENCE EXPERIENCE”

Holbrook (1994:22) defined perceived value as an “interactive relativistic preference experience” and proposed a theory of perceived value that shared some points with the research approaches mentioned above. Based on three dichotomies (self-oriented vs. other-oriented, active vs. reactive and extrinsic vs. intrinsic), this value typology consists of eight types of value (Holbrook, 1994;1999) (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6: Holbrook’s Typology A

Value	Description
Efficiency (output/input ratio or convenience)	The perceived value from an active transformation of means in pursuit of a self-oriented end.
Excellence (quality)	The perceived value associated with a distanced apprehension or receptive admiration.

Politics (success)	The perceived value of one's own consumption experience as a mean to achieve a favourable response from someone else.
Esteem (reputation)	The perceived value from the reactive contemplation of one's own status as reflected in the probative opinion of others.
Play (fun)	The perceived value of an active self-oriented experience enjoyed for its own sake.
Aesthetics (beauty)	The perceived value of an essentially reactive appreciation and as an end itself.
Morality (virtue)	The perceived value from an ethical action favouring others.
Spirituality (faith or ecstasy)	The perceived value of a devotional experience.

Source: Holbrook (1994:22)

The typology of experiential value was expanded by Holbrook (1994:22) to include an environment factor and the interaction between the environment and individuals, thereby incorporating three dimensions of internal/external; active/passive and self-guided/others-guided.

Holbrook (1994:22) made a major effort to describe value in the consumption experience. Holbrook distinguished eight separate categories of consumer value based on a three-dimensional paradigm. Shown in Table 2.7 are the eight categories as defined by the three dimensions.

Table 2.7: Holbrook's Typology B

Self / Other Orientation	Active / Reactive Orientation	Extrinsic Orientation	Intrinsic Orientation
Self	Active	• Efficiency	• Play
	Reactive	• Excellence	• Aesthetics
Others	Active	• Status	• Ethics
	Reactive	• Esteem	• Spirituality

Source: Oliver (1996:143)

Holbrook (2006:715) defined customer value as an interactive relativistic preference experience. By this, Holbrook meant that it involved an interaction between an object (for example, a product) and a subject (for example, a consumer).

Table 2.8: Holbrook's Typology of Customer Value

	Extrinsic Orientation	Intrinsic Orientation
Self-orientated	Economic	Hedonic
	Value	Value
Other-orientated	Social	Altruistic
	Value	Value

Source: Holbrook (2006:715)

- **Extrinsic value** – relates to a product or consumption experience that serves instrumentally or functionally as a means to some further end.

Versus

Intrinsic value – where a consumption experience is appreciated for its own sake and self-justifying end-in-itself.

- **Self-orientated value** – where a consumer prizes some product or consumption experience for its own sake, because of how they respond to it, or by virtue of the effect it has on the consumer.

Versus

Other-orientated value – where a consumer prizes a product or consumption experience for the sake of others, because of how they respond to it, or by virtue of the effect it has on them.

- In this typology, **economic value** refers to the case where a product or consumption experience serves as a means to a consumer's own objectives – as when prizing **efficiency** or **excellence**.
- **Social value** occurs when the consumer's own behaviour serves as a means to shaping the responses of others – as when a person consumes in a way that makes a **status-enhancing** favourable impression or basks in the reflected glory of **esteem-evoking** material possessions.

- **Hedonic value** arises from a person's own pleasure in consumption experiences appreciated for their own sake as ends in themselves – as in fun that might be derived from various leisure activities or the aesthetic enjoyment that might be felt when beholding a work of art, an entertainment event or a beautiful vista.
- **Altruistic value** entails a concern for how a persons' own consumption behaviour affects others where this experience is viewed as a self-justifying end-in-itself – as when engaging in ethically desirable practices which 'virtue is its own reward' or when feeling some sort of spiritual ecstasy.

2.6.2 SHETH, NEWMAN AND GROSS PROPOSED THEORY OF CONSUMPTION VALUE

A study done by Sheth, Newman and Gross in 1991, entitled 'Why we buy what we buy: A theory of consumption values' presents a theory true to its title and explains why consumers make the choices that they do. The theory according to Sheth *et al.* (1991:159) identifies five consumption values (Figure 2.6) influencing consumer choice behaviour.

Sheth *et al.* (1991:159) indicate three fundamental propositions that are axiomatic to their theory:

- Consumer choice is a function of multiple consumption values.
- The consumption values make differential contributions in any given choice situation.
- The consumption values are independent.

Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991:160) proposed a theory of consumption value

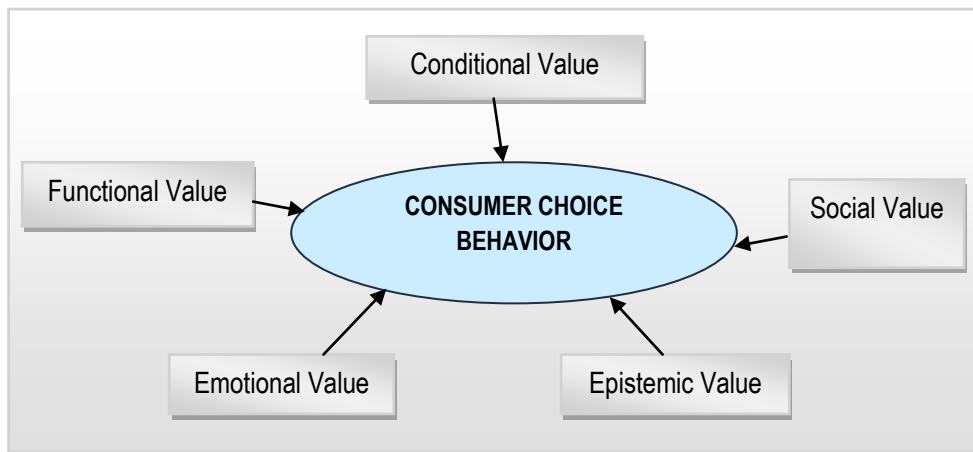


Figure 2.6: The five values influencing consumer choice

Source: Sheth *et al.* (1991:160)

As shown in Figure 2.6, the theory identifies five consumption values influencing consumer choice behaviour (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160). Sheth *et al.* (1991:160) stated that these five values (functional, value, conditional value, social value, emotional value & epistemic value) might influence a decision made by consumers.

Table 2.9: Proposed Five Consumer Values

Value	Description
Functional value	The perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian or physical performance.
Social value	The perceived utility through the association with positively or negatively stereotyped demographic, socio-economic and cultural-ethnic groups.
Emotional value	The perceived utility through the creation or perpetuation of feelings or affective states.
Epistemic value	The perceived utility through the arousal of curiosity, the provision of novelty and/or the satisfaction of a desire for knowledge.
Conditional value	The perceived utility through the presence of antecedent physical or social contingencies in a specific situation.

Source: Sheth *et al.* (1991:160)

Functional value: Sheth *et al.* (1991:160) defined functional value as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian or physical performance. An alternative acquires functional value through the possession of salient functional, utilitarian or physical attributes (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160). Sheth *et al.* (1991:160) state that value is measured on a profile of choice attributes.

Social value: The perceived utility acquired from an alternative's association with one or more specific social groups. An alternative acquires social value through association with either positively or negatively stereotyped demographic, socio-economic and cultural-ethnic groups. Social value is measured on a profile of choice imagery (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:161).

Emotional value: The perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity to arouse feelings or affective states. An alternative acquires emotional value when associated with specific feelings or when precipitating or perpetuating those feelings. Emotional value is measured on a profile of feelings associated with the alternative (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:161).

Epistemic value: Sheth *et al.* (1991:162) indicate that epistemic value is the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity to arouse curiosity, provide novelty and/or satisfy a desire for knowledge. An alternative acquires epistemic value by questionnaire items referring to curiosity, novelty and knowledge.

Conditional value: Sheth *et al.* (1991:162) indicate that conditional value is the perceived utility acquired by an alternative as the result of the specific situation or set of circumstances facing the choice maker. An alternative acquire conditional value in the presence of antecedent physical and social contingencies that enhance its functional or social value. Conditional value is measured on a profile of choice contingencies.

Sheth *et al.* (1991:170) indicate that their theory could well be used to predict consumption behaviour, as well as to describe and explain it. The theory may be applied to any consumer choice situation or interest, with the limitations that the context is one of individual decision making (as opposed to didactic or group choice), systematic decision making (as opposed to random or stochastic choice) and voluntary decision making (as opposed to mandatory or involuntarily choice).

Sheth, Newman and Gross' (1991:160) theory of values influencing consumer choice have been applied to a number of different studies, but one study that made a major contribution to the knowledge-base using this model was that of Sweeney and Soutar, who developed the PERVAL (PERceived VALue) scale based on these consumption values in 2001. Since that theory will be adapted and used for the purpose of this study, it is discussed and analysed in more detail below.

2.6.3 SWEENEY AND SOUTAR's PERVAL (PERCEIVED VALUE) SCALE

As mentioned above in 2001, Sweeney and Soutar developed a multiple item scale based on the broad framework of Sheth *et al.* (1991:160) consumption values. In their study, Sweeney and Soutar (2001:203) created the PERVAL scale to assess customers' perceptions of the value of a consumer durable good at brand level. The measure was developed for use in a retail purchase situation to determine what consumption values drive purchase attitude and behaviour. Four distinct, value dimensions emerged that were termed emotional, social, quality/performance and price/ value-for-money (Table 2.10).

The reliability and validity of the scale were found to help significantly in explaining attitudes and behaviour. The scale was also tested in a post-purchase situation and again found to be both reliable and valid in this context also. The PERVAL scale has a multitude of potential applications and could serve as a framework for further empirical research in this important area. The study shows that multiple dimensions better explain consumer choice, both statistically and qualitatively, than does a single 'value for money' item and should produce superior results when investigating consumption value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:216).

The scale demonstrated that consumers assess products, not just in functional terms of expected performance, value for money and versatility; but also in terms of enjoyment or pleasure derived from the product (emotional value) and the social consequence of what the product communicates to others (social value).

According to Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211), the PERVAL scale (Table 2.10) has a variety of potential applications and can serve as a framework for further empirical research in this important area.

Table 2.10: The PERVAL Scale

Value	Description
Emotional value	The perceived utility through the creation or perpetuation of feelings or affective states.
Social value	The perceived utility through the association with positively or negatively stereotyped demographic, socio-economic and cultural-ethnic groups.
Functional value (price/ value for money)	The utility derived from the product due to the reduction of its perceived short term and long term costs
Functional value (performance/quality)	The utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product.

Source: Sweeney & Soutar (2001:211)

The following provides a description of each perceived value in the PERVAL scale (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:211).

Emotional value: Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) describe this as the utility derived from the feelings or affective states that a product generates and includes such criteria as:

- Is one that I would enjoy;
- Would make me want to use it;
- Is one that I would feel relaxed about using;
- Would make me feel good; and
- Would give me pleasure.

Social value (enhancement of social self-concept): Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) describe this as the utility derived from the product's ability to enhance social self-concept. It includes aspects such as:

- Would help me feel acceptable;
- Would improve the way I am perceived;
- Would make a good impression on other people; and
- Would give its owner social approval.

Functional value (price/ value for money): Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) describe this as the utility derived from the product due to the reduction of its perceived short- and long-term costs and includes aspects such as:

- Is reasonably priced;
- Offers value for money;
- Is a good products for the price; and
- Would be economical.

Functional value (performance/ quality): that Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) describe as the utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product. It includes aspects such as:

- Has consistent quality;
- Is well made;
- Has an acceptable standard of quality;
- Has poor workmanship;
- Would not last a long time; and
- Would perform consistently.

According to Sweeney and Soutar (2001:216), their study shows that multiple value dimensions better explain consumer choice, both statistically and qualitatively, than does a single value-for-money item and should produce superior results when investigating consumption value. They also indicated that studies employing a longitudinal framework may be productive and may shed different light upon the relative importance and, perhaps, the susceptibility of change of the four dimensions of value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:218).

2.6.4 APPLICATION OF SWEENEY & SOUTARS' PERVAL SCALE

In their study (An investigation of perceived value and consumable goods) Hall *et al.*, (2001:350) stated perceived value is to be understood thoroughly, Sweeney's model (2001:211) needs to be applied to a large number of products. Their study tested the PERVAL model on a non-durable product - namely wine. However, they did indicate a modification of the model by adding perceived-risk value to the original model.

Table 2.11: A contribution to Sweeney's model

Value	Description
Perceived-risk value	The utility derived from factors reducing risk are highly sought.

Source: Hall *et al.* (2001:352)

Perceived-risk value: which, according to Hall *et al.* (2001:352), is the utility derived from factors reducing risk that are highly sought.

Hall *et al.* (2001:352) divided the variables from Sweeney's PERVAL scale (2001:211) into four factors, these being:

1. Emotional/ Social Perceived value: Whereas Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) divided these two values, this particular study regarded the two as being so closely intertwined that they should be considered as one.

2. Functional/ Quality Perceived value: Quality was indicated by the price, age, vintage and brand.

3. Perceived Risk value: One factor that was not addressed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) is perceived risk value. This research found that, for intangible products, factors reducing risk are highly sought.

4. Functional / Price value: Price, in terms of value for money, was also considered an important factor in determining perceived value.

This study examined the success of the model as it was applied to a non-durable and intangible product, in this case, wine, or more accurately, wine purchase (Hall *et al.*, 2001:353). Wine is often brought to drink in a social setting, therefore the choice of wine needs to satisfy both your needs and others (Hall *et al.*, 2001:353). Therefore, emotionally, you seek an enjoyable experience that you wish others to enjoy and therefore be impressed by your choice of wine. This is quite unlike some durable goods where the main importance is functionality, and which is often insured by warranty, wine incorporates a number of risks (Hall *et al.*, 2001:353).

Therefore, a modification to Sweeney's PERVAL scale (2001:211) is required for products which, through their use, may link emotional and social value. Along with this intangibility, they

carry a certain amount of perceived risk to the functional, emotional and social aspects (Hall *et al.*, 2001:353). Through the authors' study of the wine product, Hall *et al.* (2001:353) found emotional and social (acceptability) values to be more closely intertwined than those for non-durable goods. The type of product may explain both this and which occasions warrant the necessity of wine.

Hall *et al.* (2001:353) indicated that although their study was tested on a non-durable product, wine, it might not be representative of all intangible, non-durable products. Therefore, an opportunity exists to expand studies on all types of product categories, thus allowing marketers to have a thorough understanding of the market and customer perceptions of value and purchasing behaviour (Hall *et al.*, 2001:353) such as in the tourism industry where both elements of tangibility and intangibility exist.

Table 2.12 provides a summary of the previous studies of value and of how these studies can be categorised according to the models discussed above. It is clear that a lot of attention had been given to perceived value as a whole, and only minimal research has been done on epistemic value. Thus an opportunity exists to do research focused on epistemic (novelty) value. It is also clear that earlier researchers gave attention the get/give component also known as the quality/price trade-off aspects, introduced by Zeithaml in 1988. Marketers currently have been paying more attention to a wider variety of perceived values, that are not limited to aspects of price and quality aspects (that is, perceived emotional value, perceived social value and perceived epistemic value) and that are more focused on building relationships with the customer.

Table 2.12: Categorisation of values measured in previous studies

Author	Title	Perceived quality	Perceived value	Perceived emotional Value	Perceived social value	Perceived functional (quality/ price) value	Perceived epistemic (novelty) value
Monroe & Krishnan (1985)	The effects of price on subjective product evaluation.		x				
Dodds & Monroe (1985)	The effects of brand and price information on subjective product evaluations.		x				
Monroe & Chapman (1987)	Framing effect on buyers' subjective product evaluations		x				
Dodds, Monroe & Grewal (1991)	Effects of price, brand and store information on buyers' product evaluations.		x			x	
Seth, Newman & Gross (1991)	Consumption values and market choices – theory and application.		x	x	x	x	x
Bolton & Drew (1991)	A multistage model of customers' assessments of service quality and value.		x				
Holbrook (1994)	The nature of consumer value: An axiology of service in the consumption experience.		x	x	x	x	

Chan (1994)	The effects of country or origin, brand and price information: a cognitive-affective model of buying intentions.	x	x				
Chang & Wildt (1994)	Price, product information and purchase intention: an empirical study.		x				
Lai (1995)	Consumer value, product benefits and customer value: A consumption behaviour approach.			x	x	x	
Wakefield & Barnes (1996)	Retailing hedonic consumption: a model of sales promotion of leisure service.		x				
Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha & Everitt (1996)	The American Customer Satisfaction Index: nature, purpose and findings.		x				
Sirohi, McLaughlin & Wittink (1998)	A model of consumer perceptions and store loyalty intentions for a super market retailer.		x				
Grewal, Monroe & Krishnan (1998)	The effects of price-comparison advertising on buyers' perceptions of acquisition value, transaction value and behavioural intentions.		x			x	
Grewal,	The effect of store name, brand name and price		x				

Krishnan, Baker & Borin (1998)	discounts on consumers' evaluations and purchase intentions.						
Oliver (1999)	Value as excellence in the consumption experience.		x				
Sweeney, Soutar & Johnson (1999)	The role of perceived risk in the quality-value relationship: a study in retail environment.	x	x				
Oh (1999)	Service quality, customer satisfaction and customer value: a holistic perspective.	x	x				
Kashyap & Bojanic (2000)	A structural analysis of value, quality and price perceptions of business and leisure travellers.		x				
Murphy, Prichard & Smith (2000)	The destination product and its impact on traveller perceptions.		x				
Oh (2000)	The effects of brand class, brand awareness and price on customer value and behavioural intentions.	x	x				
Cronin, Brandy & Hult (2000)	Assessing the effects of quality, value and customer satisfaction on consumer behaviour intentions in service environments.		x				

Caruana, Money & Berthon (2000)	Service quality and satisfaction – the moderating role of value.		x				
Lapierre (2000)	Customer-perceived value in industrial contexts.				x	x	
Mathwick, Malhotra & Rigdon (2001)	Experimental value: Conceptualisation, measurement and application in the catalogue and Internet shopping environment.			x		x	
Babin & Kim (2001)	International students' behaviour: a model of the travel-related consumer/dissatisfaction process.		x				
Sweeney & Soutar (2001)	Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale.			x	x	x	
Oh (2003)	Price fairness and its asymmetric effects on overall price, quality and value judgements: the case of an upscale hotel.	x	x				
Sánchez, Callirisa, Rodrigues & Moliner (2006)	Perceived value of the purchase of a tourism product			x	x	x	

Source: Author's own composition

In the following section, each perceived value will be discussed in detail.

2.7 ANALYSING THE VARIOUS VALUES

From the above, it can be seen that perceived emotional value, perceived social value, perceived functional value (price/value for money), perceived functional value (performance/quality); perceived epistemic value and perceived risk value are all important when measuring and seeking an understanding of consumer behaviour. Therefore, each perceived value will be discussed in more depth below.

2.7.1 PERCEIVED EMOTIONAL VALUE:

Emotional value is a social-psychological dimension that is dependent on a product's ability to arouse feelings or affective states (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:162). Emotions are strongly influenced by personal experiences. Direct experiences have a greater effect on brand perceptions and on emotions towards the brand than do indirect experiences. Emotional perceived value is, thus, likely to be a key factor in the consumption of a marine activity such as scuba diving where the experiences are very direct in nature.

As product experiences are influenced by emotional states, emotional value can be defined as a product's ability to arouse feelings or affective states that can, if utilised correctly, lead to fully satisfying the needs of consumers through appropriate marketing and management strategies.

2.7.2 PERCEIVED SOCIAL VALUE (ENHANCEMENT OF SOCIAL-SELF CONCEPT)

Tourists also expect a number of things from themselves, such as being knowledgeable about the product, and, at the same time, creating a favourable impression in a social atmosphere.

Social value has been defined as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's association with one or more specific social groups (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:161). Choices involving highly visible

products (for example, clothing, jewellery) and goods or services shared with others (for example, gifts, products used in entertaining) are often driven by social value (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:161). In tourism, factors such as interactions between people on a scuba diving trip, the relationship between passengers and the tour guide, together with the individual recognition or prestige obtained from undertaking the trip, may all create social value. Social value may be particularly strong in small group tours.

Social value in scuba diving can be seen as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative association with one or more specific social groups. This could include the interaction between people and the relationships they build during a dive trip.

2.7.3 PERCEIVED FUNCTIONAL VALUE (PRICE/ VALUE FOR MONEY)

Value has being defined as value in use in an economic sense, related purely to monetary value, price and cost (Hirschey & Pappas, 1993, cited in Hall *et al.*, 2001:350). Functional value is defined as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian or physical performance (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160) and is seen as a primary driver of consumer choice. Common functional value attributes include quality, reliability, durability and, of course, price.

De Chernatony and McDonald (2003:139) indicated that, in tourism, functional perceived value refers to the value and effectiveness a visitor perceives of a product's functional capability. Tourists are therefore increasingly becoming value-conscious and they seek value for their money. This refers to the way that customers compare the amount of money they have paid to the quality of the facilities and service they receive.

2.7.4 PERCEIVED FUNCTIONAL VALUE (PERFORMANCE/ QUALITY)

Perceived quality is defined as the customer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority (Zeithaml, 1988:3). Empirical studies supported the positive relationship between perceived product quality and perceived value (Teas & Aragwal, 2000; Dodds *et al.*, 1991).

Tourists are increasingly becoming value-conscious and they seek value for money. This refers to the way that customers compare the amount of money they have paid to the quality of the facilities and service they receive. Customers must be convinced that the quality of the service and facilities they receive is consistent with the price they are paying. It is also important that the characteristics of the customers themselves play a key role in determining prices and to consider that some might be price-sensitive.

The relationship of quality to value may be queried. Excellence may be, for most, a desired value in consumption (Oliver, 1996:143). Holbrook's framework (See Table 2.6) presumes that the value of consumption increases as quality increases (Oliver, 1996:143). Thus, in Holbrook's terms, it is a reaction to the extrinsic cues of excellence. Oliver (1996:143) provides a summary of quality definitions as shown in Table 2.13

Table 2.13: Definitions of quality

Connotations of:	Terms used:
Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innate excellence • Superiority • Highest achievement • Uncompromising standards
Desirability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference • Value • Worth • Affordable excellence
Usefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness for use • Capacity to satisfy wants • Possessing desired characteristics

Source: Oliver (1996:143)

Attainment: Refers to the achievement of a high-level standard.

Desirability: Refers to a more personal level of attractiveness to the consumer.

Usefulness: Refers to the ability of the product or service to 'serve' the consumer's needs.

Generally, quality is an externally mediated perception that a product or service possesses excellent levels of the key quality dimensions that define quality for that product or service. It is an enduring cognitive representation, which may be installed and maintained by external cues including advertising and reputation (Oliver, 1996:146).

2.7.5 PERCEIVED EPISTEMIC (NOVELTY) VALUE

While epistemic value (novelty value) was not initially included in the PERVAL framework, it is a key component of the adventure tourism experience as this allows for the inclusion of the novelty of the activity and the destination (Hall & Weiler, 1992:3). Epistemic value is created when a product arouses curiosity, provides novelty and/or satisfies a desire for knowledge (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160).

In tourism, Zuckerman (1971:45) noted that epistemic value is a key factor in many adventure tourism products due to tourists' desire for exploratory, novelty- and variety-seeking behaviour. Tour operators need to modify and adapt their product to create new and novel experiences for tourists to ensure the tourists obtain epistemic value. Epistemic (novelty) value was therefore included in the present study because of its potential importance to a marine tourism environment.

2.7.6 PERCEIVED RISK VALUE

Williams and Soutar (2000:1419) indicated that perceived risk value is important because of safety issues and the planning needed to minimise risk. Zeithaml (1998:14) has suggested that perceived value can be regarded as a 'consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) based on perceptions of what is received and what is given'. This assessment could be referred to as a comparison of the product or service's 'get and give' components (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:204).

2.8 UNDERSTANDING VALUE FROM A TOURISM PERSPECTIVE

The demand for tourism is met by the concentrated marketing efforts of a wide variety of tourist services. On the demand side, visitor behaviour is evolving while, on the supply side, competition is growing. Tourism is, however, largely an intangible service that is delivered to tourists as an experience. The term 'value' has been interpreted by economists as quantifiable monetary exchange rates (in South Africa, in Rands) or physical quantifiable environmental attributes and processes (such as eco-systems). However, tourism value can be seen as the total experience of the service offered, not just a mere monetary exchange. Holbrook (1999:5) stated in 1990 that consumer value reflects an experience, in that it does not reside solely in the product purchased, the brand chosen, or the object possessed but rather in the derived consumption experience. This is especially applicable to the tourism industry.

LasSalle and Britton (2003:38) defined an experience of value as a product or service that, when combined with its surrounding experience events, goes beyond itself to enhance or bring value to a customer's life. This is the ideal – to deliver such overall value that a product transcends the ordinary to become extraordinary or even priceless (LasSalle & Britton, 2003:38). This interaction leads to a reaction, which, when positive, results in the recognition of value and this recollected value remains in the tourist's memory long afterwards (Pine & Gilmore, 1999:8).

Thus, an experience is not a snapshot, but is rather a complex process, that involves multiple parties, evolves over time and retains value far into the future. Tourism experiences are based on the notion of fun, pleasure and emotional responses, which are each assuming growing importance when seeking to understand tourist behaviour (Page & Connell, 2009:335). Because an experience is something that cannot be given or removed, it is seen as an intangible service. Tourism is thus, mostly, an intangible service that is delivered to tourists as an experience.

The intangibility of services is what makes the tourism experience so unique. The tourism product carries both the characteristics of service products and characteristics that are unique to the tourism industry, which thus makes the tourism product quite different from physical (tangible)

goods. The intangibility of tourism products implies a large amount of risk and uncertainty about customer value (quality-price ratio). A guest, who booked a certain holiday package (for example, a scuba diving package with Coral Divers), does not know with certainty what he/she can expect and how he/she will eventually perceive and judge the quality experienced in his/her vacation. However, value perceptions will influence future intentions to visit, as will word-of-mouth recommendations. Particularly for a destination, it is crucial to create confidence, to determine quality criteria and to introduce measures to reduce risks for the customer (Weiermair, 2003:3). Given the intangibility of tourism products, the tourist may feel uncertain about the quality of the services. Because of this intangibility, tourism products can be enhanced in value through adding sensations (emotional, social, perceived-risk, functional price/quality and epistemic attachment). Because of such product changes, the emotional value of the tourism experience will be enhanced (Weiermair, 2003:4).

As value is a key to gaining competitive advantage (Gallarza & Saura, 2008:16), destinations are winning competitive battles by careful analysis of, and response to, the core values and needs of the segmented travel market (Hassan, 2000:240). Chang and Wild (1994:16) stated that tourism value can be seen as a combination of a product's (destination's) perceived quality and associated price that a visitor will summarise as the value received. Morrison (1989:9) agrees with this and offers that the mental estimates that consumers make of the travel product are where perceptions of value can be drawn from personal cost/benefit assessment. Stevens (1992:46), on the other hand, noted that value perceptions arose from an assessment of the goods and services purchased at the destination. Morrison (1989:9) indicated that perceived value is the mental estimate that consumers make of the travel product, where perceptions of value are drawn from personal cost/benefit assessment.

The consistent effort made in service literature to deepen the understanding of differences between satisfaction and quality often leads to the value concept. This may be examined both outside (for example, Bolton & Drew, 1991; Woodruff, 1997; Oliver, 1996; Cronin *et al.*, 2000) and inside the tourism literature (for example, Yüsel & Yüksel, 2001, Oh & Parks, 1997; Oh, 1999, 2000, 2003; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Brady, Robertson & Cronin, 2001). Perceived value forms

part of the service concept of the tourism literature. Table 2.14 indicates a summary of perceived value studies previously undertaken in the tourism industry.

Table 2.14: A summary of previous perceived value studies done in the tourism/services industry

Author(s)	Title	Value elements
Wakefield & Barnes (1996)	Retailing hedonic consumption: a model of sales promotion of leisure service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived value of service provision Perceived quality of service environment
Lovelock (1996)	Services Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-use value Post-use value
Murphy, Pritchard & Smith (1999)	The destination product and its impact on traveller perceptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived trip value
Oh (1999)	Service quality, customer satisfaction and consumer value: a holistic perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer value
Kashyap & Bojanic (2000)	A structural analysis of value, quality and price perceptions of business and leisure travellers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships between travellers' perceptions of value, quality, and price
Babin & Kim (2001)	International students' behaviour: a model of the travel-related consumer/dissatisfaction process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedonic Value Utilitarian Value
Petrick, Morais & Norman (2001)	An examination of the determinants of entertainment vacationers' intentions to revisit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived value
Petrick & Backman (2001)	An examination of golf traveller's satisfaction, perceived value,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition value Transaction value

	loyalty and intentions to revisit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceived value
Petrick (2002)	Development of a multiple-dimensional scale for measuring the perceived value of a service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-monetary costs ▪ Monetary price ▪ Emotional response ▪ Quality ▪ Reputation
Petrick (2003)	Measuring cruise passengers' perceived value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-monetary costs ▪ Monetary price ▪ Emotional response ▪ Quality ▪ Reputation
Oh (2003)	Price fairness and its asymmetric effects on overall price, quality and value judgements: the case of an upscale hotel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceived quality ▪ Perceived price ▪ Perceived value
Al-Sabbath, Ekinci & Riley (2004)	An investigation, of Perceived value Dimensions: Implications for Hospitality Research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acquisition value ▪ Transaction value
Gallarza & Saura (2006)	Value dimensions, perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty: an investigation of university students' travel behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efficiency ▪ Service quality ▪ Social value ▪ Play ▪ Aesthetics ▪ Perceived monetary costs ▪ Perceived risk ▪ Time and effort ▪ Loyalty

Gallarza & Soura (2008)	The concept of value and its dimensions: a tool for analysing tourism experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affective ▪ Cognitive ▪ Social ▪ Personal ▪ Active ▪ Reactive
Chen & Chen (2010)	Experience quality, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioural intentions for Heritage Tourists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience quality ▪ Perceived value ▪ Satisfaction ▪ Behavioural intention
Jamal, Othman & Muhammad (2011)	Tourist perceived value in a community-based home-stay visit: An investigation into the functional and experiential aspect of value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Functional value (establishment) ▪ Functional value (price) ▪ Experiential value (host-guest interaction) ▪ Experiential value (activity, culture and knowledge) ▪ Emotional value
Lee, Bendle, Yoon & Kim (2012)	Thana-tourism or Peace Tourism: Perceived value at a North Korean Resort from an Indigenous Perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emotional value ▪ Functional value ▪ Economic value

Source: Author's own composition

It can be seen in Table 2.14 that most studies have focused on price (for example, those of Kashyap & Bojanic, 2000; Petrick, 2002; Oh, 2003; Petrick, 2003; Gallaraza & Soura, 2006; Al-Sabbathiy, Ekinci & Riley, 2004; Lee, Bendle, Yoon & Kim, 2012). A large number also focus on quality (such as those of Kashyap & Bojanic, 2000; Petrick, 2000; Petrick, 2003; Oh, 2003; Gallarza & Soura, 2008; Chen & Chen, 2010) as the main element of perceived value assessment. Other aspects that were also evaluated in these studies were hedonic value and

utilitarian value (Babin & Kim, 2001); pre-use and post-use value (Lovelock, 1996); perceived trip value (Murphy, Prichard & Smith, 1999) and acquisition and transaction value (Petrick & Backman, 2001).

As the terms acquisition value, transaction value, hedonic value, utilitarian value, active value and reactive value are relatively unfamiliar, each term has been defined briefly below:

In their study, Petrick and Backman (2001:223) offer that perceived value may be conceptualised as consisting of two dimensions, being the:

- **Acquisition value:** which refers to the perceived net gains from the trade-off between benefits (quality of service) and sacrifices (price of service); and
- **Transactional value:** which refers to the difference between the consumers' internal reference price and price offered within the context of a special deal.

Petrick and Backman (2001:223) state that transitional value can be used as an objective and monetary measure of utility (physical value), while acquisition value is a more subjective measure of utility (behavioural value). Gallarza and Soura (2006:439) regard the acquisition and transactional value difference as a classical approach of value typologies.

- **Hedonic and Utilitarian values:** In a study done by Babin, Lee, Kim and Griffin (2005:134), they suggest that Hedonic values capture the affective qualities while utilitarian value captures the functional qualities of services.
- **Active and Reactive values:** Rust and Oliver (1994:43) opine that active value occurs when an individual manipulates the environment to some effect, while reactive value occurs when the individual apprehends or responds to an objective.

However, it must be noted that none of the studies listed in Table 2.14 focus on the perceived tourism value experienced at a marine destination, nor do any of these studies focus on the perceived tourism value of scuba divers. Thus, a gap exists in the literature that, if filled, will lead to a better understanding of the perceived tourism values experienced at any marine destination. This will be applicable to a number of different marine activities and will also provide insight into the intangible value of the tourism industry

Perceived value has been indicated as a dynamic variable, experienced before purchase, at the moment of purchase, at the time of use and after use (Sánchez *et al.*, 2006:394). Tourism development is about adding value in a way that is consistent with the market demand (Hassan, 2000:244) and created within the destination (Braun, 2005:6). It is important that these values are understood and correctly applied.

So it is critical to measure and manage the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the tourism product from a perceived value marketing perspective, thus giving the industry a greater chance to improve significantly its customers experience as well as managing its operational efficiencies and becoming more competitive.

2.9 ADVANTAGES OF KNOWING PERCEIVED VALUES

Perceived values will enable tourist destinations to achieve higher market growth and so become more competitive due to successful value-added programs (Hassan, 2000:242). Murphy, Prichard and Smith (2000:43) found that a high sense of trip value corresponds with a tourist's intention to return to the destination. Oh (2000:136) cited that in the tourism industry, by offering new insights into consumer behaviour, customer value might unveil deep-seated driving forces of purchase decisions and brand quality.

Managers need to understand consumer's values and where management should focus their attention in order to achieve just such a desired market advantage (Woodruff, 1997:142). Parasuraman (1997:154) indicated that Customer Satisfaction Management needs to be reinforced with in-depth learning about customer value that has been qualified as proactive. As shown in Table 2.15, the definition of Perceived Value of services generally involves a trade-off between what consumers get (benefit) and what they give (sacrifice) to acquire a service (Tam, 2000:1; Zeithaml, 1988:14). Thus, the following benefits and sacrifices of perceived value, developed by Sanchez *et al.* (2006:395) are examined.

Components of the cost benefit conceptualisation of perceived value.

Table 2.15: Benefit and Sacrifice components of perceived value

Benefit component	Sacrifice component
Economic benefits	Price sacrifice
Emotional benefits	Time sacrifice
Social benefits	Effort sacrifice
Relationship benefits	Risk sacrifice Inconvenience sacrifice

Source: Sanchez *et al.* (2006:395)

From Table 2.15, the benefits associated with perceived value may include the following (Ali; 2007:51):

- **Economic benefits:** that refer to the consumer's monetary savings when purchasing service (such as receiving a discount on a scuba diving package at, for example, Pisces Sodwana Bay).
- **Emotional benefits:** denotes the affective gain to consumers for purchasing specific services (for example, buying a diving package through a dive school).
- **Social benefit:** indicates consumers' recognition of services as the preferred choice, as their friends or relatives recommend a service to them (for example, visiting a highly recommended scuba diving destination such as Sodwana Bay).
- **Relationship benefit:** this represents a state where consumers consider service providers as a valuable resource that attends to consumers' expectations and fulfils their needs (for example, frequent scuba divers at Sodwana Bay build up a relationship with the diving companies, which resolves into a long-term relationship).

Opposed to the positive attributes are the negative attributes that were also noted by Ali (2007:1). These include:

- **Price sacrifice:** which implies the monetary cost as perceived by consumers (for example, if scuba divers find the cost higher than expected, they need to decide if sacrificing to meet the additional cost is worthwhile).
- **Time sacrifice:** entails the amount of time consumers have to spend on finding, purchasing and consuming a service (for example, the time scuba divers spend waiting between diving trips).
- **Effort sacrifice:** which involve physical energy devoted by people to find, purchase and consume services.
- **Risk sacrifice:** that refers to the probability of negative consequences of purchasing or consuming services (for example, the risk of not enjoying the diving trip after paying significant sums of money to do it).
- **Inconvenience sacrifice:** refers to circumstances where consumers had unpleasant experienced while consuming services (for example, poor visibility and strong winds during a scuba diving trip).

Understanding the perceived tourism value of scuba divers can lead to the following advantages:

- It may help explain different areas of consumer behaviour, such as:
 1. Product (destination) choice (for example, Zeithaml, 1988).
 2. Purchase intention (for example, Dodds & Monroe, 1985).
 3. Repeat purchasing (for example, Nilson, 1992).
 4. Which values drive tourists (Levy, 1999).
- Offer the destination a competitive edge.
- Improve the overall tourist experience.

Many advantages can be drawn from understanding and applying perceived values to the various sectors in marketing and tourism. Marketing in tourism can manipulate tourists into the following:

- Influence at the pre-purchase phase.
- Affects customer satisfaction.
- Intention to recommend.

- Return behaviour at the purchase phase.

From the above, it may be deduced that benefits of perceived value include economic, emotional, social and relationship benefits that can lead to a better understanding of consumer behaviour, product choice, purchase intention, repeat purchasing and of the values that drive tourists. This will result in a competitive edge and an overall, improved tourist experience.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to contextualise marine tourism and the importance of the its perceived value aspects.

These objectives were achieved and so the following can be concluded:

Marine Tourism is a unique sector of tourism that also involves travel away from the consumer's place of residence, but the emphasis is focused on the marine environment, which incorporates ocean activities. Marine Tourism can thus be identified as travel to a relatively undisturbed area, in a marine environment, where various marine activities, such as scuba diving, are hosted. Although various studies have been done in the Marine Tourism sector, none of these has to date focused on the perceived values experienced by scuba diving tourists. Thus, an opportunity exists to improve marketing and management approaches at marine destinations by analysing and studying these values.

This can be achieved using a multi- dimensional scale, adapted from the consumption values of Sheth *et al.* (1991:160) and the PERVAL scale, developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211). A modification is needed though, as introduced by Hall *et al.* (2001:4). Thus the five perceived values that will be tested in this study are:

- Emotional value;
- Social value;
- Functional value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:211);
- Perceived-Risk value (Hall *et al.*, 2001:4); and

- Epistemic value (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160).

As these were each considered important for the purpose of this study, that is, to evaluate the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination.

CHAPTER 3



The Perceived Value of a Tourism Experience

‘If you want to know if God exists – go DIVING!’ – Anonymous

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to determine the perceived value of a tourism experience, in this case, for the scuba diving tourists at the marine destination, Sodwana Bay, South Africa. Tourism value can be seen as the value that customers experience and can be defined from the separate perspectives of money, quality, benefit and social psychology. Tourists, in this case scuba divers, experience value through scuba diving activities and the environment in which they take place. Assessing and understanding these values will help scuba diving destinations gain a competitive advantage and enable a more customised product that will improve the value experienced. A survey, the first of its kind in South Africa, was conducted at Sodwana Bay and 402 questionnaires were suitable for analysis. A factor analysis supported the modified model of

Sweeney and Soutar and revealed five distinct values namely perceived emotional value; perceived risk value; perceived functional value; perceived social value; and perceived epistemic value. With the highest mean (3.43), perceived epistemic value revealed that respondents consider curiosity, acquiring knowledge, providing novelty and broadening knowledge as key in the valued experience. These criteria should thus be prioritised in marketing efforts for marine destinations, particularly where scuba diving activities are taking place.

Keywords: Perceived Tourism Value, Marine Tourism, Scuba Diving.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Scuba diving's contribution to the marine tourism context is enormous, for it is one of the world's fastest growing recreational sports and is developing into a multi-billion dollar industry at a global level (Ong & Musa, 2012:1). There has been a significant increase in the number of certified scuba divers worldwide; with a total of 20.3 million divers in 2011, compared to the 2.5 million divers registered in 1988 (PADI, 2012:2).

With the significant increase in the number of scuba divers on the one hand, and the pressure being imposed on marine protected environments to limit the number of scuba divers on the other, business competition levels are high and conflicting interests make it difficult for small scuba diving companies to survive in marine tourism environments.

The intangibility of services is what makes the tourism experience, and scuba diving, so unique. Intangibility has been defined as being something that cannot be seen, touched or felt (Page & Connell, 2009:644). Given the intangibility of tourism products, the tourist may feel uncertain about the quality of the services. However, precisely because of this intangibility, tourism products can be enhanced in value by adding sensations (for example, emotional, social, perceived-risk, functional price/quality and epistemic attachment).

Knowing the value that scuba divers receive from diving at a marine destination will assist companies in becoming more sustainable and delivering the experience according to the needs of the divers. Although there have been studies conducted of perceived value in tourism (refer to Table 2.5), no such study has been conducted in the marine environment, for scuba diving tourists or in the South African context. Such knowledge will assist in park development, enhance customer satisfaction, improve the diving experience, improve marketing initiatives and give the destination a competitive edge. The purpose of this research is thus to determine the perceived value of the tourism experience at a marine destination, Sodwana Bay.

This chapter is divided into the following sections: the literature review, which will analyse perceived value in marketing, perceived value and its importance in a tourism environment. This is followed by the method of research; discussion of the results (that is, demographic profile discussion of scuba divers in Sodwana Bay; perceived value of a tourism experience & correlation analysis of perceived values), the findings, the implications of the research and, lastly, the conclusions drawn.

3.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review aims to determine the importance of perceived value in marketing and the importance of perceived value in a tourism environment. By examining previous literature on the topic of perceived value, its importance and the marketing possibilities thereof can be better understood.

3.2.1 PERCEIVED VALUE IN MARKETING

Perceived value was labelled the “new marketing mania” and the way to sell in the 1990s (Sinha & De Sarbo, 1998:236) and has proved to be of continuing importance in the twenty-first century (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:203). Marketing seeks to make the exchange process between organisations and their customers, a mutual rewarding transaction (Ali, 2007:1). Value is created through this process, which leaves both parties better off than before the exchange took place (Bowie & Buttle, 2004:8).

Since the construct of perceived value has been identified as one of the more important measures for marketing (Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000:194), it continues to be of increasing importance (Vantrappen, 1992; Woodruff, 1997 in Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:203). A common ideal shared by Ziethaml, (1988:14); Woodruff, (1997:142); Holbrook, (1999:5); Hightower, Brady and Barker (2002:697) and by Kuo, Wu and Deng, (2009:888) is that the consumer is the key factor to gaining a competitive advantage. Hartnett (1998:21) noted that when retailers satisfy people’s basic needs, they are delivering value, which puts them in a much stronger position in the long term.

In 1973, Rekeach (1973:40) defined perceived value as enduring beliefs that particular end states of existence are personally or socially preferable to other states. According to Zeithaml (1998:2) and to Holbrook (1999:5), the concept value is old and endemic to consumer behaviour although many authors have recognised a lack of interest in understanding and measuring perceived value. This can be attributed to the intangible nature thereof, especially in the tourism industry where the experience element also contributes to the perceived value.

Kuo, Wu and Deng (2009:888) state that customer's perceived value can be defined using the perspectives of money, quality, benefit and social psychology. Boksberger and Melsen (2011:233) stated that the perceived value of services is a combined assessment of consumers' perceptions of benefits and sacrifices, including quality and price, for a variety of perceived value dimensions, with original behavioural intentions and customer satisfaction playing a role in overall evaluation (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011:233). Perceived value can be defined as the overall assessment, perceptions, mental estimates, interpretation of information or enduring beliefs of product attributes, attribute performances and consequences of the cognitive-trade off or value received between consumers, the product source and the benefits received. Therefore, the theory of value is potentially of tremendous relevance to the fields of marketing and consumer research and therefore of great benefit to the tourism Industry.

Creating a perception of value is, unfortunately, no easy task (Zeithaml, 1988:2), as these experiences tend to be complex and intangible. Thus, various models have been adapted to test the way in which consumers perceive value. In 1991, Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991:161) identified five consumption values which they believed influenced consumer choice behaviour. These were:

- Functional value;
- Conditional value;
- Social value;
- Emotional value; and
- Epistemic value.

In 2001, Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) developed a PERVAL (PERceived VALue) scale based on the consumption values identified by Sheth *et al.* (1991:161). Sweeney and Soutar (2001:203) used this PERVAL scale to assess customers' perceptions of the value of consumer durable goods at brand level. The measure was developed for use in a retail purchase situation to determine what consumption values drive purchase attitude and behaviour. Once again, five distinct, value dimensions emerged and termed:

- Emotional value;
- Social (acceptability) value;
- Functional (price/ value for money) value;
- Functional (performance/ quality) value; and
- Functional (versatility) value as seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: The PERVAL scale

Value	Description
Emotional value	The utility derived from the feelings or effective states that a product generates.
Social value (enhancement of social self-concept)	The utility derived from the product's ability to enhance social self-concept.
Functional value (price/ value for money)	The utility derived from the product due to the reduction of its perceived short term and long term costs.
Functional value (performance/ quality)	The utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product.
Functional value (versatility)	The utility derived from the versatility and practicality of the product.

Source: Sweeney & Soutar (2001:211)

All five of these value dimensions were found to help significantly in explaining attitudes and behaviour. Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:350) demonstrated that to understand thoroughly perceived value, Sweeney's model (2001:211) needed to be applied to a large number of

products. They then tested Sweeney's model (2001:211) on a non-durable product – specifically, wine. For the purpose of their study, it was indicated that a modification to Sweeney's model (2001:211) was required – they added perceived-risk value. Perceived-risk value was been defined as the utility derived from those factors reducing risk that are highly sought (Hall *et al.*, 2001:352).

Sweeney and Soutar (2001:216) indicated that their study shows that multiple value dimensions explain consumer choice better, both statistically and qualitatively, than does a single 'value for money' item and should produce superior results when investigating consumption value. Therefore, the PERVAL scale (see Table 3.1) has a variety of potential applications and can serve as a framework for further empirical research (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:203).

3.2.2 PERCEIVED VALUE AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN A TOURISM ENVIRONMENT

Tourism is not just business, money and politics. Its foundation is people, and therefore it needs to be value driven. There is a need to determine what value tourism experiences hold and what benefits they creates for the tourism industry and tourists, alike. Consumers are becoming ever-more value conscious than they were in the past (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:204) and the role of value has become of major and increasing concern to marketers. Indeed, Albretch (1992:7) argued that the only thing that matters in the world of quality is delivering consumer value.

There is a myriad of definitions of perceived value in the literature. The most common of these has been that of Zeithaml (1988:14), who defined perceived value as the consumers' overall assessment of the utility of a product based on the perception of what is received and what is given. Oliver (1999:45) defined perceived value as a positive function of what is received and a negative function of what is sacrificed. Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodriguez and Moliner (2006:1) have a slightly different view and define perceived value as a dynamic variable, experienced before purchase, at the moment of purchase, at the time of use and after use. Perceived value is thus a

subject that varies between customers, between cultures and at different times (Sánchez *et al.*, 2006:1).

Unlike retail industries, tourism is an intangible service that is delivered to tourists as an experience. Thus, careful analysis and a different approach are needed when it comes to creating perceived value in the tourism industry as well as measuring it. Hartnett (1998:21) noted that when retailers (also diving companies and destinations) satisfy people's basic needs, they are delivering value. This puts them in a much stronger position when compared to their competitors in the long-term. Since perceived value has been noted as a key in gaining a competitive advantage, the tourism industry has an opportunity to use this value to their advantage, for if utilised properly, the advantages of perceived value can be endless.

The intangibility of services is what makes the tourism experience unique, since the tourism product carries the characteristics of service products, together with characteristics that are unique to the tourism industry. This makes the tourism product very different from physical (tangible) goods. The intangibility of tourism products implies a large amount of risk and uncertainty concerning customer value (quality-price-ratio). For example, a scuba diver who booked a holiday package (for example, a scuba diving package with Divers-R-Us), does not know with certainty what he/she can expect and how he/she will eventually perceive the quality experienced on their vacation. Particularly for a destination, it is crucial to create confidence to determine quality criteria and to introduce measures to reduce risks for the consumer (Weiermair, 2003:3). Given the intangibility of tourism products, the tourist may feel uncertain of the quality of services, but despite or perhaps because of this intangibility, tourism products can be enhanced in value through adding sensations (emotional, social, perceived-risk, functional price/quality and epistemic attachment). Because of such product changes, the perceived value of the 'tourism experience' will be enhanced (Weiermair, 2003:4).

An experience is not a snapshot, but is rather a complex process that involves multiple parties, evolves over time and retains value far into the future. People want products because they want the experience-bringing services that they hope the product will render (Abbott, 1955:40). Thus,

tourists who are seeking to obtain an experience (for example, scuba diving) must actually, physically and emotionally, experience the activity before obtaining the full value of that experience. Page and Connell (2009:335) noted that tourism experiences are based on a notion of fun, pleasure and emotional responses, which are assuming a growing importance in seeking to understand tourist behaviour. These responses (fun, pleasure and emotions) can be used to create certain perceived values, thus creating a fuller experience and ensuring that tourists are satisfied.

Various studies have been undertaken in the tourism industry focusing on determining perceived value.

Kashyap and Bojanic (2000:45) investigated the relationships between travellers' perceptions of value, quality and price and their influence on travellers' ratings of similar hotels and revisit intentions. The findings of their study suggested that value played a pivotal role in travellers' decision schema, emphasising the need to refocus efforts from managing quality alone to managing customer value. Differences in the value perceptions of business and leisure travellers emphasise the need to develop segment-based strategies for managing price and quality (Kashyap & Bojanic, 2000:45).

In 2001, Babin and Kim did a study entitled 'International students' behaviour: a model of the travel-related consumer/dissatisfaction process'. The aim of the paper was twofold: first, it explored the satisfiers of international student travel behaviour and second, the study introduced a specific multidimensional value conceptualisation to the travel literature. A structural model was explored that showed how characteristics such as perceived safety, fun, and educational benefits create travel satisfaction through their impact on personal hedonic and utilitarian travel value perceptions (Babin & Kim, 2001:93). Babin, Lee, Kim and Griffin (2005:134) suggested that Hedonic values capture the affective qualities while utilitarian value captures the functional qualities of services.

Petrick, Morias and Norman (2001) explored the determinants entertainment vacationers' intentions to revisit, during which they investigated perceived value. Results suggested that perceived value is a good predictor of entertainment vacationers' intentions to revisit the destination. This emphasised the importance and influence of perceived value.

Petrick and Backman (2001) analysed golf traveller's satisfaction, perceived value, loyalty and intentions to revisit. In this study, perceived value was measured against loyalty and satisfaction, which according to Petrick and Backman (2001:223), are all derived from an experience. Findings revealed that: perceived value aided in the explanation of golf travellers' intentions to revisit, and that satisfaction was an antecedent to perceived value in the prediction of intentions to revisit.

In 2003, Oh conducted a study titled 'Price fairness and its asymmetric effects on overall price, quality and value judgements: the case of an upscale hotel'. Results indicate that the hypothesised asymmetric effects between positive (that is, gain) and negative (that is, loss) price deviations exist in buyers' judgments of quality and value, although this is not the case in overall price perceptions (Oh, 2003:387).

Al-Sabbath, Ekin and Riley (2004:226) conducted a study in the hospitality industry where they investigated perceived value dimensions and the implications for hospitality research. The study applied a two-dimensional value scale developed by Grewal, Monroe and Krishnan (1998:46) to hospitality services, hotels and restaurants. Although the scale was found to be reliable, there were some concerns about its validity across the two studies. In particular, although the dimension of acquisition value was found to be valid, transaction value showed poor validity. The conclusion suggests that a new conceptualisation of transaction value and a better scale should be developed for the evaluation of hospitality services (Al-Sabbath *et al.*, 2004:226).

Gallarza and Saura investigated university students travel behaviour in 2006 focusing on value dimensions, perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty. In this study, value dimensions tested were efficiency; service quality, social value; play; aesthetics; perceived monetary costs; perceived risk; time and effort and loyalty that were adapted from Holbrook typology. Gallarza and Saura

(2006:437) indicated that the results confirmed the existence of a quality-value-satisfaction-loyalty chain and illustrated the complexity of value dimensions that were shown to be highly sensitive to the tourism experience.

In 2008, Gallarza and Saura analysed tourism experiences by exploring the concept of value and its dimensions. Gallarza and Saura (2008:4) proposed several research questions regarding the relativity of value, using the t-test contrast of hypothesis: dimensions of value (efficiency, quality, play, aesthetics and social value) and a measure of overall perceived value tested as being personal (that is, they vary across people), comparative (with differences among objects) and situational (specific to the context).

Acquisition value refers to the perceived net gains from the trade-off between benefits (quality of service) and sacrifices (price of service). While transactional value refers to the difference between the consumers' internal reference price and price offered within the context of a special deal. Petrick and Backman (2001:223) found that transitional value can be used as an objective and monetary measure of utility (physical value), while acquisition value is a more subjective measure of utility (behavioural value). Gallarza and Saura (2006:439) regarded the acquisition and transactional value difference as a classical approach of value typologies.

Table 3.2 gives a clear indication of the studies mentioned above with the values measured in each instance.

Table 3.2: Previous perceived value studies in the Tourism Industry

Studies done in the tourism industry		
Authors(s)	Values measured	Dimensions of value
Kashyap & Bojanic (2000)	A structural analysis of value, quality and price perceptions of business and leisure travellers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships between travellers' perception of value, quality and price
Babin & Kim	International students' behaviour: a model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedonic values

(2001)	of the travel-related consumer/dissatisfaction process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilitarian values
Petrick, Morais & Norman (2001)	An examination of the determinants of entertainment vacationers' intentions to revisit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived value
Petrick & Backman (2002)	An examination of golf traveller's satisfaction, perceived value, loyalty and intentions to revisit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition value • Transaction value • Perceived value
Oh (2003)	Price fairness and its asymmetric effects on overall price, quality and value judgements: the case of an upscale hotel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived quality • Perceived price • Perceived value
Al-Sabbath, Ekinici & Riley (2004)	An investigation of perceived value dimensions: Implications for hospitality research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition value • Transaction value
Gallarza & Saura (2006)	Value dimensions, perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty: an investigation of university students' travel behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency • Service quality • Social value • Play • Aesthetics • Perceived monetary costs • Perceived risk • Time and effort • Loyalty
Gallarza & Saura (2008)	The concept of value and its dimensions: a tool for analysing tourism experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affective • Cognitive • Social

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal • Active • Reactive
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Source: Author's own compilation

It can be seen from Table 3.2 that most studies focus on price (as shown by Kashyap & Bojanic, 2000; Oh, 2003; Al-Sabbath, Ekinci & Riley, 2004; Gallarza & Soura, 2006) or quality (for example, Kashyap & Bonjanic, 2000; Oh, 2003; Gallarza & Soura, 2006) as the main elements of perceived value assessment. Other aspects that were also evaluated in these studies are Hedonic value and Utilitarian value (Babin & Kim, 2001) and Acquisition and Transaction value (Petrick & Backman, 2002).

None of the studies listed in Table 3.2 focused on the perceived value experienced at a marine destination, nor do any of these studies focus on the perceived value of scuba diving. Thus, an opportunity exists in the literature and practice, which will lead to a better understanding of the perceived tourism values experienced at any marine destination. tourism perceived value is critical in order to measure and market the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the tourism product from a marketing perspective. This will give the industry a greater chance to improve significantly its customer's experience. In order to achieve this, the Sweeney and Soutar (2001:203) PERVAL scale will be adapted to analyse the perceived value of scuba diving at a marine destination. The method of research and results are discussed below.

3.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

To identify the value of tourism in a marine environment involving scuba diving activities, a destination-based visitor survey was undertaken at Sodwana Bay in KwaZulu-Natal from 29 March to 8 April 2012.

The questionnaire developed for the purpose of this research comprised two sections, A and B:

Section A: captured demographic details (for example, gender, home language, age, occupation and province of origin) as well as the spending behaviour (number of persons paid for, length of stay and expenditure of visitors on various components).

Section B: captured the perceived values of scuba divers, which were divided into 22 attributes recorded in the form of a Likert-scale to test the levels at which respondents agreed or disagreed with a statement. As indicated, Sweeney's (2001:211) PERVAL model was utilised after adapting it according to suggestions made by Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:4) and by Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991:160) to determine its appropriateness for an intangible product in the service sector and, specifically, to determine the perceived value of scuba diving. Hall *et al.* (2001:4) suggested the addition of perceived risk value and Sheth, Newman and Gross developed the concept of epistemic value relating to novelty of the activity and the destination. Therefore, the values assessed for a tourism experience include emotional value, social value (enhancement of social self-concept), functional value (price/value for money), functional value (performance/quality), perceived risk value and epistemic value.

The survey period of ten days (29 March to 8 April 2012) allowed for adequate collection of data. Questionnaires were distributed among scuba divers on the beach and at the various campsites. Krejcie and Morgan (1970:608), indicated that for general research activities with a population (N) of 1 000 000 respondents, the recommended sample size (S) should be 384. The most recent and available data made available by Emzemvelo KZN Wildlife (2012:2) indicated that 5 885 dives were launched in March 2011 and 8 386 dives in April 2012. However, Sodwana Bay only received an average of 1 635 divers per month in 2011. To assure definitive, adequate and relevant analysis, it was decided that 500 surveys would be distributed amongst scuba divers at Sodwana Bay by using availability sampling. Divers who were willing to participate in the research and uphold honesty were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire. Questionnaires remained anonymous thus ensuring confidentiality could be maintained. After the indicated period, 402 completed questionnaires were available for use in the final analyses.

The analysis of data was divided into two stages. Firstly, a demographic profile of scuba divers visiting Sodwana Bay was compiled using Microsoft Office Excel 2007 to capture the data, which was then statistically analysed and processed by means of descriptive statistics using the SPSS 20. Secondly, a factor analysis and t-tests were made to examine the perceived value items for diving, again using the Statistics Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.4 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The results recorded were then divided into three sections – a demographic profile of the scuba divers, a factor analysis of the perceived values, as well as a correlation analysis indicating the relationships between the values.

3.4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

To achieve the objectives of this research, it is important to understand the demographical characteristics of the scuba divers. A summary of the demographic profile of scuba divers visiting Sodwana Bay is given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Description of survey respondents (n = 402)

Socio-demographic variables	Variable	Percentage
Gender	Male	62%
	Female	38%
Home language	English	45%
	Afrikaans	50%
	Other: Dutch, French, German	5%

Age	Younger than 19	8%
	20-30	32%
	31-40	25%
	41-50	27%
	Older than 51	8%
	Average age	34 years
Marital status	Married	39%
	Not married	46%
	Divorced	6%
	Widow/er	1%
	Living together	8%
Level of education	No school	1%
	Matric (Grade 12)	31%
	Diploma/ Degree	32%
	Post-graduate	14%
	Professional	14%
	Other	8%
Province of origin	KwaZulu Natal	17%
	Gauteng	56%
	Eastern Cape	1%
	Limpopo	3%
	North West	6%
	Mpumalanga	5%
	Northern Cape	1%
	Free State	1%
	Western Cape	5%

Annual Gross Income	R50 000 or less	17%
	R50 001- R100 000	9%
	R100 001 – R200 000	13%
	R200 001 – R300 000	15%
	R300 001- R400 000	9%
	More than R500 000	37%
Average number of people paying for		2 people
Average number of visits to Sodwana Bay		3.9 times
Average length of stay		5.1 nights

Source: Author's own compilation

From Table 3.3, the profile of a typical diver at Sodwana Bay is as follows: young, single, Afrikaans speaking male, obtains either a matric certificate or a diploma/degree, earns a high income and originates from Gauteng. In general, these are loyal visitors whom visit the MPA regularly, stay for longer than just a weekend and are willing to drive significant distances (for example, Johannesburg – Sodwana Bay, 583km) to reach their destination. This research therefore contributes to the knowledge of scuba divers at Sodwana Bay and can assist diving product owners in marketing of their products.

3.4.2 PERCEIVED TOURISM VALUE OF SCUBA DIVERS AT SODWANA BAY

Both Tustin (2005:668) and Wedel and Kamakura (2001:10) indicated that a factor analysis could be used to find latent variables or factors among observed variables. A factor analysis clusters together variables with similar characteristics. With a factor analysis, a small number of highly relevant factors can be produced from a large number of variables that are capable of explaining the observed variance of the larger number of variables (Tustin, 2005:668). Pieterse and Maree (2007:219) agree with this statement and add that where some of these factors are answered similarly, they may measure the same dimension or factor. They continue to say that as the factor is common to the items measuring it, this technique is known as common factor analysis (CFA) (Pieterse & Maree, 2007:219).

The purpose of the factor analysis was twofold. Firstly, to determine the underlying factors of the perceived value of scuba divers and secondly, to determine which perceived value was the most important to the divers.

To examine the factors underlying the value scale, a principle axis factor analysis with oblique rotation (Direct Oblimin) was undertaken. The twenty-two factor aspects yielded five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. These factors explained 64% of the variance and were labelled: 'emotional value', 'functional value', 'social value', 'perceived risk value' and 'epistemic value'. These are in full agreement with Sweeney and Soutars' (2001:211) modified model. The pre-determined two functional values, that is, perceived functional value (price/ value for money) and perceived functional value (performance/ quality) were collapsed into one factor related to functional values. Twenty-one (21) aspects had loadings of over 0.418, with only one item having a factor loading of 0.247. Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha or Cronbach's α) was subsequently computed to verify the internal consistency of aspects of each factor. All factors with a Cronbach's Alpha above 0.76 were deemed highly acceptable for the purposes of this exploratory study. Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure sampling adequacy (KMO) was 0.874, which was also highly acceptable.

Table 3.4: A Factor Analysis for Perceived Value of Scuba Divers

Tourism value aspects	Factor loadings				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Factor label	Emotional Value	Functional value	Social value	Risk value	Epistemic value
Scuba diving enhances my social status	0.866				
My participation in diving activities helps me to acquire social approval	0.756				
Scuba diving enhances myself	0.719				

image					
Being a scuba diver makes me unique	0.653				
Scuba diving helps me to meet social expectations	0.511				
Scuba diving makes me belong to a certain group of people	0.493				
The quality of coral reefs are good		0.835			
I received value for money		0.796			
The quality of marine life is excellent		0.770			
Prices asked are fair		0.633			
The quality of service was good		0.487			
Accessibility to the site is good		0.247			
Scuba diving strengthens my friendships			-0.758		
Scuba activities enhance my relationships with others			-0.592		
Recommendations of a dive operator influenced my decision to visit Sodwana Bay				0.702	
Recommendations of experts encouraged my dive expedition to Sodwana Bay				0.631	
Recommendations of friends encouraged my dive expedition to Sodwana Bay				0.604	
Marketing and promotion				0.601	

influenced my decision to visit Sodwana Bay					
Scuba diving arouses curiosity					-0.787
Scuba diving gives me the opportunity to acquire more knowledge					-0.724
Scuba diving provides novelty					-0.542
Scuba diving broadens my knowledge					-0.492
Eigenvalue	32.957	14.297	6.500	5.553	4.638
Cronbach's reliability coefficient	0.881	0.816	0.827	0.769	0.794
Inter-item correlations	0.553	0.445	0.706	0.455	0.499
Mean value (standard deviation)	2.7	3.3	3.1	2.7	3.4

Source: Author's own compilation.

It can be seen from the factor correlation matrix in Table 3.5 that correlations between the factors are small; therefore, every factor can be seen as an individual factor.

Table 3.5: Factor Correlation Matrix

Factor	Emotional value	Functional value	Social value	Risk value	Epistemic value
Emotional value	1.000	.155	-.327	.551	-.311
Functional value	.155	1.000	-.097	.242	-.580
Social value	-.327	-.097	1.000	-.163	.249
Risk value	.551	.242	-.163	1.000	-.346
Epistemic value	-.311	-.580	.249	-.346	1.000

Source: Author's own compilation

Factor 1 was labelled '**Emotional Value**' and constituted such value aspects such as: scuba diving enhances my social status; my self-image; makes me unique; helps me to meet social expectations and makes me belong to a certain group. Emotional value has been defined as a social-psychological dimension that is dependent on a product's ability to arouse feelings or affective states (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:161). Sweeney and Soutar (2001:212) and Jamal, Othman, and Muhammad (2011:12) tested emotional value in their studies and found it to be of significance when testing consumer behaviour.

Social and emotional values are more closely entwined with a non-durable/intangible product than a tangible/durable one (Hall *et al.*, 2001:352). As emotions alter the way that visitors perceive the environment and motivate certain behaviour, tourism product experiences are influenced by emotion (Morrison & Crane, 2007:412). Those emotions are strongly influenced by personal experiences. Emotionally, then, scuba divers may seek to have an enjoyable experience, with the expectation of enhancing their social life.

Factor 2 that was labelled '**Functional Value**' consisted of the following aspects: value for money was received, the quality of marine life was excellent, prices asked were fair, quality of service was good and accessibility to the site was good. Functional value has been defined as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative capacity for functional, utilitarian or physical performance (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160) and is seen as a primary driver of consumer choice. Holbrook's framework (see Table 2.7) presumes that the value of consumption increases as quality increases (Oliver, 1996:143).

Although functional value was analysed as one factor for the purpose of this study, Sweeney & Soutar (2001:212) divided it into two dimensions, Quality and Price. Their study found functional value to be of significant importance in the role of purchasing durable goods (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:212). De Chernatony and McDonald (2003:139) indicated that, in tourism, perceived functional value refers to the value and effectiveness a visitor perceives from a product's functional capability.

Factor 3 was labelled '**Social Value**' and consisted of the following aspects: scuba diving strengthens my friendships and scuba diving enhances my relationships with others. Sheth *et al.* (1991:161) defined social value as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's association with one or more specific social groups. Sweeney and Soutar (2001:212) and Hall *et al.* (2001:534) found social value to be of significant importance in their studies. Since scuba diving is an activity that takes place in a social setting it was also deemed important for this study.

Factor 4 was labelled '**Perceived Risk Value**' and included the following aspects: decisions to dive at Sodwana Bay were influenced by dive operators; experts; friends or promotion. Hall *et al.* (2001:350) defined perceived risk value as the utility derived from factors reducing risk that are highly sought after. They (Hall *et al.*, 2001:534) introduced perceived risk value as a modification to Sweeney's PERVAL model (1996:9) and, in their study, found perceived risk value to be of significant importance.

New scuba divers are particularly vulnerable as they are not sure what to expect, therefore they perceive the recommendations of friends, family and dive experts as being very important.

Factor 5 labelled as '**Epistemic Value**' consisted of the following aspects: scuba diving arouses curiosity, gives me the opportunity to acquire more knowledge, provides novelty and broadens my knowledge. Epistemic value is created when a product arouses curiosity, provides novelty and/or satisfies a desire for knowledge (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160). While epistemic value (novelty value) was not initially included in the PERVAL framework, it is a key component of the scuba diving experience as it includes the novelty of the activity and the destination (Hall & Weiler, 1992:3; Zuckerman, 1971:45).

In a study done by Williams and Soutar (2000:1451), epistemic value emerged as a key component of the tourism experience. Pre-tour epistemic value perceptions were evidenced by consumers choosing the tour to do something 'different' and consumers, in their satisfaction evaluations of the tour, referred to this value regularly (Williams & Soutar, 2000:1419). In their study, Sheth *et al.* (1991:165) also found epistemic value to be of significant importance.

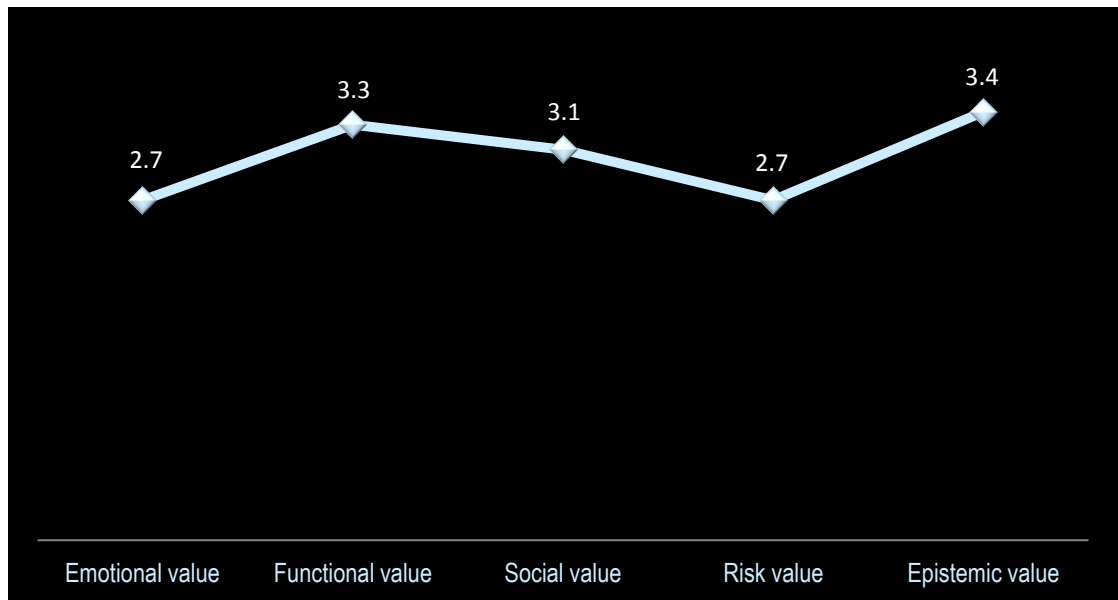


Figure 3.1: Mean values of perceived values

Source: Author's own compilation

As can be observed in Figure 3.1, **'Epistemic Value'** (Factor 5) revealed the highest Mean Value (3.4). This indicates that scuba divers are eager to gain more knowledge, experience novelty and arouse their curiosity through scuba diving activities. Epistemic values can bring about a competitive advantage in scuba diving as these activities are made more exciting and novel. Cheng, Wang, Lin and Vivik (2009:152) found epistemic value to be of significant importance as it received a high mean count in their study also.

'Functional value' (Factor 2) revealed the second highest Mean Value of 3.2. This indicates that those scuba divers who visit Sodwana Bay do not mind paying higher prices should there be value for money to be gained, the quality of marine life is good, prices are fair, the quality of service is good and there is decent accessibility to the site. The overall diving experience should thus focus on value for money and good quality. Lee, Bendle, Yaun and Kim (2012:84) and Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) all measured perceived functional value and all found it to be of significant importance.

Besides knowing the perceived tourism values, it is also important to understand the relationship between these values and the influence that the one has on the other.

3.4.3 CORRELATION ANALYSIS OF PERCEIVED TOURISM VALUES

Spearman rank order correlations were calculated between the values to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the values. A correlation 0 indicates no relationship at all, a correlation of 1.0 indicates a perfect positive correlation and a value of -1.0 indicates a perfect negative correlation. The correlations were interpreted according to the guidelines of Cohen (1988:79) that suggested that:

- small rho = 0.10–0.29;
- medium rho = 0.30–0.49; and
- large rho = 0.50–1.0.

According to Table 3.6, there is a large positive correlation between social and emotional value ($r_s=0.532$), thus implying the higher the emotional value, the higher the social value experienced by scuba divers. If diving enhances the social status, social approval, self-image and social expectations of the divers, it will also lead to strengthening of friendships and relationships. Social and emotional value are very closely entwined and were thus considered as one in the emotions associated with a specific atmosphere influencing value perceptions (Babin & Attaway, 2000:93).

A large positive correlation exists between functional value and epistemic value ($r_s=0.521$). The better the quality of the reef, the higher the perceptions of value for money, prices and service, the higher the value attached to novelty, broadening of knowledge and arousing curiosity. It is also evident that various smaller positive correlations exist between the values, indicating that these values are related to each other. Thus, all these values are important in providing a complete valued experience to the scuba divers.

Table 3.6: Spearman Rank Order Correlations between Perceived Tourism Value Factors

		Emotional	Functional	Social	Risk	Epistemic
Emotional	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.260*	.532**	.521**	.419**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	386	383	384	381	384
Functional	Correlation Coefficient	.260*	1.000	.226*	.257*	.521***
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	383	383	383	380	383
Social	Correlation Coefficient	.532***	.226*	1.000	.370**	.437**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	384	383	384	381	384
Risk	Correlation Coefficient	0.521***	.257*	.370**	1.000**	.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	381	380	381	381	381
Epistemic	Correlation Coefficient	.419**	.521***	.437**	.355**	1.000**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	384	383	384	381	385
	Correlation Coefficient	.275**	.214**	.191**	.240**	.205*

* small $r_s = .10-.29$; ** medium $r_s = .30-.49$; *** large $r_s = .50-1.0$.

3.5 FINDINGS

The following findings were recorded:

1. Firstly, it was found that the main scuba diving market for Sodwana Bay comprises single, middle-aged, Afrikaans-speaking men, who are well educated, earn a high income, originate from Gauteng and have been to Sodwana Bay before. The current market is loyal to this destination and shows commitment to diving at Sodwana Bay. However, it should perhaps be noted that Garrod and Gössling (2008:31) indicated that diving tourists vary widely in to their demographic backgrounds and socio-economic status.
2. Secondly, the following five tourism values were identified for scuba divers:
 - Emotional value;
 - Functional value;
 - Social value;
 - Perceived Risk value; and
 - Epistemic (novelty) value.

This agrees with the studies done by Sheth *et al.* (1991:161), Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) and Hall *et al.* (2001:350). Therefore, the value of the added items should not be underestimated.

3. Thirdly, it was evident that epistemic value was rated the most important perceived value to scuba diving tourists. This indicates that scuba divers are eager to gain more knowledge, novelty and 'curiosity' through scuba diving activities. Scuba diving in itself is novel, as divers never know what to expect even from the same diving site. Every dive is different and many factors, such as the weather, visibility, scuba crew, dive master, equipment used and destination of the dive site, all have an influence on the type of diving expedition experienced. In agreement with this particular finding, the study done by Williams and Soutar (2000:1451) showed that epistemic value emerged as a key component of the tourism experience. Pre-tour epistemic value perceptions were evidenced by consumers

choosing the tour to do something 'different' and consumers, in their satisfaction evaluations of the tour, referred it to regularly (Williams & Soutar, 2000:1419).

4. Fourthly, functional value was rated the second most important value. This infers that scuba divers who visit Sodwana Bay do not mind paying higher prices should they feel that they will receive value for their money, that the quality of marine life is good, the prices are fair, the quality of service is good and there is decent accessibility to the site. The overall diving experiences should offer value for money and be of good quality. Functional value, as described by Sheth *et al.* (1991:160), is the perceived utility acquired from an alternatives capacity for functional, utilitarian, or physical performance.
5. Finally, notable correlations exist between the perceived tourism value factors as it was found that divers who consider emotional value as being important also consider social value and risk value to be very important. Divers to whom functional value is important also consider epistemic value important.

3.6 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Since Sodwana Bay has been rated as the 20th best dive site in the world (Scuba Travel, 2012:online), the following managerial implications could perhaps be applied to similar marine environments that also host scuba diving activities:

- The diver profile of scuba divers to Sodwana Bay is very specific and indicative of a niche-market that shows potential. More effective marketing campaigns and material can be developed by focusing on this niche. To further attract and increase the current market, it is important to focus on Gauteng and utilise the media in that province. This market is well-educated and high-income earners, and therefore the more 'formal' media such as business magazines and selected newspapers could serve as marketing media. Since these are loyal visitors who have been to Sodwana Bay before and do not mind travelling long distances, managers could offer reward discounts after a given number of

visits per year, thus rewarding visitors for their loyalty and encouraging return visits and positive word-of-mouth.

- Based on the second finding, scuba divers perceive epistemic value as the most important value. Therefore, scuba divers seem eager to gain more knowledge, novelty and curiosity through scuba diving activities, and so these aspects need to be highlighted in marketing efforts. Marketing strategies can focus on novelty for tourists/scuba divers, through advertising exciting packages that emphasise the novelty of scuba diving. It is important to create an image of novelty and uniqueness. This should not be difficult as every dive is different. Since Sodwana Bay has the facilities to host a variety of different activities, scuba diving managers should take advantage of the opportunities offered by incorporating them into their dive packages. Sodwana Bay has the facilities to host activities such as snorkelling, trips to Sibaya Lake and Kosi Bay, night drives, watching turtles on the dunes at night, star gazing, hiking and quad biking. By adding these activities and offering scuba divers something different in the packages, the divers' satisfaction levels will be heightened and recommendations of the dive site will be more likely as it becomes perceived as novel and different. By including the quest for knowledge, challenge and novelty, scuba diving tourists are more likely to be attracted to the marine destination advertised.
- Based on the third finding, it can be deduced that scuba diving tourists perceive functional value to be of importance. Therefore, managers should focus on high quality maintenance at marine destinations, excellent maintenance of scuba diving equipment and boats, efficient transport to the beach and high levels of service delivery, as this will ensure that visitors feel they are receiving value for money. In addition to the recommendations made for managers, marketers should aim to advertise a marine destination as a tourism product offering value for money where the quality of marine life is good, prices are fair, the quality of service is good, and that offers good accessibility to the site. By maintaining and ensuring these aspects, customer satisfaction will be unambiguous.

- Based on the fourth finding, it is clear that divers who experience emotional value as important also consider social value and risk value to be very important. Thus, marketing initiatives that focus on the emotional aspects of scuba diving should also focus on social value and on reducing perceived risk value, as these three values (Emotional, Social and Perceived Risk) are inter-dependent on each other. Therefore, marketers should enhance the following value aspects in their marketing strategies:
 - Emotional Aspects: scuba diving enhances my social status; my self-image; makes me unique; helps me to meet social expectations; makes me belong to a certain group.
 - Social Aspects: scuba diving strengthens my friendships and enhances my relationships with others.
 - Perceived Risk values: recommendations made by dive operators, experts, friends or promotion. The value of recommendations from family and friends should not be underestimated. Hence, the delivery of a high level of service quality for each diver is imperative. This can be achieved by dive instructors building good relationships with present clients and thus ensuring that their referrals will be positive. New scuba divers are especially vulnerable in this area as they are not sure what to expect, and so perceive the recommendations of friends, family and dive experts as very important.
- Divers to whom functional value is important also consider epistemic value important. Thus, divers do not mind paying high prices if the novelty of the dive experience offered is high. These two values are linked and should be promoted together.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to identify the perceived tourism values of scuba diving tourists at Sodwana Bay. The findings indicate five distinct tourism values of which perceived epistemic value and perceived functional value are the most important values. The importance of perceived value should not be underestimated and tourism destinations, such as scuba diving sites, should

be aware of the total value created by the experiences. Research in this regard should be undergone on a regular basis to keep current with the changing needs of the divers. Marketing initiatives should focus on utilising these aspects to highlight to visitors what total value is, and how it can be achieved in this marine environment to ensure optimal consumer satisfaction. It is clear that tourists are value-driven and diving sites such as Sodwana Bay must be aware of this, especially in the current, very competitive, marine environment. It can also be concluded that Sodwana Bay attracts a very well defined market that can be further developed. However, new and potentially additional markets should be sought through research to ensure the long-term sustainability of the resort. Even regular divers want new experiences and seek to gain new knowledge. This is something that comes naturally at diving sites such as Sodwana Bay where no two dives are the same.

CHAPTER 4

Factors influencing Perceived Tourism Value

‘What people really desire are not products, but satisfying experiences. Experiences are attained through activities. In order that activities may be carried out, physical objects or the services of human beings are usually needed. Here lies the connecting link between man’s inner world and the outer world of economic activity. People want products because they want the experience-bringing services which they hope the product will render.’

Abbott 1995:40

ABSTRACT:

Perceived value has been recognised as a definite priority to give a destination, such as a marine destination, a competitive edge. The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) has indicated that there are 20 million certified divers worldwide to date. With the rapid increase in the number of registered scuba divers worldwide, competition levels among small scuba diving

companies are high. It is thus important to understand the value tourists experience at diving sites but more than that, it is important to identify the factors influencing the perceptions of value. This will enable thereafter these small scuba diving companies and sites to become preferred options by providing a more enhanced experience for their clients. The purpose of this research is to determine the factors that influence the perceived tourism values of scuba divers in a Marine Protected Environment, Sodwana Bay situated in the iSimangaliso Nature Reserve, South Africa. To achieve this, a quantitative study was conducted by means of questionnaires (n=402) after which One-Way Analyses of Variance were done between the perceived values and selected variables. It was found that language, province, marital status, income and certain media influence value perceptions. These factors should be considered when strategizing product and marketing planning for marine environments and, specifically, diving destinations.

Keywords: Perceived Tourism Value, Tourism Marketing, Scuba Diving, Socio-Demographic Variables and Media

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Jennings (2007:1) stated at the commencement of the twenty-first century, that a wide range of niche tourism, sport, leisure and recreation experiences provided tourists, sportspersons, people at leisure and recreationists with substantial choices how they could spend their non-work time. Such niches include adventure tourism, sport tourism, recreational tourism, marine tourism and national park tourism (Jennings, 2007:1). Dive tourism is one of these niches, and scuba diving has now been recognised as one of the fastest growing types of dive tourism in the world (Orams, 1999:10). It is thus important that tourism marketers understand the behaviour and preferences of the diving tourists.

Tourists attracted to nature-based areas are in search of an adventure holiday which, according to Travel and Tourism Analyst (Segments, 1992:38), can be defined as a holiday that contains an element of personal challenge, through controlled risk, daring and/or excitement, often in an inaccessible (wilderness) environment. Scuba diving, according to Meisel and Cottrell (2003:393), fits this definition and has grown to become a very popular activity.

Scuba diving is also a highly sought-after activity in South Africa, whose coastline stretches over 3 000km (Tinley, 1985:10), thus making marine tourism a highly competitive industry in this country. Small enterprises are greatly dependent on tourists for survival and so it is imperative that they provide satisfying experiences. To facilitate this, they should seek knowledge of the dive market in general (Meisel & Cotrell, 2003:393). Divers will return and recommend their providers to others if the divers experienced value. These word-of-mouth referrals can lead to a competitive advantage (Gallarza & Soura, 2008:16). This will assist product owners to continue attracting and satisfying the needs of current and potential divers. It is not merely important to understand the perceived values, it is also important to determine the factors influencing these perceptions that should inform future marketing strategies.

This chapter aims to reveal the relationships between socio-demographic variables, as well as the media factors influencing perceived value. Such knowledge will help product owners to market

efficiently and effectively while enhancing the diver experience through various perceived values (emotional value, social value, functional value, perceived risk value and epistemic value).

This chapter is divided as follows: a literature review focussing on perceived value, socio-demographic and media variables is followed by the method of research, the results, the findings, their implications and conclusions drawn from the results of the research.

4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Value is in many ways abstract, intangible, difficult to understand and measure. However, most decisions made by tourists are based on their perceptions of value, which indicates the importance of understanding this concept. Perceptions of value are not created in isolation but are influenced by a number of factors. The following section reviews the marketing literature related to the perceived value construct, as well as to the factors that can influence these value perceptions.

4.2.1 PERCEIVED VALUE AS A TOOL FOR MARKETING

Perceived value was labelled as the new marketing mania and the way to sell in the 1990's (Sinha & De Sarbo, 1998:236). It proved to be of continuing importance into the twenty-first century (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:203). In 2006, Kotler and Armstrong (2010:4) defined marketing as managing profitable customer relationships. Mostert and du Plessis (2007:5) offered that businesses must attract new customers by promising superior value and retain current customers by delivering superior satisfaction. In 2010, Kotler and Armstrong (2010:19) defined marketing as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and values with others. Today, marketing is about customers (which could be individuals or organisations): how to find them, how to satisfy them, how to keep them (George, 2001:3) and how to influence their perceptions.

Kotler and Keller (2006:185) defined perception as a process through which individuals receive, organise and interpret information inputs to create a meaningful and coherent picture of the world.

Therefore, the concept of perceived value plays an important role in tourism marketing (Holbrook, 1999:xiii; Cronin, Brandy & Hult, 2000:194).

When buying a tourism experience, a customer pays to be able to spend time in a tourist destination and enjoy a series of memorable events, which the enterprises “set on display” (Pine & Gilmore, 1999:154). This changing construct of perceived value has been identified as one of the most important measures for gaining a competitive edge for any tourism product (Gallaraza & Soura, 2008:16). A number of studies have found that there is indeed a positive relationship between perceived value and repurchasing of products (Parasuraman, 1997:154; Petrick, 2004:29). Perceived value can be seen as a comparison between what customers get and what they give, thus suggesting that value is a comparison of benefits and sacrifices (Zeithaml, 1988:14). Richins (1994:504) suggests that value could be derived from the consumption experiences associated with objects. Perceived value is thus seen as a dynamic variable, experienced before purchase, at the moment of purchase, at the time of use and after use (Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodrigues & Moliner, 2006:394).

Boksberger and Melsen (2011:233) stated that the perceived value of services is a combined assessment of consumers’ perceptions of benefits and sacrifices, including quality and price, for a variety of perceived value dimensions with original behavioural intentions and customer satisfaction playing a role in overall evaluation (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011:233).

Thus, perceived value can be defined as:

‘the overall assessment, perceptions, mental estimates, interpretation of information or enduring beliefs of product attributes, performances and consequences of the cognitive-trade off or value received between consumers, the product source and the benefits received’.

Perceived value in tourism is of vital importance to product owners as it can assist them in enhancing the tourist’s overall experience and thus heighten their satisfaction levels, thereby ensuring return visits and positive word-of-mouth references.

Lin and Haung (2008:223) cited that travel destinations are affected by many factors, such as mass media advertisements, promotions by travel agencies and airlines, peer travel experiences and personal preference - to name but a few. Since various factors pose an influence on the way in which tourists perceive the tourism value of a product/service, these factors need to be examined in order to optimise perceptions of value at a marine destination.

Measuring and understanding the perceived values of tourists can bring about various benefits including improved marketing and customer satisfaction. Various models have been developed to test the perceived values of clients in retail and marketing settings (for example, Zeithaml, 1988; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Sheth, Norman & Gross, 1991; Oliver, 1996; Sweeney, Soutar & Johnson, 1996; Patterson, Johnson & Spreng, 1997; Grewal, Monroe & Krishnan, 1998; Oh, 1999; Oliver, 1999; Cronin, Brandy & Hult, 2000; Caruana, Money & Berthon, 2000; Tam, 2000; Oh, 2000; McDougall & Lévesque, 2000; Teas & Aragwal, 2000 and Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) and in tourism settings (for example, Kashyap & Bojanic, 2000; Oh, 2003; Petrick, 2003; Al-Sabbath, Ekinici & Riley, 2004; Gallaraza & Soura, 2006; Jamal, Othman & Muhammad, 2011 and Lee, Benale, Yoon & Kim, 2012). None of these studies, though, focuses on the perceived values experienced by scuba diving tourists at a marine destination.

In order to measure these values, this study made use of the PERVAL scale as developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211). This PERVAL scale (Sweeney *et al.*, 2001:211) was developed in 2001 to:

'assess customers' perceptions of the value of a consumer durable good at brand level'.

The measure was developed for use in a retail purchase situation to determine which perceived values drove purchase attitude and behaviour. As this study aims to identify the perceived values that drive scuba divers to purchase a dive experience at Sodwana Bay, the PERVAL scale (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:211) is well suited. However, one modification was needed, namely, perceived risk value as introduced by Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:4). Hence, the five perceived values which were tested in this study are emotional value, social value, functional

value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:211), perceived-risk value (Hall *et al.*, 2001:4) and epistemic value (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160).

4.2.2 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Saayman (2006:91) defined socio-demographic characteristics as being age, education, gender, family size, occupation, income, social class and religion. Page and Connell (2009:79) indicated that these characteristics, as well as marital status, amount of disposable income, place of residence and other factors such as consumer interest in travel, directly affect travel behaviour. Page and Connell (2009:79) adds that consumer (tourist) behaviour concerns the way tourists, as purchasers of products and services, behave in terms of spending, their attitudes and values towards what they buy. Woodside and Lynsonski (1989:14) agree with Page and indicate that tourists' perceptions of a destination are influenced by destination attributes and traveller variables such as age, income, past experiences and personal values.

Many travel decision-making models (for example, Woodside & Lysonski, 1989; Um & Crompton, 1990; Stabler, 1995) show that the individuals' personal characteristics, such as gender, age, occupation, education and social class, are internal inputs that influence the perceptions of places. Each of these variables is discussed below:

Age: Baloglu and McCleary (1999:875) found that an individual's age influences their perceived image of various tourist destinations. Mostert and du Plessis (2007:121) showed that the need for various products, as well as the usage thereof, is often linked to a consumer's age and, as people move through the family life cycle, their needs and wants constantly change. Oh, Cheng, Lehto and O'Leary (2004:311) found a direct link between age and spending behaviour where the mature sector of the market tends to spend more. Anderson and Littrell (1995:328) found that consumers opt for different souvenirs at different ages, and that their preferences were associated with different tourism styles. Steyn (2010:ii) found that different tendencies occurred when analysing the relationship between respondents' perceptions and age. It is thus clear that age influences travel behaviour and travel decisions, which are directly linked to perceptions of value.

Scuba diving as an activity has historically been preferred, largely, by younger people (WTO, 2001:85).

Gender: Diep and Sweeney (2008:59) indicated that gender differences influence consumer evaluations and that personal material possessions tend to be more important to men for functional reasons, but more important to woman for symbolic reasons. Lam and Hsu (2006:589) found that women were more likely to visit a spa and health destinations than men were. A report by the World Tourism Organisation stated that scuba diving has historically been largely male-orientated (WTO, 2001:85). This is often ascribed to the physical demands involved in scuba diving (Woodside & Lynsonski, 1989:14).

Language: In a study done by Steyn (2010:ii), it was found that respondents speaking an African language as their home language seemed to differ from English- and Afrikaans-speaking respondents in terms of perception towards textile product labels. However, no other related studies could be found indicating the influence of language on consumer behaviour.

Marital status/ family size: In a study done by Tosun that aimed to investigate resident's perceptions of tourism impacts on a Turkish town, it was noted that respondents' marital status had an influence on perceptions (Tosun, 2002:238). The needs of families will differ depending on the number of people in the family, thus forming a natural segmentation method (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:121). MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997:559) analysed how the visual content of tourist advertising material affected the formation of image, and reached the conclusion that an individual's marital status does not affect the perceived image.

Income: Consumers usually buy products based on their level of income (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:122). According to Burke and Resnick (2000:42) and Laws (1991:46), income will influence whether or not people travel, the amount of money spent on holiday, frequency of travel, the destination and the mode of transport chosen. Laws (1991:46) stated that income is an indicator of economic welfare and peoples' discretionary spending power. Zimmer, Brayley and Searly (1995:8) found that income influenced a traveller's decision to travel. Lam and Hsu (2006:589)

stated that customers' wants are influenced by their income and that it is an indication of their buying power. Similar findings were reported by Kattiyapornpong and Miller (2008:358) who found that destination choice, usage of accommodation and transportation each relate to differences in economic status and to discretionary income available for travelling.

Level of Education: Baloglu and McCleary (1999:875) found that an individual's level of education also influenced the perceived image of various tourist destinations. Mostert and du Plessis (2007:121) indicated that education could be used successfully when conducting marketing by considering the consumer's highest qualification. Zimmer *et al.* (1995:8) found that education influenced a traveller's decision to travel. Burke and Resnick (2000:42) stated that there is a general perception that higher educated people are more likely to travel and that education levels can be associated with certain types of travel. The educational status of scuba diving participants tends to be higher than average, although this is probably related with the close correlation between education and income than with any fundamental causal factor linked specifically to educational achievement (Garrod & Gössling, 2008:33).

Place of origin: This relates to the geographic area where visitors originate from. Chen and Kerstetter (1999:256), found a relationship between the perceived image and the tourists' country of origin.

Number of visits: Statistically significant differences were found with numbers of visits and companions on international tourists' travelling characteristics when both American and Japanese tourists visited night markets (Chang & Chiang, 2006:391).

Garrod and Gössling (2008:31) encapsulated the above stating that diving tourists differ according to their demographic backgrounds and socio-economic status, their previous experience of diving and aspirations for the diving holiday, their needs and expectations, the ways in which they approach the diving tourism product and other aspects (Garrod & Gössling, 2008:31).

It can be understood from the discussion that socio-demographic characteristics influence travel behaviour and decisions. However, the influence of these characteristics on perceived tourism value is not yet fully explored. It is clear, however, that socio-demographic characteristics influence travel and travel behaviour but the unanswered question is whether certain socio-demographic variables influence tourists' perceived values?

4.2.3 MARKETING MEDIA

Information inputs are sensations received through hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste (Pride & Ferrell, 2011:241) and are delivered to consumers through different marketing media (for example, social media, television and print media). With the variety of marketing media available, it is important to understand which media work best for a specific market and how that media influences perceptions. Consumers are bombarded by thousands of different advertisements daily, thus it is important to target the right market using the correct marketing medium to ensure that the product is advertised successfully. As tourism is an intangible service and a product that is delivered to consumers/ tourists in the form of an experience, perceived values can be utilised with the intention of maximising sensations through advertising.

Advertising aspires to persuade consumers to buy the product or service advertised by providing information on the product or service, or by creating a positive feeling towards a brand or business (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:221). Arens and Shaefer (2007:4) define advertising as:

the structured and composed non-personal communication of information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products (goods, services and ideas) by identified sponsors through various media.

Holloway (2004:197) had already noted that information and communication technology, as it is now known, was playing a key role in all elements of the marketing mix, and the new term recognises the importance of communication in the interface between a business and its customers. Electronic, or 'online' communications, have become affordable and practical for even the smallest SMEs (Small Micro Enterprises) and no sector of the travel industry is unaffected by

this revolution (Lin & Haung, 2008:223). Since marketing media can influence the value perceived before the visit, it is important to create the appropriate message for the selected market.

Television is widely used as a form of advertising for mass marketing and has the ability to show tourists the product and value by using pictures and sounds, thus making it a very useful medium in advertising (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:222). Radio too has been recognised as one of the best methods of reaching a mass audience as more people own radios than televisions (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:224). Print media such as newspapers and magazines allows marketers to choose the best, most specific, option for a specific target market (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:226) and the visual attractiveness and longevity of these media create many opportunities for effective advertising.

The World Wide Web and social networks such as Twitter and Facebook provide useful, reliable travel information as well as effective and integrated sets of attractive features to entice visitors to the destination. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) see Social Media as media that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The value of word-of-mouth as an informal marketing medium should not be underestimated and is, in many cases, considered as the most important marketing medium for the tourism industry. This is largely due to its credibility to family and friends.

Travel destinations are affected by numerous factors, such as mass media advertisements, promotions by travel agencies and airlines, peer travel experiences and personal preference (Lin & Haung 2008:223). However, some marketing media might be more effective than others for influencing scuba divers. This leads to the question whether a certain marketing medium influences tourists' perceptions of values more than do others?

The following section focuses on the method of research.

4.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

To identify the value of tourism in a marine environment through scuba diving activities, a destination-based visitor survey was undertaken at Sodwana Bay in KwaZulu-Natal from 29 March to 8 April 2012. The questionnaire consisted of four sections:

Section A - Demographic information;

Section B - Perceived values;

Section C - Travel motivations; and

Section D - Media preferences.

For the purpose of this chapter, sections A, B and D will be used in the analysis.

The survey period of ten days allowed for the collation of data and research during which 500 questionnaires were distributed among scuba divers on the beaches and at various campsites. Krejcie and Morgan (1970:608) indicated that for general research activities with a population (N) of 1 000 000 respondents, the recommended sample size (S) should be 384. The most recent and available data which was available from Emzenvelo KZN Wildlife (2012:2) indicated that 5 885 dives were launched in March 2011 and 8 386 dives in April 2012, but that Sodwana Bay only received an average of 1 635 divers per month in 2011. To ensure definite, adequate and relevant analysis, it was decided that 500(n) questionnaires would be distributed amongst the scuba divers at Sodwana Bay by means of availability sampling. Divers who were willing to participate in the research and uphold honesty were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire. After completion of the survey, 402 (n) questionnaires were fully completed and usable.

The analysis of data was divided into three stages. Firstly, a demographic profile of scuba divers to Sodwana Bay was compiled. After capturing the data, it was then statistically analysed and processed by means of descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20.0). Secondly, a factor analysis was done to determine the value factors (See Chapter 3). Thirdly ANOVAs and t-tests were done to explore the effect of selected socio-demographic characteristics as well as various marketing media on the perceived value items identified for diving.

- **ANOVA:** ANalysis Of VAriance is a technique used when there are more than two independent groups that need to be compared on a single quantitative measure or score. Pieterse and Maree (2007:223) indicate that an ANOVA is appropriate if the quantitative variable is normally distributed in each population and the spread (variance) of the variable is the same in all populations. Significant differences are visible when the p-value is <0.000 . In the case of this study, ANOVAs were done to explore the effect of language; province of residence; marital status and income on perceived tourism value.
- **t-tests:** This technique, according to Pieterse and Maree (2007:223), is used when two independent groups need to be compared, based on their average score on a quantitative variable. t-tests were conducted in order to determine if there were any correlations to be found between gender and media aspects (such as websites; shows; friends; radio; T.V., magazines & social networks) on perceived tourism values.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results are divided into two sections. Firstly, the demographic profile of the respondents is discussed. This is followed by the results of the socio-demographic characteristics and those of the marketing media.

4.4.1

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

To reach the objectives of this research, it was important to understand the demographical characteristics of the scuba divers. A summary of the demographic profile of scuba divers visiting Sodwana Bay is given in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Description of survey respondents (N = 402)

Socio-demographic variables	Variable	Percentage
Gender	Male	62%
	Female	38%
Home language	English	45%
	Afrikaans	50%
	Other: Dutch, French, German	5%
Age	Younger than 19	8%
	20-30	32%
	31-40	25%
	41-50	27%
	Older than 51	8%
	Average age	34 years
Marital Status	Married	39%
	Not married	46%
	Divorced	6%
	Widow/er	1%
	Living together	8%
Level of education	No school	1%
	Matric (Grade 12)	31%
	Diploma/ Degree	32%
	Post-graduate	14%
	Professional	14%

	Other	8%
Annual Gross Income	R50 000 or less	17%
	R50 001- R100 000	9%
	R100 001 – R200 000	13%
	R200 001 – R300 000	15%
	R300 001- R400 000	9%
	More than R500 000	37%
Province of origin	KwaZulu Natal	17%
	Gauteng	56%
	Eastern Cape	1%
	Limpopo	3%
	North West	6%
	Mpumalanga	5%
	Northern Cape	1%
	Free State	1%
	Western Cape	5%
Average number of people paying for		2 people
Average number of visits to Sodwana Bay		3.9 times
Average length of stay		5.1 nights

Source: Author's own compilation

It is clear that the average diver is a single, young, Afrikaans speaking man, who obtains either a matric certificate, or diploma/ degree, earns a high income and originates from Gauteng. In general, these divers are loyal visitors who visit the MPA regularly, stay for longer than a weekend and are willing to drive significant distances (for example, Johannesburg – Sodwana Bay, 583km)

to reach this destination. Thus, their knowledge and opinion of the scuba activities at the park can be seriously considered and will be of great value towards the research done in this study.

4.4.2 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERCEIVED TOURISM VALUES AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

In this section, attention is given to the relationships between language, province or origin, marital status, income and perceived tourism values. The ANOVAs and t-tests conducted discovered no significant correlations between ages, gender, number of times dived, number of nights stayed in the area, travel group size or previous visits to the perceived tourism values. However, the following variables revealed significant differences on perceived tourism values:

4.4.2.1 COMPARISON BY LANGUAGE

The ANOVA revealed significant differences for perceived emotional and perceived risk value. Afrikaans (M=2.80) speaking respondents considered perceived emotional value more important than did respondents who spoke other languages (M=2.32) including Dutch, French and German. It seems that social status, enhancement of self-image and belonging to a group are more important to Afrikaans-speaking divers. As product experiences are influenced by emotional states, emotional value can be defined as a product's ability to arouse feelings or affective states that, if utilised correctly, can lead to fully satisfying the needs of consumers through appropriate marketing and management strategies.

Afrikaans-speaking (M=3.42) respondents also considered 'perceived risk value' more important than did respondents who spoke other languages (M=2.23). These respondents minimise the risk of making a wrong holiday decision by consulting family, friends and certain marketing media (See Table 4.2). Perceived risk value was introduced by Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:4) and they defined it as utility derived from the factors that reduce risk and are highly sought after.

Thus, when marketing is aimed at the Afrikaans-speaking market, emotional and perceived risk value aspects need to be addressed in marketing material. Therefore, the value created at the destination must not be under-estimated as that influences the word-of-mouth messages given to family and friends.

Table 4.2: ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Language

Language	ENGLISH (n=182)	AFRIKAANS (n=198)	OTHER (n=20)	F-VALUE	P-VALUE
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value		
Perceived Emotional Value	2.64	2.80	2.32	4.90	0.007*
Perceived Functional Value	3.29	3.29	3.03	2.53	0.080
Perceived Social Value	3.15	3.10	2.76	2.38	0.093
Perceived Risk Value	2.67	2.76	2.23	4.85	0.008*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.46	3.42	3.17	2.73	0.066

p<0.001*

Source: Author's own compilation

4.4.2.2 COMPARISON BY PROVINCE

Significant differences were found for perceived emotional value; perceived functional value; perceived risk value and province. In all three cases, respondents from the Eastern Cape rated the values lower than did respondents from other provinces.

Perceived emotional value received the highest rating from respondents who live in the Western Cape (M=3.03) and the lowest rating from those who live in the Eastern Cape (M=2.30).

Perceived functional value was perceived highest by those respondents who reside in the Western Cape (M=3.46) and the lowest by those who reside in the Eastern Cape (M=3.13). Respondents from the Western Cape consider the role of scuba diving in enhancing social status, acquiring social approval and the enhancement of the self-image more important than did Eastern Cape respondents. Western Cape respondents also considered the quality of coral reefs, receiving value for money, fair prices more important than did respondents from the Eastern Cape. The Western Cape is a more affluent province, which might explain the differences above.

Table 4.3: ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Province

PROVINCE	GAUTENG (n=225)	KWAZULU- NATAL (n=68)	WESTERN- CAPE (n=19)	LIMPOPO (n=11)	MPUMALANGA (n=20)	NORTH-WEST (n=26)	EASTERN-CAPE (n=22)	F-VALUE	P-VALUE
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value		
Perceived Emotional Value	2.66	2.85	3.03	2.60	2.63	2.94	2.30	2.48	0.022*
Perceived Functional Value	3.23	3.41	3.46	3.25	3.20	3.45	3.13	2.49	0.022*
Perceived Social Value	3.07	3.23	3.30	3.00	3.15	3.32	2.92	1.09	0.368
Perceived Risk Value	2.68	2.88	2.65	2.47	2.61	2.96	2.28	2.49	0.022*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.38	3.57	3.65	3.44	3.45	3.43	3.35	1.69	0.120

p<0.001*

Source: Author's own compilation

The ANOVA indicates that perceived risk value is important to people who live in the North-West Province (M=2.96) while people living in the Eastern Cape perceive it as being less important (M=2.28). Respondents from North West value recommendations from experts, diver operators, friends and family more highly than do people from the Eastern Cape. This might be due to respondents from the North West Province not being so familiar with dive sites than are people living closer to the sea. Research found that when considering intangible products, factors reducing risk are highly sought.

Thus, when marketing efforts concentrate on attracting people from the Western Cape, perceived emotional value and perceived functional value should be enhanced and, when advertising in the North West Province perceived risk value needs to be utilised, as these were rated highest by those respondents living in the stated provinces.

4.4.2.3. COMPARISON BY MARITAL STATUS

Table 4.4: ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Marital Status

MARITAL STATUS	MARRIED (n= 153)	SINGLE (n= 184)	DIVORCED (n= 22)	LIVING TOGETHER (n=33)	F-VALUE	P-VALUE
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value		
Perceived Emotional Value	2.60	2.79	2.57	2.71	1.92	0.124
Perceived Functional Value	3.21	3.37	3.13	3.29	3.70	0.011*
Perceived Social Value	3.13	3.11	3.09	3.16	0.06	0.979
Perceived Risk	2.66	2.77	2.75	2.45	2.05	0.105

Value						
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.40	3.48	3.29	3.37	1.43	0.232

p<0.001*

Source: Author's own compilation

The above ANOVA conducted on marital status indicates that single respondents (M=3.37) consider perceived functional value to be of more importance than do respondents who are divorced (M=3.13) (Table 4.4). As scuba diving is an expensive sport with many additional costs (for example, transport, entrance fees, equipment, accommodation, and training), it is perhaps understandable that single respondents rated perceived functional value higher than did other marital status categories as they have to carry all the costs themselves. They place a high premium on value for money.

4.4.2.4. COMPARISON BY INCOME

Table 4.5 indicates that the most significant differences were found on income, specifically on perceived emotional value; perceived functional value; perceived social value and perceived risk value. Respondents who earned between R100 000 – R200 000 per annum (M=3.04) considered perceived emotional value to be more important than did those respondents who earned between R200 000 – R 300 000, annually (M=2.51). Perceived functional value is perceived higher by the respondents who earned more than R500 000 per annum (M=3.50) than did those who earned an annual income of R300 001 – R400 000 (M=3.17). Respondents earning an annual income of R100 001 – R200 000 (M=3.36) rated perceived social value higher than did those earning between R200 000 and R 300 000 (M=2.94) annually. Perceived risk value was rated highest by respondents who earned an annual income of R100 001 – R200 000 (M=2.90) and lowest by those respondents earning more than R500 000 (M=2.45).

Consumers usually buy products because of their level of income (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:122). Laws (1991:46) stated that income is an indication of economic welfare and

peoples' discretionary spending power. Kattiyapornpong and Miller (2008:358) found that destination choice, usage of accommodation and transportation relate to differences in economic status and in the amount of discretionary income available for travelling. Zimmer *et al.* (1995:8) found that income and education influenced travellers' decision to travel.

Table 4.5: ANOVA for comparison of perceived values by Income

INCOME	R50 000 OR LESS (n=62)	R50 001 – R100 000 (n=31)	R100 001 – R200 000 (n=48)	R200 000 – R 300 000 (n=55)	R300 001 – R400 000 (n=133)	MORE THAN R500 000 (n=31)	F-VALUE	P-VALUE
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value	Mean Value		
Perceived Emotional Value	2.78	2.89	3.04	2.51	2.61	2.67	3.81	0.002*
Perceived Functional Value	3.34	3.24	3.35	3.35	3.17	3.50	3.24	0.007*
Perceived Social Value	3.17	3.26	3.36	2.94	3.05	3.12	2.15	0.058
Perceived Risk Value	2.83	2.80	2.90	2.63	2.61	2.45	2.45	0.033*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.51	3.44	3.54	3.38	3.37	3.54	1.55	0.173

p<0.05*

Source: Author's own compilation

The income group R100 001 – R200 000 rated perceived emotional value, perceived social value and perceived risk value higher than any other income group. Though they do not earn a high income, they enjoy engaging in this expensive sport as it fulfils the emotional and social attributes associated with scuba diving. As money is limited, they need reassurance from experts and friends/family before embarking on a diving trip. They also need the reassurance that there are no hidden costs, and that they will still receive value for money. These latter two need to be emphasised when marketing scuba diving at Sodwana Bay to this target group.

4.4.3 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERCEIVED TOURISM VALUES AND MEDIA VARIABLES

The following t-tests reveal the results of the effect of selected marketing media on perceived tourism values:

4.4.3.1 COMPARISON BY WEBSITES

Table 4.6: t-test for the comparison of perceived values by Media: Websites

<u>MEDIA</u> WEBSITES	YES (n=61)	NO (n=298)	P-VALUE
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean & St. Dev	Mean & St. Dev	
Perceived Emotional Value	2.86 (± 0.87)	2.68 (± 0.87)	0.102
Perceived Functional Value	3.40 (± 0.55)	3.25 (± 0.55)	0.029*
Perceived Social Value	3.27 (± 0.79)	3.09 (± 0.79)	0.097
Perceived Risk Value	2.95 (± 0.78)	2.64 (± 0.78)	0.002*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.59 (± 0.52)	3.40 (± 0.52)	0.011*

p<0.05*

Source: Author's own compilation.

Table 4.6 shows that significant differences were found between perceived functional value; perceived social value; perceived risk value and perceived epistemic value and websites. Respondents who answered 'Yes' to websites, rated perceived functional value (M=3.40, SD=±.55), perceived risk value (M=2.95, SD=±.78) and perceived epistemic value (M=3.59, SD=±.52) higher than did those respondents who said 'No'. It is clear that websites contributes to the creation of almost all the perceived values.

Cho and Sung (2012:221) stated that, in order to create a positive image, the destination website has to provide useful, reliable travel information, as well as an effectively integrated set of attractive features, to entice visitors to the destination. Websites should thus focus their attention on enhancing perceived values attaining to enhance perceived functional value; perceived risk value; perceived epistemic value and perceived social value, as these were rated highest. Managers can make the scuba diving experience more novel and exciting by introducing a range of activities, other than scuba diving, into their packages. This will make the websites more intriguing and unique to scuba diving experienced at Sodwana Bay.

4.4.3.2 COMPARISON BY SHOWS (FOR EXAMPLE, GET-A-WAY)

Table 4.7: t-test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Shows

MEDIA	YES	NO	P-VALUE
SHOWS (GETAWAY)	(n=29)	(n=330)	
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean & St. Dev	Mean & St. Dev	
Perceived Emotional Value	2.94 (± 0.94)	2.70 (± 0.72)	0.107
Perceived Functional Value	3.40 (± 0.58)	3.26 (± 0.48)	0.161
Perceived Social Value	3.18 (± 0.82)	3.11 (± 0.74)	0.627
Perceived Risk Value	3.08 (± 0.71)	2.66 (± 0.72)	0.002*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.49 (± 0.54)	3.43 (± 0.51)	0.557

p<0.001*

Source: Author's own compilation

With the ANOVA done to draw comparisons between perceived tourism values and shows (such as the annual Getaway show), respondents who answered 'Yes' (M=3.08, SD=±.71) rated Perceived Risk Value higher than those who said 'No' (M=2.66, SD=±.72).

The above results indicate that those respondents who encounter people at the exhibitions or friends and family, who attended such an exhibition, rated Perceived Risk the highest. This aids in reducing the risk factors involved when visiting a scuba-diving destination. This also shows the value of attending these shows as it contributes to the creation of perceived value.

4.4.3.3 COMPARISON BY FRIENDS (WORD-OF-MOUTH)

Table 4.8: t-test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Friends.

MEDIA	YES	NO	P-VALUE
FRIENDS	(n=262)	(n=97)	
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean & St. Dev	Mean & St. Dev	
Perceived Emotional Value	2.77 (± 0.71)	2.58 (± 0.79)	0.013*
Perceived Functional Value	3.26 (± 0.51)	3.31 (± 0.45)	0.458
Perceived Social Value	3.19 (± 0.71)	2.92 (± 0.82)	0.002*
Perceived Risk Value	2.77 (± 0.70)	2.46 (± 0.76)	0.002*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.46 (± 0.52)	3.35 (± 0.51)	0.075

p<0.001*

Source: Author's own compilation

Table 4.8 indicates that respondents who said 'Yes' to hearing about scuba diving from friends rated perceived emotional value (M=2.77, SD=±.71), perceived social value (M=3.19, SD=±.71), perceived risk value (M=2.77, SD=±.70) and perceived epistemic value (M=3.46, SD=±.52) higher than did those who answered 'No'.

Word-of-mouth is considered a critical factor of success in service contexts. Its importance is due to the uncertainty associated with the purchase of an intangible product and the difficulty related to the assessment of the desired result prior to the consumption of the service. Generally, word-of-mouth occurs naturally through positive consumption experiences (Lam & Hsu, 2004:463). An example of positive word-of-mouth is the recommendation made by satisfied consumers. The recommendation is an explicit encouragement to visit a service provider.

Word-of-mouth creates novelty/curiosity and the recommendations and reassurance of friends reduces perceived risk these respondents would otherwise experience. From the results, it is clear that recommendations made by friends form a need to fulfil the perceived emotional values, perceived social values and perceived risk values involved in scuba diving activities. An increase in customer satisfaction at marine destinations will ensure that good recommendations are made.

4.4.3.4 COMPARISON BY RADIO

Table 4.9 indicates that significant differences were found between perceived emotional value; perceived social value; perceived risk value and the radio. Those respondents who heard about scuba diving activities at Sodwana Bay on the radio rated perceived emotional value, (M=3.18, SD=±.95), perceived social value (M=3.59, SD=±.53) and perceived risk value (M=3.35, SD=±.64) higher than those who did not.

Table 4.9: T-test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Radio

<u>MEDIA</u>	YES	NO	P-VALUE
RADIO	(n=11)	(n=348)	
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean & St. Dev	Mean & St. Dev	
Perceived Emotional Value	3.18 (± 0.95)	2.71 (± 0.73)	0.039*
Perceived Functional Value	3.46 (± 0.76)	3.27 (± 0.48)	0.212

Perceived Social Value	3.59 (\pm 0.53)	3.10 (\pm 0.75)	0.037*
Perceived Risk Value	3.35 (\pm 0.64)	2.67 (\pm 0.72)	0.003*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.70 (\pm 0.35)	3.42 (\pm 0.52)	0.083

p<0.001*

Source: Author's own compilation

Radio has also been recognised as one of the best methods of reaching a mass audience for more people own radios than own televisions (Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:224; Belch & Belch, 2007:377).

Even though only a few of the respondents use radio, it was clear that those who did make use of this medium tend to rate the contribution to value creation highly. The social attributes accompanied with radio advertising clearly affect how importantly the respondent's rate perceived epistemic value, perceived social value and perceived risk value. Therefore, those values need to be enhanced in radio advertising, ensuring that this potential dive market will be attracted to the product by the advertising.

4.4.3.5 COMPARISON BY TV

Table 4.10: t-test for comparison of perceived values by Media: T.V.

<u>MEDIA</u>	YES	NO	P-VALUE
T.V.	(n=20)	(n=338)	
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean & St. Dev	Mean & St. Dev	
Perceived Emotional Value	2.88 (\pm 0.97)	2.71 (\pm 0.72)	0.345
Perceived Functional Value	3.38 (\pm 0.68)	3.27 (\pm 0.48)	0.328
Perceived Social Value	3.22 (\pm 0.80)	3.11 (\pm 0.75)	0.540
Perceived Risk Value	3.02 (\pm 0.77)	2.67 (\pm 0.72)	0.041*

Perceived Epistemic Value	3.52 (\pm 0.54)	3.43 (\pm 0.52)	0.437
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$p < 0.001^*$

Source: Author's own compilation

Respondents who said that they saw ($M=3.02$, $SD=\pm.77$) an advertisement or documentary about Sodwana Bay on television rated perceived risk value as more important than those who did not ($M=2.67$, $SD=\pm.72$).

As television utilises sensations such as seeing and hearing, Perceived Risk is reduced as respondents get to see first-hand what the product can deliver. This is therefore rated as important. Again, as this medium contributes to the creation of value, it is clear that risk is lowered for these respondents after viewing Sodwana Bay on television.

4.4.5.6 COMPARISON BY MAGAZINES

Table 4.11: t-test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Magazines

<u>MEDIA</u> MAGAZINES	YES (n=82)	NO (n=277)	P-VALUE
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean & St. Dev	Mean & St. Dev	
Perceived Emotional Value	2.89 (\pm 0.78)	2.67 (\pm 0.72)	0.016*
Perceived Functional Value	3.39 (\pm 0.50)	3.24 (\pm 0.49)	0.015*
Perceived Social Value	3.03 (\pm 0.77)	3.14 (\pm 0.74)	0.388
Perceived Risk Value	2.93 (\pm 0.70)	2.62 (\pm 0.72)	0.009*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.52 (\pm 0.50)	3.41 (\pm 0.52)	0.094

$p < 0.001^*$

Source: Author's own compilation

Table 4.11 indicates that there are significant differences found between perceived emotional value; perceived functional value; perceived risk value and magazines. Respondents who read about scuba diving activities at Sodwana Bay in magazines, rated perceived emotional value ($M=2.89; SD=\pm.78$), perceived functional value ($M=3.39, SD=\pm.50$) and perceived risk value ($M=2.93, SD=\pm.70$) much higher than those who did not.

The visual images and information accompanied with magazines enhance the perceived emotional value, perceived functional value and perceived risk value attributes involved in scuba diving. Sodwana Bay is clearly making an impression on those that read magazines and the advertisements have an effect on how respondents perceive this diving site.

4.4.5.7 COMPARISONS BY SOCIAL NETWORKS (such as FACEBOOK & TWITTER)

Table 4.12: t-test for comparison of perceived values by Media: Social networks (Facebook & Twitter)

<u>MEDIA</u> SOCIAL NETWORKS (FACEBOOK, TWITTER)	YES (n=30)	NO (n=329)	P-VALUE
Perceived Tourism Values	Mean & St. Dev	Mean & St. Dev	
Perceived Emotional Value	2.92 (± 0.85)	2.70 (± 0.72)	0.122
Perceived Functional Value	3.47 (± 0.59)	3.26 (± 0.48)	0.021*
Perceived Social Value	3.38 (± 0.81)	3.10 (± 0.74)	0.049*
Perceived Risk Value	3.06 (± 0.76)	2.66 (± 0.71)	0.003*
Perceived Epistemic Value	3.55 (± 0.60)	3.42 (± 0.51)	0.193

$p < 0.001^*$

Source: Author's own compilation

Table 4.12 indicates that significant differences were found between perceived functional value; perceived social value; perceived risk value and social networks. Respondents who heard about Sodwana Bay through social networks rated perceived functional value ($M=3.47$, $SD=\pm.59$), perceived social value ($M=3.38$, $SD=\pm.81$) and perceived risk value ($M=3.06$, $SD=\pm.76$) higher than those respondents who did not.

Functional value is defined as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian or physical performance (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160) and is seen as a primary driver of consumer choice. Williams and Soutar (2000:1415) indicate that perceived risk value is important because of safety issues and the planning needed to minimise risk.

Social Media has been defined as media that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61), therefore users perceive money, quality, social and risk attributes that accompany such activities as important.

4.5 FINDINGS

When analysing the factors influencing perceived value evaluations by scuba diving tourists, the following should be noted:

- It was found that age, gender, number of times visited, number of nights spend, travel group size and previous visits did not influence the identified perceived values.
- Perceived risk value was influenced by most of the variables including, language, province of residence, income, websites, magazines, shows, word-of-mouth communication, social networks, radio and television advertisements. Thus, the risk of making a mistake when deciding to visit Sodwana Bay is lowered by the use of, and exposure to, the variables mentioned above. Hall *et al.* (2001:350) found perceived risk value to be of significant importance in their study whereas Sweeney and Soutar (2001:212) found perceived functional value to be important.

- Emotional value was also influenced by most of the variables including language, province of residence, income, magazines, word-of-mouth communication and by radio and television advertisements. Emotional value includes aspects such as social status, social approval, self-image enhancement, social expectations and belonging to a certain group of people. Sweeney and Soutar (2001:212) and Jamal, Othman and Muhammad (2011:12) also tested emotional value in their studies and found it to be of significant importance when investigating consumer behaviour.
- The socio-demographic variable that had the greatest influence on the way in which scuba diving tourists perceive various values was annual income. Scuba diving is an expensive sport and this, therefore, influences the spending behaviour of scuba divers. Burke and Resnick (2000:42) and Laws (1991:46) agree with this statement and state that income will influence the amount of money tourists will spend on vacation, how often they will travel, whether or not people travel and the destination they choose to visit. Income is a factor that influences the way in which respondents perceived certain emotional, functional and risk values.
- Media variables that had the greatest influence on the way in which scuba diving tourists perceived various values were websites, recommendations made by friends, radio, magazines and social networks. Thus, these media aspects need to be utilised to their fullest potential when marketing scuba diving activities at Sodwana Bay. Even with the rapid development of social networks, the relevance of other media was also emphasised in this study.

4.6 MANAGERIAL/ MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

The following managerial implications have been derived from the above results. Since this research was conducted at one of the world's top 20 dive sites (Scuba Travel, 2012:online), these managerial implications can be applied to any scuba diving destination:

- Perceived risk value and perceived emotional values were influenced by various aspects. Care should therefore be taken when selecting marketing messages for

specific language groups, groups from different provinces, different income groups as well as for the different groups using various media. Marketers should consider these aspects when attracting a specific market.

➤ **Perceived emotional value:** As product experiences are influenced by emotional states, perceived emotional value can be defined as a product's ability to arouse feelings or affective states which, if utilised correctly, can lead to fully satisfying the needs of consumers through appropriate marketing and management strategies. This can be achieved by enhancing emotional attributes through marketing strategies.

➤ **Perceived risk value:** The following attributes each have an influence on reducing perceived risk when planning a trip to a dive site: the recommendations of a dive operator who influenced the decision to visit Sodwana Bay; the recommendations of experts who encouraged the dive expedition to Sodwana Bay; recommendations of friends who encouraged the dive expedition to Sodwana Bay; and the marketing and promotion that influenced the decision to visit Sodwana Bay. Marketers can reduce perceived risk value by incorporating a review page on Sodwana Bay's website or by inviting people to comment freely on social networks such as Facebook. This will enable potential visitors to gain reassurance from previous visitors as their feedback and reviews will help create the expectation of what can be experienced at Sodwana Bay. This will encourage high service levels as staff will understand the importance of "word-of-mouth" promotion from friends/ family or social networks and of the potential business this can bring to the destination.

- With income showing the greatest influence on the way respondents perceived the values, it is important to consider this when crafting marketing and product planning. The income group whom earn R100 001–R200 000 per annum rated three (emotional, social and risk values) of the five perceived values higher than did the other income groups. Their profile, as discussed in the results, fit the profile of the typical adventure

tourist (Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2009:225). Although they are not the highest income earners, they are prepared to spend money on adventure activities, in this case, scuba diving. When attracting this group, it is important to highlight the emotional, social and risk values in the advertising material. This is a young, dynamic group of people who seek the adrenaline, adventure; social and emotional aspects and should be attracted to become loyal visitors to Sodwana Bay. The profile of these divers can assist dive operators to offer their products in the correct market, and so attract divers who are serious about diving.

- The influence of media on the perceived risks should be utilised to its fullest potential by implementing the following:

Websites: Utilise websites to show the functional, risk and epistemic values associated with scuba diving. An attractive, professional and user friendly website with recent pictures, a review page, rates, specials/discounts, maps and relevant contact numbers is highly recommended as this will lead to reduced risk, enhanced social, functional and emotional aspects. As websites are often the first impression visitors get of a destination, marketers need to enhance the values that were perceived as being most pertinent. These are:

- **Perceived risk value:** Managers and marketers should focus on reducing perceived risk value on websites by supplying relevant contact information (for example, of scuba diving companies and the Reception at Sodwana Bay). In order to insure positive 'word-of-mouth' by dive operators, experts and friends, management needs to ensure that good relationships are maintained by dive operators, experts and promoters. Excellent service is essential such that customers leave feeling satisfied, thus resulting in positive 'word-of-mouth' and recommendations.
- **Perceived epistemic value:** A gallery of photographs should be added to the website as this will make potential clients more curious and attract them to be part of such a novel experience. Information about the marine wildlife to be found at Sodwana Bay can also be provided on websites, as this will

give potential clients the opportunity to both acquire and to broaden their knowledge.

- **Perceived social value:** Photos displayed on the website should show scuba divers engaging in social settings and having fun (for example, getting together for a “braai” or exchanging photos after a dive). This will demonstrate that scuba diving strengthens friendship and enhances relationships.

“Word-of-mouth”: Influence previous divers to spread messages of the emotional, social and novelty values of Sodwana Bay. Since “word-of-mouth” creates novelty/curiosity and the recommendations and reassurance of friends reduces the perceived risk these respondents would otherwise experience, destination managers need to ensure that their customers depart from the resort with a sense of satisfaction achieved through excellent quality service. This will encourage positive “word-of-mouth” and return visits. Sodwana Bay could implement a reward system where previous visitors could be given discounts after a specified number of trips to the reserve (the reward could even be higher for regular off-season visitors). This will give regular visitors a sense of appreciation and loyalty towards Sodwana Bay – enforcing a sense of pride and positive recommendations when telling others about the reserve. It could also encourage more visitors to make out of season bookings if they know that they will be paying less for the same opportunities.

Radio: Utilise this medium to focus on the emotional, social and risk values of the diving experience. This can be done by advertising new, exciting and different packages on the radio that include a range of different activities. Sodwana Bay hosts a variety of activities such as self-guided walking trails for nature lovers and bird enthusiasts that explore the coastal forests and dunes; snorkelling spots in the rock pools and off the beach; night tours in December and January which offer clients a unique opportunity for turtle watching (Emzemvelo KZN Wildlife, 2012:1). Scuba diving companies should advantage of these activities and incorporate them into their dive packages.

Magazines: This medium should be utilised to highlight emotional, functional and risk values. Magazine advertisements are usually printed in full colour and excellent reproduction quality is offered. Since each scuba diving company offers a slightly different experience (for example some focus on customer satisfaction and socialising while others focus on service quality), the novelty thus experienced is also different. Scuba diving companies should advertise the value that makes them unique in magazines; this will heighten expectations of specific markets. Photos displayed in magazines should portray the following messages: scuba diving enhances social status; participation in diving activities helps to acquire social approval; scuba diving enhances self-image; being a scuba diver makes people unique; scuba diving helps to meet social expectations and scuba diving makes people belong to a certain group. For example, a photograph of a group of scuba divers engaging in a social setting, having fun and relaxing, will portray such an image. Photographs displayed in magazines showing well-maintained buildings and general cleanliness at Sodwana Bay will make respondents feel that they are receiving value for money.

Social Networks (for example, Facebook and Twitter): This powerful medium should be used to highlight the functional, social and risk values. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter have been defined as media that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61). Satisfied customers can attract potential clients through positive 'word-of-mouth'. This can be done by regular updates of discount packages on websites, Facebook and other social networks. Photographs of scuba divers enjoying social activities can also be uploaded to strengthen the marketing message.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to determine the factors that influence perceived tourism values (refer to objective 3).

Using ANOVAs and t-tests, it was discovered that no correlations existed between ages; gender; number of times dived; number of nights stayed in the area, travel group size and previous visits. The socio-demographic variable that posed the greatest influence was income, while the media variables that revealed the greatest influence on perceived value were websites, radio and magazines. Therefore, it is highly recommended that marketers utilise these aspects to their advantage when advertising scuba diving destinations.

Since this research was conducted at one of the world's top 20 dive sites the findings and results can be applied to similar settings. As emotional value was rated highest in most cases, marketing strategies should focus on arousing feelings towards the wonders and excitement. This should be generated by the wonder of scuba diving and the beauty of the natural setting where Sodwana Bay is situated. Marketing managers need to maintain continuous good relationships with dive operators and experts when striving to enhance perceived risk value. This will ensure customer satisfaction that will lead to good word-of-mouth when recommendations are made to friends and family. It is also recommended that managers at Sodwana Bay maintain the facilities in an excellent condition while keeping the park neat, tidy and, above all, clean. This will make visitors feel that they are receiving value for money, enhancing perceived functional value that was the third highest value. If these values are utilised properly, the scuba diving experience will be enhanced and visitors to Sodwana Bay will be well satisfied, ensuring return visits and good word-of-mouth recommendations to potential clients. This will lead to small scuba diving companies and marine destinations gaining a competitive edge through improved service levels, better maintenance and management of the needs of their clients.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and recommendations

‘Everything we do starts with knowing a client’s business inside out. That’s the key to anticipating their needs, to solving their problems, to bringing them opportunities they might not find on their own’

Anonymous

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aimed to investigate the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination, through assessing and evaluating the following five perceived values: emotional value, social value, functional value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:211), perceived-risk value (Hall *et al.*, 2001:352) and epistemic value (Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160). In order to achieve the goal, four objectives had to be realised. Each objective is listed below and briefly discussed:

The first objective was to contextualise marine tourism and perceived value. This objective was achieved in Chapter 2. In this section, a review of the marketing literature on the perceived value construct was analysed. It was discovered that only limited literature existed on the perceived value construct in the Tourism Industry, especially in the case of Marine

Tourism, where various marine activities such as scuba diving take place. Since scuba diving is a highly popular sport that is growing globally, competition levels amongst diving companies at marine destinations are high. In this chapter it was determined that, through the use of perceived values, the needs and wants of scuba divers can be identified that will ultimately lead to a competitive advantage. When analysing various models, it was determined that the PERVAL scale developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) was the best available for the purpose of this study.

The second objective was to determine the perceived value of a tourism experience, in this case, for scuba diving tourists at a marine destination, Sodwana Bay. This was achieved in Chapter 3 (Article 1) using a factor analysis. The factor analysis supported the modified model of Sweeney and Soutar, and revealed five distinct values: perceived epistemic value; perceived risk value; perceived functional value; perceived social value and perceived epistemic value.

The third objective was to determine the factors that influence perceived tourism values of scuba divers in a Marine Protected Environment, again, Sodwana Bay. This was achieved in Chapter 4 (Article 2) through ANOVAs and t-tests. Correlations were drawn between age, gender, province, income, level of education, marital status, number of times dived, number of nights stayed in the area, travel group size and promotional media (including websites, shows, friends, radio, T.V., magazines, previous visits and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter).

The fourth objective was to draw conclusions and make recommendations concerning the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination. Accordingly, this chapter aims to underline the purpose of this study by looking at the goals and objectives that were revealed in Chapter 1. Subsequently, the importance of this study will be quantified, conclusions will be drawn concerning each objective, limitations of the research will be noted and recommendations for future study will be revealed.

5.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

With a coastline of over 3 000km (Tinley, 1985:10), South Africa has a highly competitive Marine Tourism industry. This competition makes it challenging for small businesses to flourish. Since these businesses are greatly dependent on the tourists who enjoy various marine activities, it is important to understand the way in which marine tourists, in the case of this study, scuba diving tourists, perceive the value they receive at marine destinations. This research took place at Sodwana Bay, situated in the Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park (iSimangaliso) (SA Venues, 2012:online) South Africa, and listed as the 20th best site to dive worldwide (Scuba Travel, 2012:online).

It might be thought that Marine and scuba diving companies are relatively successful in South Africa although very little research has been done in these sectors to justify this opinion. As perceived value is created within the destination (Braun, 2005:6), it holds various benefits including that the destinations will achieve high market growth and hence become more competitive due to the successful Perceived value-added programmes (Hassan, 2000:242). Tourists are value driven (Levy, 1999:5) and, as value is the key to long-term sustainable tourism practices (Hassan, 2000:239; Gallarza & Soura, 2008:16) and is one of the most important measures for gaining a competitive edge, research is essential.

Yet despite the accepted importance of value, there has been relatively little research done to develop an in-depth understanding of the concept of perceived value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:204; Patterson, Johnson & Spreng, 1997:4), particularly as it concerns marine tourism. Boksberger and Melsen (2011:299) recommended that future research and the application of perceived value with relevance to the service industry be done.

While recent multidimensional scales have been created for measuring the value of tangible products (Zeithaml, 1988:2; Sheth *et al.*, 1991:160; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001:211), a multidimensional scale for the measurement of the perceived value of intangible products (services) does not yet exist (Petrick, 2002:120). According to Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:350), there is a need to develop a scale that measures intangible products. As the tourism sector delivers a combination of tangible and intangible products and services, the

need to measure the value provided to tourists in this highly competitive industry is vital. Unfortunately, value can be seen as rather a neglected aspect in the discussion of customers' evaluation of services (Caruana *et al.*, 2000:1338), particularly as it affects the tourism industry.

The limited knowledge that exists regarding tourism value must be a concern. Scuba diving companies are especially vulnerable to the whims of their clients, and to economic downturns. Hence, delivered value and customer satisfaction are crucial to establishing long-term relationships and to winning repeat business (Patterson, Johnson & Spreng, 1997:4; Williams & Soutar, 2000:1419; Mostert & du Plessis, 2007:5). Insufficient research in the past has led to various problems, such as the negative perceptions of the impacts that marine tourism makes on the environment, strong competition levels in the tourism industry and a lack of knowledge to enable the marketing of intangible (service) products correctly.

Given these issues, it is clear that more tourism context information is needed. A study of this kind, that measures the value of tourism, holds countless benefits for the tourism industry. By undertaking this study at Sodwana Bay, scuba diving companies and other small enterprises in the surrounding area will benefit significantly as they will be able to identify the particular value that scuba diving bestows on their target market. This will enable them to undertake marketing that is more accurate, utilise marketing strategies to their full potential and ultimately gain a competitive advantage. By fully understanding the value of scuba diving, marketers will be able to utilise the value-driven needs of scuba divers and so improve the scuba experience created at the destination. This study contributes to sustaining and developing the tourism product offered at Sodwana Bay for subsequent to this study, Sodwana Bay will be able to become a specialist in a niche market, building a loyal market while still upholding sustainable development.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions regarding the literature review and the survey as reported in two articles will be discussed next.

5.3.1 CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 aimed to contextualise marine tourism and the importance of perceived value aspects. The following conclusions can be drawn from the literature:

5.3.1.1. MARINE TOURISM

- The South African coastline stretches over 3000 kilometres and attracts thousands of tourists annually. Many of these tourists participate in various activities such as scuba diving. Small, scuba diving companies depend on these scuba diving tourists to generate an income. In order to enhance the scuba diving experience, it is imperative that dive masters and company owners understand the needs of their clients (c.f. 2.1).
- Marine Tourism has its own unique sector of tourism that also involves travel away from one's place of residence, but the emphasis is on the focus of the marine environment that incorporates ocean activities. It can also be seen as travel to a relatively undisturbed area, in a marine environment, where various activities such as scuba diving are hosted, (c.f. 2.2).
- Cruise Tourism; Beach Tourism; Marine Ecotourism; Marine Events; Special Interest Tourism; Aquatic Tourism and Island Tourism are sectors that form part of Marine Tourism.
 - **Island Tourism** takes place when people travel to islands to relax, rejuvenate and take part in marine tourism activities.
 - **Cruise Tourism** can be defined as a multi-centre holiday where the holiday is taken as the holiday-maker moves from tourist centre to tourist centre.
 - **Beach Tourism**, on the other hand, comprises of the sun, sand and surf experience and is the most popular form of Marine Tourism.
 - **Aquatic Tourism** includes research, conservation and education of marine species.
 - **Marine Events Tourism** includes sport, music, health and wellness aspects that take place in marine settings; and

- Special Interest Tourism is a form of tourism which includes a number of different sub-sectors including:
 - Nature Tourism; yachting, boating and sailing, scuba diving, sports fishing, and
 - Eco-tourism (c.f. 2.2).
- Marine environments are complex systems, with waters that are saline and tide affected, and host popular settings for tourism and recreation activities (c.f. 2.2.1). Marine Protected areas (MPAs) are water-based reserves that have been given special status in order to enable enforcement of protection, oversight and conservation of marine resources (c.f. 2.2.2).
- Marine tourism activities which can be divided into four broad categories:
 1. non-specialist leisure pursuits,
 2. shore-based,
 3. water-based motorised, and
 4. water-based non-motorised.
- These activities focus predominantly on the natural environment and its water resources while hosting a wide variety of different activities (for example, watching whales, dolphins, other marine mammals and fish, bird watching, scuba diving, beach walking, rock pooling, snorkelling and walking on coastal footpaths) (c.f. 2.2.3).
- Dive Tourism is a specialised niche that involves travel to unusual territories, then actively participating in diving activities such as free diving, snorkelling, dive propulsion vehicle (DPV) and scuba diving (c.f. 2.2.4).
- Scuba diving involves the use of a Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA) (c.f. 2.2.5).
- One of the world's top 20 dive sites, Sodwana Bay, situated in the Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park (iSimangaliso) in South Africa, launched 58 868 dives in 2011 (c.f. 2.2.6).

5.3.1.2. **PERCEIVED VALUE**

- Perceived value can be defined as the overall assessment, perceptions, mental estimates, interpretation of information or enduring beliefs of product attributes,

attribute performances and consequences of the cognitive-trade off or value received between consumers, the product source and the benefits received (c.f. 2.3).

- Core marketing concepts include the needs, wants and demands; products; value, satisfaction and quality; exchange transactions and relationships and markets. Marketing is concerned with the customer and achieving organisational goals through determining the needs and wants of the target market thus offering satisfaction while still providing consumers with added value (c.f. 2.4).
- Various studies assessing perceived value have been done for the retail and marketing industry. For example, Zeithaml (1988), Bolton and Drew (1991), Sheth, Norman and Gross (1991), Oliver (1996), Sweeney, Soutar and Johnson (1996), Patterson, Johnson & Spreng (1997), Grewal, Monroe & Krishnan (1998), Oh (1999) and Oliver (1999) all made contributions before the turn of the century, Subsequently, Swait and Sweeney (2000), Cronin, Brandy and Hult (2000), Caruana, Money and Berthon (2000), Tam (2000); Oh (2000), McDougall and Lévesque (2000), Teas and Aragwal (2000) and Sweeney and Soutar (2001) have all published concerning their researches (c.f. 2.5). However, literature detailing the measuring of perceived value in the tourism industry is lacking.
- A theory developed by Holbrook focusing on the evaluation of perceived value found economic, social, hedonic and altruistic values to be important (c.f. 2.6.1).
- Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991:161) identified functional value, conditional value, social value, emotional value and epistemic value to be of importance when measuring the consumption values experienced by consumers (c.f. 2.6.2).
- Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) developed a PERVAL (PERceived VALue scale) based on the consumption values developed by Sheth, Norman and Gross (1991:161). They found emotional value, social value, functional value (price/quality for money) and functional value (performance/quality) to be of importance (c.f. 2.6.3).
- Hall, Robertson and Shaw (2001:350) applied Sweeney's model to investigate the perceived value of consumable goods, namely, wine. They found that when measuring the perceived value of an intangible product that it was also necessary to measure epistemic (novelty) value (c.f. 2.6.4).

- As product experiences are influenced by emotional states, emotional value can be defined as a product's ability to arouse feelings or affective states that, if utilised correctly, can lead to fully satisfying the needs of consumers through appropriate marketing and management strategies (c.f. 2.7.1).
- Social value in tourism can be seen as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative association with one or more specific social groups, such as the interaction between people and the relationships they build during a trip (c.f. 2.7.2).
- Functional value in tourism can be seen as the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian or physical performance acting as the primary driver of consumer choice, with attributes such as quality, reliability, durability and price, each playing a role (c.f. 2.7.3).
- Functional (Performance/ quality) value can be defined as the customer's judgement of a product's overall excellence or superiority, leading to tourists becoming increasingly value-conscious of value for money and the quality thereof, as customers compare the amount of money they pay to the quality of the facilities and service they receive (c.f. 2.7.4).
- Epistemic value can be defined as the arousal of curiosity, provision of novelty and satisfaction of a desire for knowledge, thus in tourism, novelty and seeking new knowledge are significant values for scuba divers (c.f. 2.7.5).
- Perceived risk value can be defined as a tourist's overall assessment of the utility of a tourism product or tourism service based on the tourist's perceptions of what is received and what is given, and the subjective expectation of a loss (c.f. 2.7.6).
- Tourism value has been identified as the perceptions/mental estimates that tourists form of a product/ service, delivered to them as an experience. Because of its intangibility, the tourism experience can be enhanced by adding certain values (emotional, social, perceived risk, functional/price/quality and novelty) thus ensuring customer satisfaction that will ultimately lead to a competitive advantage in the highly competitive industry (c.f. 2.8).
- Previous perceived value studies done in the tourism/services industry focus closely on price and quality as the main elements of perceived value assessment. Other aspects which were also evaluated in these studies are Hedonic value and

Utilitarian value, Pre-use and Post-use value; Perceived trip value; Active and Reactive values and Acquisition and Transaction value (c.f. 2.8).

- Benefits of perceived value include economic, emotional, social and relationship benefits that can lead to a better understanding of consumer behaviour, product choice, purchase intention, repeat purchasing and the values that drive tourists, thus resulting in a competitive edge and an overall improved tourist experience (c.f. 2.9).

5.3.2 CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE RESULTS

The following conclusions can be drawn from Chapter 3 and 4:

Article 1 (Chapter 3) sought to assess the perceived value of scuba diving tourists at Sodwana Bay through Emotional, Social, Functional, Perceived Risk and Epistemic dimensions. The following was inferred from the results:

- The main scuba diving market for Sodwana Bay are single (46%), young (57%), Afrikaans-speaking (50%) men (62%), who had obtained a degree or diploma (32%), earn a high income (37%), originate from Gauteng (56%) and have been to Sodwana Bay before (± 4 times). These are loyal visitors whom visit the MPA regularly, stay longer than a weekend (± 5 nights) and are willing to drive long distances (for example, Johannesburg – Sodwana Bay, 583km) to reach this destination (c.f. 3.4.1).
- Five tourism values were identified for scuba divers: Emotional value; Functional value; social value; perceived risk value and Epistemic (novelty) value. This finding agrees with those of Sheth *et al.* (1991:161), Sweeney and Soutar (2001:211) and of Hall *et al.* (2001:350). Therefore, the value of the added items, for the purpose of a tourism product and service, should not be underestimated (c.f. 3.4.2).
- Epistemic value was rated as the most important perceived value to scuba diving tourists. This indicates that scuba divers are eager to gain more knowledge, experience novelty and 'curiosity' through scuba diving activities. Scuba diving in

itself is novel, as divers never know what to expect even at the same diving site. Every dive is different and many factors have an influence on the type of diving experienced. Factors such as the weather, visibility, scuba crew, dive master, equipment used and destination of the dive site all affect the experience. In agreement with this finding, the study done by Williams and Soutar (2000:1451) showed that epistemic value was a key component of the tourism experience. Pre-tour epistemic value perceptions were evident in consumers choosing the tour opted to do something 'different' and consumers, in their satisfaction evaluations of the tour, referred it to regularly (Williams *et al.*, 2000:1419) (c.f. 3.4.2).

- Functional value was ranked the second most important value. This infers that scuba divers who visit Sodwana Bay do not mind paying higher prices should they feel that they will receive value for their money, that the quality of marine life is good, the prices are fair, the quality of service is good and there is decent accessibility to the site. The overall diving experience should offer value for money and be of good quality. Functional value, as described by Sheth *et al.* (1991:160), is the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian or physical performance (c.f. 3.4.2).
- Correlations exist between the perceived tourism value factors. It was found that divers who consider emotional value important also consider social value and risk value to be very important. Divers to whom functional value is important also consider epistemic value to be important (c.f. 3.4.3).
- Hence, it can be concluded that the perceived value for tourism products and services such as diving are linked to novelty and curiosity. This differs from other types of products and services.

Article 2 (Chapter 4) aimed to analyse the factors influencing perceived value evaluations by scuba diving tourists. This was achieved using ANOVAs and t-tests. The following can be inferred from the results:

- It was found that age, gender, number of times visited, number of nights spend, travel group size and previous visits did not influence the identified perceived values.
- Perceived risk value was influenced by most of the variables including, language, province of residence, income, websites, magazines, shows, word-of-mouth communication, social networks, radio and television advertisements. Thus, the risk of making a mistake when deciding to visit Sodwana Bay is lowered by the use of, and exposure to, the variables mentioned above. Hall *et al.* (2001:350) found perceived risk value to be of significant importance in their study whereas Sweeney and Soutar (2001:212) found perceived functional value to be important (c.f.4.5).
- Emotional value was also influenced by most of the variables including language, province of residence, income, magazines, word-of-mouth communication and by radio and television advertisements. Emotional value includes aspects such as social status, social approval, self-image enhancement, social expectations and belonging to a certain group of people. Sweeney and Soutar (2001:212) and Jamal, Othman and Muhammad (2011:12) also tested emotional value in their studies and found it to be of significant importance when investigating consumer behaviour (c.f. 4.4.1.5).
- The socio-demographic variable that had the greatest influence on the way in which scuba diving tourists perceive various values was annual income. Scuba diving is an expensive sport and this, therefore, influences the spending behaviour of scuba divers. Burke and Resnick (2000:42) as well as Laws (1991:46) agree with this statement and state that income will influence the amount of money tourists will spend on vacation, how often they will travel, whether or not people travel and the destination they choose to visit. Income is a factor that influences the way in which respondents perceived certain emotional, functional and risk values (c.f. 4.4.1.5).
- Media variables that had the greatest influence on the way in which scuba diving tourists perceived various values were websites (c.f. 4.4.2.1), recommendations made by friends (c.f. 4.4.2.3), radio (c.f. 4.4.2.4), magazines (c.f. 4.4.2.6) and social networks (c.f. 4.4.2.7). Bennet (1995:279) indicated that advertising can only work if it is seen and

heard by tourists and subsequently operates in their minds. Thus, these media aspects need to be utilised to their fullest potential when marketing scuba diving activities at Sodwana Bay. Even with the rapid development of social networks, the relevance of other media was also emphasised in this study.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- This study was limited to just one leisure activity, being scuba diving activities. Thus, the results do not necessarily apply to all other service contexts and the tourism industry.
- Only one survey was conducted at one dive site. Other surveys at different dive sites would offer a more diverse spread of information.
- Since this study was conducted from a South African perspective, it is not representative of all international marine destinations. This can, however, be tested.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations will be discussed in two sections, general recommendations and recommendations for future research.

5.5.1 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were drawn from the results of the study to assist in management and marketing strategies at Sodwana Bay.

- The diver profile of scuba divers to Sodwana Bay is very specific and indicative of a niche-market showing potential. Marketing campaigns and material can be developed most effectively by focusing on this niche. To attract and increase the current market, it is important to focus on Gauteng and to utilise the media in this province. This market is well-educated and high-income earners and, therefore, the more formal media such as business magazines and carefully selected newspapers could serve as marketing mediums. As these are loyal visitors who have been to

Sodwana Bay before and do not seem to mind travelling long distances, managers could reward this loyalty by offering discounts after a number of visits per year, thus rewarding the loyalty and so encouraging return visits and positive word-of-mouth (c.f.3.6).

- Perceived epistemic value was seen as the most important value. Therefore, product owners should be eager to provide diving experiences offering more knowledge, novelty and curiosity-satiation through scuba diving activities. This should be the aim of marketing strategies that focus on highlighting the novelty of scuba diving where the unexpected is to be expected. Since Sodwana Bay has the facilities to host a variety of different activities, scuba diving managers should take advantage of these opportunities by incorporating them into their dive packages. Sodwana Bay has the facilities to host a wide variety of activities such as snorkelling, trips to Sibaya Lake and Kosi Bay, night drives, watching turtles on the dunes at night, star gazing, hiking and quad-biking. By adding these activities and offering scuba divers something new and additional, their satisfaction levels will be heightened and recommendations of the dive site will be highly likely as it is perceived to be novel and different. By including the quest for knowledge, challenge and novelty, scuba diving tourists are almost certain to be attracted to the marine destination advertised (c.f.3.6).
- Scuba divers also perceived functional value to be of importance. Therefore, managers and product owners should focus on quality maintenance at marine destinations, excellent maintenance of scuba diving equipment and boats, efficient transport to the beach and high levels of service delivery, as this will ensure visitors feel that they are receiving value for money. In addition to the recommendations made for managers, marketers should aim to advertise a marine destination as a tourism product offering value for money, where the quality of marine life is good, the prices are fair, the quality of service and accessibility is excellent (c.f.3.6).
- The correlations between the various perceived values also indicate the inter-dependence of each and therefore marketing messages combining the Emotional,

Social and risk values are important. Thus, marketing initiatives that focus on the emotional aspects of scuba diving should also focus on social value as well as reducing perceived risk value, for these three values are inter-dependent on each other. Therefore, marketers should enhance the following value aspects in their marketing strategies:

- Emotional Aspects: scuba diving enhances social status; self-image; assures uniqueness; helps to meet social expectations; enhances belonging to a certain group (c.f.3.6).
 - Social Aspects: scuba diving strengthens friendships and enhances relationships with others (c.f.3.6).
 - Perceived Risk values: recommendations made by dive operators, experts, friends or promotion. The value of recommendations from family and friends must not be underestimated and therefore the delivery of a high level of service quality to each diver is imperative. This can be enabled by dive instructors building good relationships with present clients and thereby ensuring their recommendations will be positive. New scuba divers are especially vulnerable as they are not entirely sure what to expect, therefore they perceive the recommendations of friends, family and dive experts as being very important (c.f.3.6).
- Perceived risk value and perceived emotional values were influenced by various aspects. Care should therefore be taken when selecting marketing messages for specific language groups, groups from different provinces, different income groups as well as for the different groups using various media. Marketers should consider these aspects when attracting a specific market.
- **Perceived emotional value:** As product experiences are influenced by emotional states, perceived emotional value can be defined as a product's ability to arouse feelings or affective states which, if utilised correctly, can lead to fully satisfying the needs of consumers through appropriate marketing and

management strategies. This can be achieved by enhancing emotional attributes through marketing strategies.

- **Perceived risk value:** The following attributes each have an influence on reducing perceived risk when planning a trip to a dive site: the recommendations of a dive operator who influenced the decision to visit Sodwana Bay; the recommendations of experts who encouraged the dive expedition to Sodwana Bay; recommendations of friends who encouraged the dive expedition to Sodwana Bay; and the marketing and promotion that influenced the decision to visit Sodwana Bay. Marketers can reduce perceived risk value by incorporating a review page on Sodwana Bay's website or by inviting people to comment freely on social networks such as Facebook. This will enable potential visitors to gain reassurance from previous visitors as their feedback and reviews will help create the expectation of what can be experienced at Sodwana Bay. This will encourage high service levels as staff will understand the importance of "word-of-mouth" promotion from friends/ family or social networks and of the potential business this can bring to the destination (c.f.4.6.).
- With income showing the greatest influence on the way respondents perceived the values, it is important to consider this when crafting marketing and product planning. The income group whom earn R100 001–R200 000 per annum rated three (emotional, social and risk values) of the five perceived values higher than did the other income groups. Although they are not the highest income earners, they are prepared to spend money on adventure activities, in this case, scuba diving. When attracting this group, it is important to highlight the emotional, social and risk values in the advertising material. This is a young, dynamic group of people who seek the adrenaline, adventure; social and emotional aspects and should be attracted to become loyal visitors to Sodwana Bay. The profile of these divers can assist dive operators to offer their products in the correct market, and so attract divers who are serious about diving (c.f.4.6.).

- The influence of media on the perceived risks should be utilised to its fullest potential by implementing the following:

Websites: Utilise websites to show the functional, risk and epistemic values associated with scuba diving. An attractive, professional and user friendly website with recent pictures, a review page, rates, specials/discounts, maps and relevant contact numbers is highly recommended as this will lead to reduced risk, enhanced social, functional and emotional aspects. As websites are often the first impression visitors get of a destination, marketers need to enhance the values that were perceived as being most pertinent. These are:

- **Perceived risk value:** Managers and marketers should focus on reducing perceived risk value on websites by supplying relevant contact information (for example, of scuba diving companies and the Reception at Sodwana Bay). In order to insure positive 'word-of-mouth' by dive operators, experts and friends, management needs to ensure that good relationships are maintained by dive operators, experts and promoters. Excellent service is essential such that customers leave feeling satisfied, thus resulting in positive 'word-of-mouth' and recommendations (c.f.4.6.).
- **Perceived epistemic value:** A gallery of photographs should be added to the website as this will make potential clients more curious and attract them to be part of such a novel experience. Information about the marine wildlife to be found at Sodwana Bay can also be provided on websites, as this will give potential clients the opportunity to both acquire and to broaden their knowledge (c.f.4.6.).
- **Perceived social value:** Photos displayed on the website should show scuba divers engaging in social settings and having fun (for example, getting together for a "braai" or exchanging photos after a dive). This will demonstrate that scuba diving strengthens friendship and enhances relationships (c.f.4.6.).

"Word-of-mouth": Influence previous divers to spread messages of the emotional, social and novelty values of Sodwana Bay. Since "word-of-mouth" creates

novelty/curiosity and the recommendations and reassurance of friends reduces the perceived risk these respondents would otherwise experience, destination managers need to ensure that their customers depart from the resort with a sense of satisfaction achieved through excellent quality service. This will encourage positive “word-of-mouth” and return visits. Sodwana Bay could implement a reward system where previous visitors could be given discounts after a specified number of trips to the reserve (the reward could even be higher for regular off-season visitors). This will give regular visitors a sense of appreciation and loyalty towards Sodwana Bay – enforcing a sense of pride and positive recommendations when telling others about the reserve. It could also encourage more visitors to make out of season bookings if they know that they will be paying less for the same opportunities (c.f.4.6.).

Radio: Utilise this medium to focus on the emotional, social and risk values of the diving experience. This can be done by advertising new, exciting and different packages on the radio that include a range of different activities. Sodwana Bay hosts a variety of activities such as self-guided walking trails for nature lovers and bird enthusiasts that explore the coastal forests and dunes; snorkelling spots in the rock pools and off the beach; night tours in December and January which offer clients a unique opportunity for turtle watching (Emzemvelo KZN Wildlife, 2012:1). Scuba diving companies should advantage of these activities and incorporate them into their dive packages (c.f.4.6.).

Magazines: This medium should be utilised to highlight emotional, functional and risk values. Magazine advertisements are usually printed in full colour and excellent reproduction quality is offered. Since each scuba diving company offers a slightly different experience (for example some focus on customer satisfaction and socialising while others focus on service quality), the novelty thus experienced is also different. Scuba diving companies should advertise the value that makes them unique in magazines; this will heighten expectations of specific markets. Photos displayed in magazines should portray the following messages: scuba diving enhances social status; participation in diving activities helps to acquire social approval; scuba diving enhances self-image; being a scuba diver makes people unique; scuba diving helps to

meet social expectations and scuba diving makes people belong to a certain group. For example, a photograph of a group of scuba divers engaging in a social setting, having fun and relaxing, will portray such an image. Photographs displayed in magazines showing well-maintained buildings and general cleanliness at Sodwana Bay will make respondents feel that they are receiving value for money (c.f.4.6.).

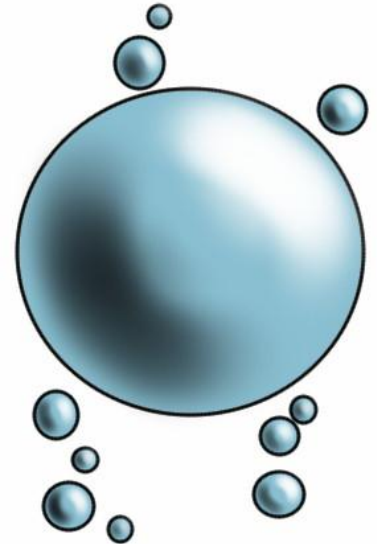
Social Networks (for example, Facebook and Twitter): This powerful medium should be used to highlight the functional, social and risk values. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter have been defined as media that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61). Satisfied customers can attract potential clients through positive 'word-of-mouth'. This can be done by regular updates of discount packages on websites, Facebook and other social networks. Photographs of scuba divers enjoying social activities can also be uploaded to strengthen the marketing message (c.f.4.6.).

5.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following recommendations were drawn from the results of this study and, if implemented, would guide future research in this field while simultaneously improving the scuba diving experience at marine destinations across South Africa.

- This research was focused on one scuba diving destination, Sodwana Bay, whereas South Africa has a number of other scuba diving destinations that should also be researched.
- An opportunity also exists to apply the values tested in this study to a broader spectrum of other marine adventure activities (for example, surfing; shark diving; safaris and whale watching).
- Since this study was limited to scuba diving activities, the opportunity exists to apply this study to other tourism products and services. This will also allow for comparisons to be made.
- Continuous research is recommended in order for marketing and management to be more successful. The needs of the scuba diving market are continually changing and business competition levels are always increasing.

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Questionnaire - Scuba Divers at Sodwana Bay

SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DETAIL

1. Gender?

M	1
F	2

2. In which year were you born?

19

3. Home language?

English	1
Afrikaans	2
Other (Specify)	3

5. In which province do you live?

Gauteng	1
KwaZulu-Natal	2
Eastern Cape	3
Western Cape	4
Northern Cape	5
Limpopo	6
Mpumalanga	7
Free State	8
North West	9
Outside SA	10

6. Country of residence (If outside RSA)?

4. Marital status?

Married	1
Not married	2
Divorced	3
Widow/er	4
Living together	5

7. Please indicate your highest level of education.

No school	1
Matric/ Grade 12	2
Diploma, Degree	3
Post-graduate	4
Professional	5
Other (Specify)	6

8. Which category best describes your annual household gross income group?

R50 000 or less	1
R50 001 - R100 000	2
R100 001 - R 200 000	3
R 200 001 - R 300 000	4
More than R500 000	5
Other (Specify)	6

SECTION B: SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACT

1. Which other activities do you partake in? (exc. Scuba diving)

Fishing	1
Snorkeling	2
Beach Walks	3
Hiking	4
Boat trips	5
Other (Specify)	6

2. Including yourself, how many people are you paying for in your travel group?

Number

3. How many times have you visited Sodwana (including this time)?

Number

4.1 Did you visit any shops including petrol stations in the immediate vicinity of SB?

Yes No

4.2 If Yes, list the types of businesses

5. How many nights are you staying in the area?

Number

6. How much did you spend during your visit to Sodwana Bay on the following?

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------|
| 1. Other Activities (exc. Scuba diving) | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 2. Accommodation | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 3. Restaurants | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 4. Food & beverage | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 5. Tobacco products | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 6. Clothes and footwear | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 7. Scuba diving equipment | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 8. At diving companies | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 9. Entrance and conservation fee | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 10. Transport | R | <input type="text"/> |
| 11. Other expenses not listed above (Specify) | R | <input type="text"/> |
| | R | <input type="text"/> |
| | R | <input type="text"/> |

7. Rate according to the scale why you have visited Sodwana Bay and why you enjoy scuba diving here (Please answer all possibilities):

Not applicable	6	6				
Extremely important	5	5				
Very important	4	4				
Important	3	3				
Less important	2	2				
Not at all important	1	1				
	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. To get away from my routine	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. To relax	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. To explore a new destination	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. To spend time with my friends	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. To aquire new skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. So that other members in my party could learn about marine wildlife	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. It's fun to scuba dive	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. I am crazy about diving	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. In search of a specific species	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Sodwana Bay is a world class diving spot	1	2	3	4	5	6
k. I always come to dive here	1	2	3	4	5	6
l. So that other members of my party can share in the challenge of scuba diving or other adventure activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
m. For new experiences - scuba diving is something I've always wanted to do	1	2	3	4	5	6
n. To overcome fear	1	2	3	4	5	6
o. To be part of an expedition	1	2	3	4	5	6
p. Scuba diving at Sodwana Bay is an annual activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
q. Feeling of success after activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
r. To photograph marine life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
s. Because I grew up with scuba diving activities	1	2	3	4	5	6
t. The following excites me most about diving here:	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Soft coral (Live coral)	1	2	3	4	5	6
2 Hard coral (Dead coral)	1	2	3	4	5	6
3 Sharks	1	2	3	4	5	6
4 Rays	1	2	3	4	5	6
5 Coelacanths (The living fossil)	1	2	3	4	5	6
6 Moray eels	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Sponges	1	2	3	4	5	6
8 Crustaceans (Crabs, lobsters etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
9 Turtles	1	2	3	4	5	6
10 Dolphins	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. Evaluate to which extent you agree and/or disagree with the following statement:

Strongly agree	4			
Agree	3			
Disagree	2			
Strongly disagree	1			
	1	2	3	4
a. Scuba diving enhances my self image	1	2	3	4
b. Scuba diving enhances my social status	1	2	3	4
c. My participation in diving activities helps me to acquire social approval	1	2	3	4
d. Being a scuba diver makes me unique	1	2	3	4
e. Scuba diving makes me belong to a certain group of people.	1	2	3	4
f. Scuba diving broadens my knowledge	1	2	3	4
g. Scuba activities enhance my relationships with others	1	2	3	4
h. Scuba diving strengthens my friendships	1	2	3	4
i. Scuba diving helps me to meet social expectations	1	2	3	4
j. Recommendations of experts encouraged my dive expedition to Sodwana Bay	1	2	3	4
k. Recommendations of friends encouraged my dive expedition to Sodwana Bay	1	2	3	4
l. Recommendations of a dive operator influenced my decision to visit Sodwana Bay	1	2	3	4
m. Marketing and promotion influenced my decision to visit Sodwana Bay	1	2	3	4
n. Accessibility to the site is good	1	2	3	4
o. The quality of marine life is excellent	1	2	3	4
p. The quality of coral reefs are good	1	2	3	4
q. I received value for money	1	2	3	4
r. Prices asked are fair	1	2	3	4
s. The quality of service was good	1	2	3	4

SECTION C: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1) Rate the following environmental impacts on a scale from heavy (1) to none (4)

None	4	4			
Little	3	3			
Moderate	2	2			
Heavy	1	1			
In your opinion, how detrimental are the following actions to the coral:					
a) Touching the coral accidentally	1	2	3	4	
b) Touching coral	1	2	3	4	
c) Swimming & walking on the sandy bottom	1	2	3	4	
d) Flash photography	1	2	3	4	
e) Diving from the shore and boats	1	2	3	4	
f) Diving with gloves	1	2	3	4	
g) Wearing sunscreen	1	2	3	4	
If you have dived at Sodwana before indicate the degradation over the past few years of the following:					
h) Degradation of the reefs over the past few years	1	2	3	4	
i) The water	1	2	3	4	
j) The coral	1	2	3	4	
k) The wildlife	1	2	3	4	
Which type of coral do you think is most fragile.					
l) Hard coral (Dead coral)	1	2	3	4	
m) Soft coral (Live coral)	1	2	3	4	
n) Both equally	1	2	3	4	
When do you think diving may cause the most damage to the reef?					
o) Day time	1	2	3	4	
p) Night time	1	2	3	4	
q) Both	1	2	3	4	
Rate the vulnerability of the following reefs					
r) Two-mile Reef	1	2	3	4	
s) Four-mile Reef	1	2	3	4	
t) Seven-mile Reef	1	2	3	4	
u) Nine-mile Reef	1	2	3	4	

2. How did you experience the following at Sodwana Bay?

Not applicable	6					
Excellent	5					
Good	4					
Fair	3					
Poor	2					
Very poor	1					
a. Hiring of equipment	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Safety	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. Friendliness and service of scuba diving operators	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. The whole scuba experience	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Your level of knowledge regarding reef ecology and biology	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. The level of crowdedness(number of divers) in the water	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Friendliness and service of the staff at Sodwana Bay	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. General maintenance of facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Activities at Sodwana Bay	1	2	3	4	5	6

3. Indicate the number of times you have visited each of the following reefs at Sodwana Bay during your **current** stay:

Two-mile Reef	
Four-mile Reef	
Seven-mile Reef	
Nine-mile Reef	

4. Which would you consider the best time of the year to dive at Sodwana Bay?

a) Spring (August to mid October)	
b) Summer (mid October to mid February)	
c) Autumn (mid-February to April)	
d) Winter (May to July)	

5. When you dive do you:

Stick around other divers and boats

Yes	No
Yes	No

Try to get away from other divers and boats

6. Which distance would you consider as safe in an attempt to avoid contact with coral? Eg. 2 metres

7. Which distance would you consider as safe in an attempt to avoid contact and disturbance of marine wildlife?

8. If you had to put a limit on the number of divers who dive at Sodwana Bay daily, what would it be?

Number

10. Any recommendations or suggestions?

10. Where did you hear about Sodwana Bay?

a. Website	Yes	No
b. Shows (Getaway)	Yes	No
c. Friends & family	Yes	No
d. Radio	Yes	No
e. TV	Yes	No
f. Magazines	Yes	No
g. Previous visits	Yes	No
h. Social networks such as Twitter & Facebook	Yes	No
j) Other (specify)	Yes	No

9. Would you recommend diving at Sodwana Bay to your friends and relatives?

Yes	1
No	2

Thank you for your participation in this survey!!

Ellis Educational Trust CC

7 December 2012

To Whom It May Concern

Editorial Certification

This document certifies that the typescript entitled

" The perceived value of scuba diving tourists at a marine destination"

was edited for proper English language usage, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall style by one or more of the highly qualified, native English-speaking editors at Ellis Educational Trust CC.

Neither the research content nor the author's intentions were altered in any way during the editing process.

Documents receiving this certification should be English-ready for publication - however, the author has the ability to accept or reject our suggestions and changes.

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Author(s): **Seymour, K.**

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EM Ellis

MBA (BSNsa), MBA (IMC, UK), NDip: Hot Mgt & Admin (Ports, UK), NDip:
Hot Mgt (Byo, Rhod)

mellisel@gmail.com

FAX: 086 242 1861

