

# **The influence of the 2008/2009 economic recession on travel behaviour of visitors to the Kruger National Park**

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# ABSTRACT

## **The influence of the 2008/2009 economic recession on travel behaviour of visitors to the Kruger National Park**

During the recession period of 2008/2009, global tourism declined by 8%. This was also evident in South Africa with the domestic travel market shrinking by 8% as well. However, this did not apply to the Kruger National Park (KNP) which experienced a sustained Accommodation Unit Occupancy growth of 1.6% during the same period. Visitors to the KNP thus see it as an attractive holiday destination irrespective of tough economic conditions characterised by less disposable income. To sustain this growth, it is important to be aware of the reasons visitors still visit the KNP during a recession.

The aim of this study was to determine the reasons why visitors still travelled to the KNP during the 2008/2009 recession. This can be done by analysing the visitors' behaviour and the motivational factors (internal feelings of the visitors) and determinants of the demand (income and exchange rates for instance) that influenced visitors' choice to visit the KNP. To achieve this aim, a survey was conducted at the KNP between 15 and 20 December 2009 (high season). A total of 355 questionnaires were completed, after which a number of analyses were done to determine the effects of the recession on travel behaviour. For the purpose of this study, two articles were written.

Article 1 is titled: "Motivations of visitors to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 recession period". The aim of this article was to determine the motivations of visitors to the KNP during the recession. A factor analysis on the motivations to visit the park was conducted, of which the following factors obtained the highest mean values: *Escape*, *Wildlife experience* and *Family benefits*. Push factors to the KNP were important to such an extent that visitors regarded visiting the park as a primary need or lifestyle. The results furthermore showed that visitors might have adapted their spending behaviour at the park to still afford to visit the park during the recession. This article provides a better understanding of visitors' feelings towards the KNP, especially amidst recessions which, in turn, will improve niche marketing and a competitive advantage.

Article 2 is titled: "Factors that influenced demand to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 economic recession". The aim of this article was to identify the determinants that influence the demand for visits to the KNP. Due to the homogeneous nature of the park's market, the results of the stepwise logistic regression analysis revealed a few socio-

demographic and behavioural determinants that influenced visitors' demand to the park. The motives *Escape* and *Souvenirs* were the only two behavioural determinants while the provinces *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* were the only socio-demographic determinants. These two provinces are the two main markets for the KNP. Visitors indicated that visiting the KNP is a great way of escaping their busy metropolitan areas, especially in the *Gauteng* province. *Mpumalanga* residents have many tourism attractions in their province thus lowering the chances that they will visit the KNP. The determinant *Souvenirs* indicates that visitors adapted their spending at the park to still be able to afford visits. It was also found that demand to visit the park was not greatly influenced by the recession, because visitors could adapt their spending at the park.

This is the first time the determinants of demand to a national park during a recession period have been conducted. The study indicated that visiting natural areas may have become a primary need or part of a lifestyle, especially during the 2008/2009 recession period. This article gives park management guidelines that will ensure the sustainability of the KNP because this information now allows for well-planned, thorough marketing and management of the park. In the case of KNP, which has a homogeneous market, the number of determinants identified influencing demand for visiting the park is fewer than has been found in other studies done on heterogeneous markets. This study therefore also makes a valuable methodological contribution in relation to analysing demand of homogeneous and heterogeneous markets.

**Keywords:** *South African National Parks (SANParks), Kruger National Park (KNP), Tourism, Travel motives, Push and pull theory, Determinants of demand, Demand.*

# OPSOMMING

## **Die invloed van die 2008/2009 ekonomiese resessie op die reisgedrag van besoekers aan die Kruger Nasionale Park**

Gedurende die resessie-tydperk van 2008/2009, het wêreldtoerisme met 8% afgeneem. Hierdie verskynsel is ook in Suid Afrika waargeneem, aangesien die plaaslike reis-mark ook met 8% gekrimp het. Voorgenoemde toedrag van sake is egter nie op die Nasionale Kruger Park (NKP) van toepassing nie, aangesien hul Akkommodasie-eenheid-besetting 'n volgehoue groei van 1.6% tydens hierdie tydperk getoon het. Besoekers aan die NKP beskou die park gevolglik as 'n aanloklike vakansiebestemming, nieteenstaande die moeilike ekonomiese toestande wat gekenmerk word deur minder besteebare inkomste. Ten einde hierdie groei te handhaaf moet 'n mens kennis neem van die redes waarom besoekers aan die park dit steeds tydens die resessie besoek het.

Die doel van hierdie studie was dus om te bepaal waarom besoekers nietemin tydens die 2008/2009 resessie-tydperk na die park gereis het. Die doel is bereik deur besoekers se gedrag, naamlik motiverende faktore (innerlike gevoelens van die besoekers) sowel as die determinante van vraag (byvoorbeeld inkomste en wisselkoerse) wat besoekers se keuse om die park te besoek beïnvloed het, te analiseer. Om hierdie doel te bereik is 'n opname by die NKP gedoen, en wel tussen 15 en 20 Desember 2009 (hoogseisoen). 'n Somtotaal van 355 vraelyste is volledig ingevul, waarna verdere analises gedoen is om die invloed van die resessie op reisgedrag te bepaal. Twee artikels is vir doeleindes van hierdie studie geskryf.

Artikel 1 is getitel: "Motivations of visitors to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 recession period". Die doel van hierdie artikel was om te bepaal wat besoekers gemotiveer het om die NKP tydens die resessie-tydperk te besoek. 'n Faktoranalise is op die motiverings van besoekers om die park te besoek gedoen, en die volgende faktore het die hoogste gemiddelde waardes verkry: *Escape*, *Wildlife experience* and *Family benefits*. Interne faktore wat besoekers aangemoedig het om die park te besoek was so sterk dat besoekers besoeke aan die NKP ervaar het as 'n primêre behoefte of as iets wat deel van hul leefstyl is. Die resultate het verder getoon dat besoekers hul bestedingsgedrag aangepas het sodat hulle steeds 'n besoek aan

die park tydens die resessie tydperk kon bekostig. Die artikel gee dieper insig in besoekers se gevoelens teenoor die NKP, veral te midde van resessie-tydperke, wat weer nis-bemaking en 'n mededingende voordeel sal verbeter.

Artikel 2 is getitel: "Factors that influence demand to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 economic recession". Die doel van hierdie artikel was om die determinante wat die vraag na die NKP beïnvloed, te identifiseer. Weens die homogene aard van die park se mark het die stapsgewyse logistieke regressie-analise enkele sosio-demografiese en gedragsdeterminante wat besoekers se vraag na die NKP beïnvloed, laat blyk. Die motiewe Wegbreek (*Escape*) en Soeweniers (*Souvenirs*) was die enigste twee gedragsdeterminante, terwyl *Gauteng* en *Mpumalanga* die enigste sosio-demografiese determinante was. Hierdie provinsies is die NKP se twee hoofmarkte. Besoekers het aangedui dat 'n besoek aan die NKP 'n wonderlike manier is om van hul gejaagde, stedelike leefstyl te ontsnap; veral besoekers van die *Gauteng* Provinsie. *Mpumalanga* inwoners het baie toerisme-atraksies in hul provinsie wat die kans dat hulle die NKP sal besoek, verskraal. Die determinant *Souvenirs* dui aan dat die vraag na die park nie so sterk deur die resessie beïnvloed is nie, aangesien besoekers hul bestedingsgedrag by die park self kon aanpas.

Dit is die eerste keer dat die motivering van besoekers, sowel as die determinante wat vraag beïnvloed, by 'n nasionale park in Suid-Afrika, tydens 'n ekonomiese resessie, bepaal is. Die studie dui aan dat besoeke aan natuurlike omgewings kon ontwikkel het in 'n primêre behoefte of dat dit deel geword het van die besoekers se leefstyl, veral in tye wanneer besteebare inkomste minder is, soos tydens resessies. Hierdie artikel verskaf riglyne aan die parkbestuur wat die volhoubaarheid van die NKP sal verseker mits dit toegepas word, aangesien die inligting nou voorsiening maak vir goed beplande, deurdagte bemaking en bestuur van die park. In die geval die NKP, wat 'n homogene mark het, is die aantal geïdentifiseerde determinante wat die vraag na besoeke aan die park beïnvloed, minder as wat in ander studies oor heterogene markte gevind is. Hierdie studie lewer dus ook 'n waardevolle bydrae, gesien vanuit 'n metodologiese oogpunt, veral wanneer analyses gedoen word met die doel om die vraag van homogene en heterogene markte te bepaal.

**Sleutelwoorde:** *South African National Parks (SANParks), Nasionale Krugerpark (NKP), Toerisme, Reis motiewe, Stoot-en-trek teorie, Determinante van vraag, Vraag.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1: Introduction, problem statement, objectives and method of research

<b>1.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.3 GOAL OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>6</b>
1.3.1 Goal	6
1.3.2 Secondary objectives	6
<b>1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH</b>	<b>7</b>
1.4.1 Literature study	7
1.4.2 Empirical study	7
1.4.2.1 Research design and method	7
1.4.2.2 Selection of the sampling frame	8
1.4.2.3 Development of the questionnaire	9
1.4.2.4 Data analysis	9
<b>1.5 DEFINITIONS OF KEYWORDS</b>	<b>10</b>
1.5.1 Travel motivations	10
1.5.2 Economic downturn/Recession	11
1.5.3 South African National Parks	14
1.5.4 Kruger National Park (KNP)	15
1.5.5 Determinants of tourism demand	15
1.5.6 Types of goods	16
1.5.6.1 Luxury goods and Basic needs	16
1.5.6.2 Normal goods and Inferior goods	16
1.5.6.3 Ordinary goods and Giffen goods	16

**CHAPTER 2: Motivations of visitors to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 recession period**

<b>2.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH</b>	<b>25</b>
2.3.1 The Questionnaire	26
2.3.2 The Sample and survey	26
2.3.3 Statistical analysis	27
<b>2.4 RESULTS</b>	<b>27</b>
2.4.1 Visitor profile to the Kruger National Park	28
2.4.2 Results of the factors analysis	28
<b>2.5 FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.6 CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>33</b>

**CHAPTER 3: Determinants of demand to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 economic recession**

<b>3.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>3.2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH</b>	<b>42</b>
3.3.1 The Questionnaire	42
3.3.2 The Sample and survey	43
3.3.3 Statistical analysis	43
<b>3.4 RESULTS</b>	<b>45</b>
3.4.1 Visitor profile to the Kruger National Park	45

3.4.2	Motivation to visit the KNP	46
3.4.3	Results of the factor analysis: The influence of the recession on behaviour prior to and at the Park	47
3.4.4	Results of the Chi-square tests to determine the differences between visitors who considered an alternative destination and those who did not	49
3.4.5	Results from the independent t-test	51
3.4.6	Results from the stepwise logistic regression analysis	52
<b>3.5</b>	<b>FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>57</b>

#### **CHAPTER 4: Conclusions and recommendations**

<b>4.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>60</b>
4.2.1	Conclusions with regards to the literature review	60
4.2.2	Conclusions with regard to the survey	61
<b>4.3</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARK MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>63</b>
4.3.1	Marketing recommendations	63
4.3.2	Managerial recommendations	64
4.3.3	Recommendations with regard to the survey	65
<b>4.4</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH</b>	<b>66</b>
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>67</b>

# LIST OF TABLES

## **CHAPTER 1: Introduction, problem statement, objectives and method of research**

---

Table 1.1: Timeline of 18 recessions and world crises	12
---	----

---

## **CHAPTER 2: Motivations of visitors to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 recession period**

---

Table 2.1: Analysis of previous research on travel motives	23
Table 2.2: Visitor profile at the KNP (2009)	28
Table 2.3: Factor analysis results of visitors' motivations to the KNP	29

---

## **CHAPTER 3: Determinants of demand to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 economic recession**

---

Table 3.1: The factors influencing demand	38
Table 3.2: Visitor profile at the KNP (2009)	46
Table 3.3: Factor analysis results of visitors' behaviour to as well as at the KNP	47
Table 3.4: Results of the Chi-square tests	50
Table 3.5: T-test results of differences between visitors who considered an alternative destination and those who did not based on travel motivations and travel	52
Table 3.6: Questions used and their descriptions	53
Table 3.7: Results from the hierarchical stepwise logistic regression: Influence on the demand to KNP	54

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## LIST OF FIGURES

### CHAPTER 1: Introduction, problem statement, objectives and method of research

---

Figure 1.1:	Countries with the highest international arrival declines, first quarter 2009.	14
-------------	--	----

---

## LIST OF MAPS

### CHAPTER 1: Introduction, problem statement, objectives and method of research

---

Map 1.1	Kruger National Park	8
---------	----------------------	---

---

### CHAPTER 2: Motivations of visitors to the Kruger National Park during the 2008/2009 recession period

---

Map 2.1	Kruger National Park	26
---------	----------------------	----

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## APPENDICES

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Appendix 1:	Visitor questionnaire	80
-------------	-----------------------	----

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# INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT,  
OBJECTIVES AND METHOD OF RESEARCH

## CHAPTER 1

*"I've always worked very, very hard, and the harder I worked, the luckier I got." - Alan Bond*

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) (2009), the Tourism industry employed over 225 million people around the world and generated 9.6 percent of the global GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2008. However, the deterioration in global economic conditions has led to a global tourism decline of 8 percent (Tourism-review, 2009). An economic recession is a period of repeated negative economic growth and it is also known as a 'credit crunch' (Todd, 2008). Ellis (2005) claims that there are four visible stages of a recession. The first stage is when the economy is uniformly favourable and the second stage is marked by a modest slowdown in economic growth. During the third stage, consumers (including tourists) are starting to worry more and interest rates and inflation, are higher. Stage four is recession in which a country's real GDP starts to decline, which might lead to higher levels of unemployment.

With this in mind, employment decreased by 3.6 percent in South Africa with an estimated 484 000 jobs lost during the period 2008/2009 (SA, 2009a:vi). South African consumers were furthermore faced with additional economic pressures due to the increase in interest rates, fuel, electricity and food costs (Chakauya, Beyene & Chikwamba, 2009:174). The influence of the global recession during the period 2008/9 also affected the South African tourism industry. During this period, there were significant decreases in international arrivals with a growing decline in the country's European and Asian markets. International tourists spent less, had a shorter length of stay and visited fewer provinces during their holiday, resulting in a worsening total seasonal spread. In addition, the domestic travel market also showed changes in their travel behaviour and decreased by 8 percent mainly due to the decline in visiting family and friends, holiday and business trips (StatsSA, 2009a:46). This had a significant influence on the hospitality sector in the country and the total number of foreign and domestic tourist room nights in all accommodation establishments decreased by almost 9% compared to the same period before the recession (StatsSA, 2009b:6).

However, while the aftermath of the global economic crisis is apparent when looking at the tourism industry in South Africa and the rest of the world, its negative repercussions did not have a significant effect on South African National Parks` (SANParks) Kruger National Park (KNP). This is confirmed by statistics that showed tourism income grew by 9.39 percent and the overall Accommodation Unit Occupancy increased by 1.6 percent over the 2008/2009 period (SANParks, 2009:13). Therefore, tourists still consider national parks to be an attractive holiday destination even during tough economic conditions. The reasons for this phenomenon during the recession period is currently unknown.

For this reason, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research process that was followed in this study. This is achieved by first analysing the problem statement, which is followed by the goals and objectives, the method of research, definitions of key concepts and lastly the chapter classification.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

SANParks (South African National Parks) was established in 1926, and today it is the leading conservation authority in South Africa. This organisation is responsible for managing 4 111 113 hectares of protected land, which spans more than 20 national parks (SANParks, 2010). National parks in South Africa have three distinct purposes. These are: (1) to provide a recreation outlet where the wonders of the park can be experienced and enjoyed while at the same time (2) creating an environment from which local communities can benefit and (3) conserving the natural environment. From a tourism perspective, national parks provide tourists with a unique nature and leisure experience and are major drawcards for domestic travellers and especially international visitors who travel to the country for a nature experience (Saayman & Saayman, 2009:50). National parks are therefore powerful magnets for tourists, major export earners, and constitute an important part of the tourism industry (Uysal, McDonald & Martin, 1994:18; Cook, Yale & Marqua, 2010:212).

One of the oldest and most profitable national parks in South Africa, in terms of visitor numbers, is the Kruger National Park (KNP) (SANParks, 2009:19). The KNP is one of the largest game reserves in Africa covering about 20 000 square kilometres, extending 350 kilometres from north to south and 60 kilometres from east to west (Kruger National Park, 2010). The KNP contains a very high diversity of living organisms, including 1 982 species of plants, 517 species of birds, 147 species of mammals (including the Big 5) and 114 species of reptiles. The park has 21 rest camps, two private lodge concessions, and 15 designated private safari lodges. There are nine gates that provide access to the park, which makes the

park much more accessible from the two provinces surrounding it (Mpumalanga and Limpopo). Visitors can also enjoy a wide variety of recreational activities and facilities at the park, including game drives, photography, bird watching, accommodation, swimming pools and restaurants. The KNP therefore offers visitors an all inclusive holiday experience and it is thus not surprising that the park attracts over one million visitors per annum (SANParks, 2009:19). The popularity of this park also continued throughout the 2008/2009 recession. The global recession seems to have had a minimal effect on the KNP since, according to statistics provided by SANParks, the KNP continued to experience an increase in their Accommodation Unit Occupancy during the recession period (SANParks, 2009).

Tourism has historically behaved like a luxury good, implying that people with more disposable income tend to travel (Song & Lin, 2010:16; Papatheodourou, Rossello & Xiao, 2010:44), while people with less disposable income would rather save their income for the essentials of life such as food and shelter (Wilkerson, 2003:50). In analysing the theory on the economics of travel, it is evident that more disposable income leads to more frequent and extravagant travel. The opposite is also true. In most cases, less income leads to less travel. This confirms that tourists' travel patterns are greatly influenced by their disposable income, thus suggesting that travel can be seen as an ordinary good (Runde, Faulkner, Taylor & Aidt, 2007) (Uysal, 1998:88; Ouerfelli, 2008:127; Mulhearn, Vane & Eden, 2001:20; Smeral & Witt, 1996:894; Pearce, 1989:25; Weaver & Lawton, 2006:71; Lim, 1997:842; Crouch, 1996:118). However, these studies show that visitors tend to change their behaviour during times of economic downturns. Depending on the severity of the situation the worst case scenario is no travel at all. In most other cases, tourists can: travel and stay more cheaply; travel closer to home; stay for a shorter time; share more costs by travelling in larger groups; and stay with family and friends to avoid accommodation fees. If one takes this into consideration, it implies that visitors to the KNP were not severely affected by the 2008/2009 recession seeing as the Accommodation Unit Occupancy maintained its steady growth.

The studies described above necessitate further investigation since many questions are raised such as: Did visitors travel closer to home to keep travel costs low?; Did visitors change their travel patterns?; Did visitors to the KNP change their spending in the park such as staying in cheaper accommodation?; Did visitors scale down on everyday luxuries?; Have visitors become so in touch with nature that visiting a natural area has become a primary need or new lifestyle? According to Pan and Ryan (2007:289), to continue to maintain this sustainable growth rate, national parks, such as the KNP, should understand and be aware

of the underlying reasons that tourists travel. This will enable the KNP to manage visitor flows during tourism crises such as recession periods.

According to Crompton and McKay (1997:425) as well as Lohmann (2004:3), a decision to visit a destination (national park) is a directed action, which is triggered by a desire to meet a need. Motivation comes into play when a person wants to satisfy a need and must take action to do so (Goossens, 2000:302). Bhatia (2006a:29) adds that motivation operates on individuals' travel purchase choices within the framework already set by the determinants of demand. Based on this, there are many theories that support travel motivations such as: Maslow's hierarchy of needs; Pierce's leisure ladder; Plog's psychocentric-allothetic continuum (Cook *et al.*, 2010:34); and Iso-Ahola's seeking and escaping theory (Saayman, 2006:26). One of the most well-known theories for tourist motivation is the push-and-pull theory (Cook *et al.*, 2010:34) and the notion of this theory is that tourists are both 'pushed' (motivated) to travel by personality traits or individual needs and wants, and 'pulled' to travel by appealing attributes of the destination (Cook *et al.*, 2010:34; Kim & Chaplin, 2004:179).

Based on this, Kim, Lee and Klenosky (2003:179) identified the following factors that 'pull' visitors to national parks - appropriate area for children's study on natural resources, rare fauna and flora, beautiful natural resources, tranquil rest areas, cultural and historic resources, well-conserved environment; well-organised tourist information system, convenient facilities (for example restroom, drinking stands), convenient parking lots, clean and comfortable accommodation, easy accessibility, and convenient transportation. These factors were condensed to three main pull factors, which are (1) key tourist resources, (2) information and convenience of facilities and (3) accessibility and transportation. In the case of the KNP, the products and services offered at the park, such as wildlife, restaurants, accommodation, activities, accessibility and affordability, can therefore be regarded as the park's pull factors since these create a favourable image for the park that attracts visitors.

Previous research on travel motives of visitors to national parks and nature areas by Afwaritefe (2004) at Nigerian National Parks; Uysal *et al.* (1994) on Australian tourists to US National Parks, Tao, Eagles and Smith (2004) at Tatoko National Park, Saayman and Saayman (2009) at Addo Elephant National Park, Kruger and Saayman (2010), who did a comparative study between motives to visit Tsitsikamma National Park and KNP, Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008) at KNP, Galloway and Lopez (1999) on sensation seeking and attitudes of people to national parks, and Kim *et al.* (2003) at Korean National Parks, confirm the notion by Qu and Ping (1999) that different national parks have different motives. This is also the case when looking at South African National Parks. Saayman and Saayman (2009)

identified six travel motivations of visitors to the Addo Elephant National Park. These were nature, activities, family, escape, attractions and photography. In their comparative study of visitors' travel motivations to the KNP and Tsitsikamma National Park, Kruger and Saayman (2010) revealed that the main motives in both national parks were knowledge seeking, nostalgia, and park attributes as well as escape and relaxation. KNP differed in terms of activities and novelty, compared to nature experience and photography in the case of Tsitsikamma National Park.

Concerning 'push' factors, visitors have different motives for travel and different visitors may engage in the same (park) element and derive different benefits from the experience (Qu & Ping, 1999:238). Research on travel motivation has revealed a wide variety of push factors that influence tourists' travel decisions for visiting different attractions and/or destinations, such as broadening of knowledge, travel for prestige, for the enhancement of human relations, relaxation and novelty, such as finding thrills or excitement (Zhang & Lam, 1999 as cited by Kim & Chaplin, 2004:696). Maslow (1943) as cited by Saayman (2006:31), on the other hand, identified the following motives: relaxation, security, love, status, to be true to one's nature (self-discovery), knowledge and an appreciation for beauty (such as the environment). Kozak (2002:222) also found multiple items that he put into four dimensions. These were culture (to increase knowledge of new places), pleasure seeking, relaxation and physical activities (to keep them busy).

However, apart from these push-and-pull motivations, other determinants also play a role in visitors' desire and demand for travel (Cook *et al.*, 2010:35). Pearce and Butler (1993:113) see tourism demand as the outcome of tourists' motivation, as well as marketing, destination features and contingency matters, such as money, health and time relating to the visitor's choice behaviour. Determinants should therefore be distinguished from motivations and buying behaviour (Vanhove, 2005:50). According to Burkart and Medlik (1986), the determinants of tourism demand are those factors that drive and set limits to the volume of a population's demand for holiday and travel. Uysal (1998:86), Prideaux (2004:783) and Zalatan (1996:124) summarise the determinants under the following headings: economic factors, comparative prices, demographic factors, geographic factors, socio-cultural attitudes to tourism, mobility, government/regulatory, media communications and information, communication technology, disposable income, private consumption, demographic factors, visitors' personal motivations, travel preferences, perception of destination, attitudes towards destination, amount of leisure and travel time, paid vacations, past experiences, physical and mental health, cultural similarities, and affiliations.

However, until recently it was unclear which of these factors played a fundamental role in the increased bed occupancy of the KNP during the recession. This left a few unanswered questions pertaining to why tourists travelled to the KNP during the 2008/2009 recession, for example: Why did people still visit the park during this period?; Did they scale down on other inferior goods or daily luxuries to be able to afford their visit?; Did they scale down on spending at the park?; Did they make use of alternative/cheaper accommodation and did they still partake in as many activities at the park as they usually do during more stable economic times? Possible answers to these questions can be provided by analysing visitors' travel motives (push and pull) as well as the determinants that influence their demand and consequently their behaviour at the park. This information will provide valuable insights into the visitors' wants, needs and motivations and how the KNP product can be adapted and marketed according to visitors' specific requirements. In addition, establishing the influence of demand determinants on visitor behaviour, can aid park management to effectively manage these influences, especially during recessions. This will also ensure the sustainable growth in bed occupancy at the KNP. To date, no previous research on the influence of a recession on a visitor's travel motives to visit a South African national park has been conducted and this study is therefore invaluable for not only the KNP, but also for other national parks in the country and the rest of the world.

Hence, with the aftermath of the 2008/2009 recession in mind, the research question that this dissertation addressed was: What was the influence of the 2008/2009 recession on travel behaviour of visitors to the Kruger National Park?

### **1.3 GOAL OF THE STUDY**

To find answers to the problem statement, some objectives had to be achieved first.

#### **1.3.1 Goal**

To determine the influence of the 2008/2009 recession on travel behaviour of visitors to the Kruger National Park, the following secondary objectives had to be achieved.

#### **1.3.2 Secondary objectives**

- **Objective 1:** To analyse literature concerning travel motives and travel behaviour regarding visitors to national parks and nature areas.
- **Objective 2:** To determine the relationship between visitors' travel motives to the KNP and the recession.

- **Objective 3:** To identify the determinants of demand to the KNP during the economic recession.
- **Objective 4:** To draw conclusions and make recommendations regarding the motivations, determinants of demand and travel behaviour of visitors to the KNP.

The methods by which these objectives were achieved will be discussed in the next section.

## **1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

The research was conducted using two methods. The first part consisted of a literature study, and the second part was an empirical study.

### **1.4.1 Literature study**

This study entailed the use of the local library, the Ferdinand Postma Library on the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University as well as online databases containing information in the form of e-books, papers, reports and articles as well as papers written by students of previous years. Search engines, for example Science Direct and Google Scholar were used, as well as Internet sites. The keywords: SANParks (South African National Parks), Kruger National Park (KNP), economic downturn/recession, travel behaviour, travel motivations, push-and-pull factors and determinants of tourism demand were used to help obtain the relevant information. The literature study created a holistic understanding of visitors' travel motivations and the impacts of demand determinants on the tourists' behaviour at a destination. This was done to build a hard conceptual framework to improve the understanding of the objectives of the study.

### **1.4.2 Empirical study**

#### **1.4.2.1 Research design and method**

This was an exploratory empirical study, conducted by means of quantitative research. Maree and Pietersen (2008:145) define quantitative research as 'a process that is systematic and objective in its ways of using numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe (or population) to generalise the findings of the universe that is being studied'. The main objectives of the definition are thus to be objective, to use numerical data and to generalise information.

The strengths of the quantitative method include (Matveev, 2002:62):

- Very specific research problem and set terms.

- It is inexpensive to conduct.
- It is relatively easy to tabulate and analyse the data using statistical programs.
- Clearly and precisely specifying both the independent and the dependant variables under investigation.
- It arrives at more objective conclusions by firmly following the original set of research goals.
- It achieves high levels of reliability of gathered data because of controlled observations.
- It minimises or eliminates subjectivity of judgment.

For the purpose of this study, research was conducted at the KNP from 15 to 20 December 2009 by the Institute for Tourism and Leisure Studies. A structured questionnaire served as the instrument for the collection of data.

#### 1.4.2.2 Selection of the sampling frame

All the visitors to the KNP between 15 and 20 December 2009, staying overnight in the camps Skukuza or Satara as well as day visitors from Afsaal, Nkuhlu and Tshokwane who were willing to take part in the survey were asked to complete the questionnaires (Map1.1). Respondents were briefed beforehand to ensure that they understood the aim of the research. The camps surveyed were chosen because of their size, the number of visitors, the popularity and diversity of visitors (for example other cultures and nationalities). Fieldworkers distributed the questionnaires at the respective camps in the late afternoon. Both the camping visitors and chalets were included in the overnight visitor survey while fieldworkers handed out questionnaires at the day visitor sites. Fieldworkers were furthermore trained beforehand to ensure that they also understood the aim of the



Map 1.1: Kruger National Park  
(Adapted from African Safari Travel, 2007)

research and the information captured in the questionnaire, as well as to ensure that the maximum number of visitors was targeted for this study. A total of 355 questionnaires were successfully completed. Because this is an exploratory study, this number of questionnaires is sufficient.

#### **1.4.2.3 Development of the questionnaire**

The Institute for Tourism and Leisure Studies at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, developed the questionnaires in collaboration with SANParks management. Questions were used to measure the independent variables and demographic information and the questions were asked in such a way that they would provide answers that can assist in achieving the study's objectives. The questionnaire used to survey visitors at the KNP in December 2009 consisted of three sections (see Appendix 1) and measured the following:

**Section A:** Demographic details (gender, home language, age, occupation, home province and preferred accommodation) as well as socio-economic information (number of people in tour group, number of people paid for, type of accommodation and spending dynamics at the park).

**Section B:** Travel motivations (what motivates visitors to travel to the KNP that are push and pull factors).

**Section C:** The influence of the recession on behaviour such as the type of accommodation usually chosen, group size, length of stay, purchases of souvenirs and length of stay.

#### **1.4.2.4 Data analysis**

Microsoft<sup>®</sup> Excel<sup>®</sup> was used for data capturing and basic data analysis. The Statistical Services at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, assisted in the processing of the data and SPSS software (SPSS Inc., 2009) was used to process the information. Using SPSS, a factor- and regression analysis, and t-tests were carried out. A brief description of each analysis used appears in the next section.

- **Factor analysis**

According to Child (2006:1), a factor analysis is an 'orderly simplification' of several interrelated measures using mathematical procedures. This means that many different variables are categorised into factors so that there is less data to work with which, in turn,

implies simplicity. A factor analysis was conducted to determine the main motivations as well as the behaviour of visitors to choose the KNP as a holiday destination.

- **Regression analysis**

A regression analysis is a statistical tool used for the forecasting of change in a dependent variable (such as sales revenue) on the basis of change in one or more independent variables (population and income for example) (Sykes, 1992:1; Businessdictionary, 2010). For the purpose of this study, a hierarchical stepwise logistic regression was conducted, meaning that one dependent variable was regressed on a set of independent variables (SPSS, 2009). The regression analysis was used to identify the determinants of demand.

- **Independent t-test**

This type of test is also known as the analysis of means. This test is used when one wants to compare two independent groups based on their average score on a quantitative variable, or if average scores on two quantitative variables need to be compared in a single sample or if a quantitative variable needs to be compared with a specified constant value in a single sample (Ivankova, Creswell & Clark, 2008:255). For the purpose of this study, t-test analyses were used to indicate the differences between visitors who indicated in the questionnaire that they did not consider alternative destinations before travelling to the KNP and visitors who indicated that they did consider an alternative destination.

## **1.5 DEFINITIONS OF KEYWORDS**

This section clarifies terms and concepts that are used in the rest of this study.

### **1.5.1 Travel motivations**

According to Pizam, Neumann and Reichel (1979) as cited by Swanson and Horridge (2005:672) and Kim and Prideaux (2005:348), motivation to travel refers to a set of needs that causes a person to participate in a tourist activity. Travel motives include the following: people who want to expand their knowledge for prestige enhancement of human relations; relaxation and novelty such as finding thrills or excitement (Zhang & Lam, 1999 as cited by Kim & Chaplin, 2004:696). Travel motivation is considered to be one of the most important variables because it is a strong force behind all human behaviour (Oh, Uysal & Weaver, 1995:124).

Many models attempt to explain how travel motivation works. The following authors name and explain these models, Page and Connell (2009:81, 82 & 85), Kim, Borges and Chon (2006:958), Crompton and McKay (1997), Crompton (1979), Dann (1977), Swanson and

Horridge (2006) and Saayman (2006:30). Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which was developed in 1943, is widely acknowledged as the best-known work on hierarchy of human needs, which can be utilised to help explain visitors' travel motives. Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs that motivate people to travel. At the bottom of the hierarchy one finds psychological needs, which include hunger, thirst, sleep, sex and activity. These are the most basic forms of human needs. Safety needs are found on the next level of the hierarchy. This pertains to the freedom from threat, fear and anxiety. In other words, it is the need to feel secure. The next level is the need for socialisation (feeling of belonging or love). This includes friendship as well as receiving and giving love. The second last level is esteem needs, which includes a person's self-esteem, esteem for others, self-confidence, reputation and prestige. The highest level of the hierarchy of needs is self-actualisation. This is the personal feeling of self-fulfilment that a person reaches after all the other levels have been satisfied.

Another popular model is Dann's push and pull theory which incorporates factors that push people to travel such as personal desires (motives) and external factors such as determinants that create demand. This model also includes factors that pull people to a destination such as the unique attributes of the destination itself. Other well-known models include Iso Ahola's model (seeking and escaping dimensions of motivation), and Pearce's 'Travel career ladder', which suggests that individuals exhibit a 'career' in terms of tourism behaviour. They progress through their different lifecycle stages and can be constrained by income, health and other people. As the individuals start to receive a bigger income, they can afford to travel to more exotic destinations thereby building their travel career ladder (Page & Connell, 2009:85).

These models are very important because they create an understanding of what creates the need for travel and then niche marketing can make people aware that a particular destination offers what they demand, thus prompting travel to these destinations (Cook *et al.*, 2010:40-41).

### **1.5.2 Economic downturn/Recession**

An economic downturn is a period of repeated negative economic growth. It is also known as a 'credit crunch' or a 'recession' (Todd, 2008; Shama, 1993). Microsoft® Encarta® (2009) defines a recession as a 'decline in economic activity', it lasts for a period shorter than a depression, during which there is a decline in economic trade and prosperity. Brux (2011:140) defines a recession as 'a decline in a nation's gross domestic product (GDP) (output) associated with a rise in unemployment. Technically, there must be a decline in real

GDP for at least two consecutive quarters'. This definition is also supported by Tribe (2005:210). With this definition in mind, Ellis (2005) adds that there are four stages in a recession of which the first stage is where an economy is normally favourable. Then, during the second stage, economic growth starts to slow a little, which gives consumers (including tourists) an uneasy feeling as interest rates as well as inflation start to rise (the third stage). The final stage is when a country's GDP starts to decline, leading to higher levels of unemployment. This is called a recession.

Recessions are therefore one of the main causes of poverty, because businesses produce lower output levels, and have to retrench many workers. Other causes of poverty can include: poor labour productivity; structural changes in an economy (such as robots replacing human workforces), personal factors (people without adequate skills), demographic trends (births to unmarried mothers rising) and budget cuts (Brux, 2011:140-143). For an economy to recover from a recession, it is necessary for governments to develop new fiscal policies. A fiscal policy is a policy made by a government adjusting its spending and income, in this case for the alleviation of poverty. Brux (2011:363) gives a summary of what the USA government decided in their policy in an attempt to alleviate poverty during the 2008/2009 recession. The following were listed:

- An increase in government's spending on goods and services;
- A drastic reduction in government taxes; and
- An increase in government income transfer.

Table 1.1 gives a timeline of 18 past recessions as well as their durations for various countries from around the world. These recessions have lasted anything between 8 months to 19 years.

**Table 1.1:** Timeline of 18 recessions and world crises

Crises	Duration
1) The great depression (1929)	43 months
2) Recession of (1945)	8 months
3) Recession of (1948-1949)	11 months
4) Post-Korean War Recession (1953)	10 months
5) Recession of (1957-1958)	8 months
6) Recession of (1960-1961)	10 months
7) Bond Inversion of (1965-1967) (no recession)	-
8) Recession of (1969-1970)	11 months
9) 1973 oil crisis (1973-1975)	16 months
10) 1979 energy crisis	12 months

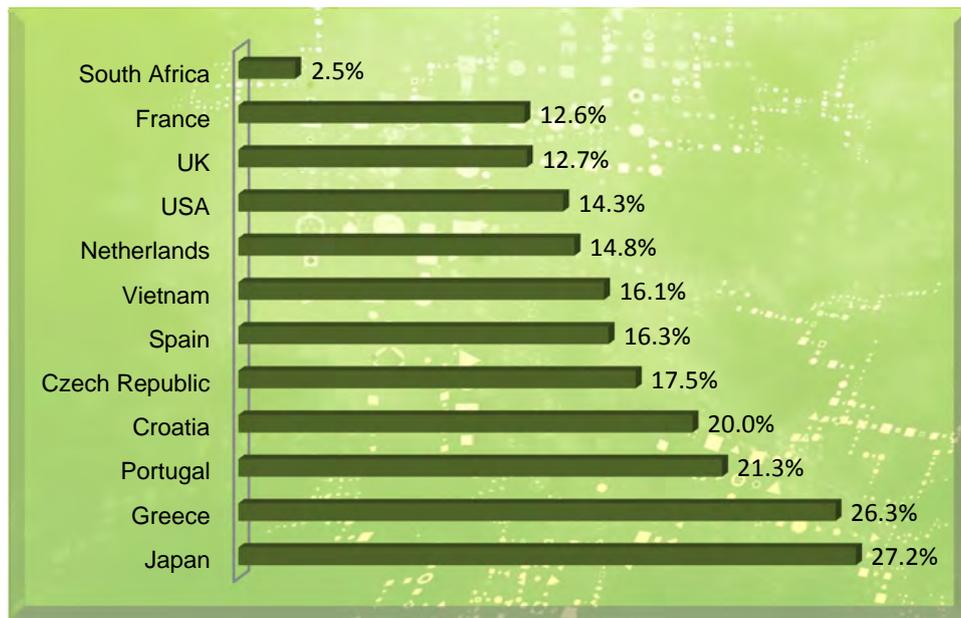
11) Recession of (1981-1982)	16 months
12) Early 1980s recession	12 months
13) Great commodities depression (1980-2000)	20 years
14) Late 1980s recession (1988-1992)	4 years
15) Japanese recession (1991 to present)	19 years so far
16) Asian financial crisis (1997)	-
17) Early 2000s recession (2001-2003)	-
18) Major global recession (2007- )	3 years so far

**Sources:** *Blain (2008), Bloomberg Businessweek (2010), Hunt (2002)*

During the 2007 global recession, the United States of America (USA) experienced its worst recession since World War 2. This lasted 18 months and ended in June 2009. During this period, eight million jobs were lost, meaning that 1 in 10 United States (US) workers were jobless (News24, 2010). The British government had to cut jobs by 490 000 (Hindustantimes, 2010), while unemployment levels in Ireland tripled during this recession (Bloomberg, 2010). As shown in Figure 1.1, the economic recession also had a drastic effect on tourism globally, with Japan (27.2%), Greece (26.3%), Portugal (21.3%) and Croatia (20%) showing the worst declines in international tourist arrivals during the first quarter of 2009. The USA had a total international visitor decline of 14.3 percent, while the UK and France showed declines of 12.7 percent and 12.6 percent respectively. These figures clearly show the implications of the recession on global tourism and poverty levels, from which one can conclude that recessions have very negative impacts on world economies, social classes and travel behaviour. This pertains to the impacts on an international scale but, for the purpose of this study, it is important to determine the repercussions of the 2008/2009 recession on a national scale for South Africa.

In the second quarter of 2009, South Africa officially joined this global recession after experiencing its first two consecutive negative GDP growths in 17 years. A total growth of -6.4 percent was recorded in the first quarter of 2009 and -1.8 percent in the second quarter (SouthAfrica.info, 2009). Retail sales were down by 6 percent in the second quarter of 2009 compared to 2008 (Fin24, 2009). Monetary policy (policies made by the central bank) were quickly changed in an attempt to dampen the effects of the recession and rebuild the economy. The central bank did this by cutting interest rates by 500 basis points from December 2008 to February 2010 as well as leaving the repo rate flat at 7 percent. In the third quarter of 2009, South Africa exited its recession and, in the fourth quarter, showed a positive GDP growth of 3.2 percent (Fin24, 2010) as well as a growth of 4.6 percent in international arrivals (Eturbonews, 2010). However, when comparing the effects of the recession in South Africa with other countries, South Africa was not too strongly influenced by the 2008/2009 recession. Compared to other countries, South Africa showed only a 2.5

percent decline in international arrivals (Figure 1.1), while domestic tourism declined by 8 percent (StatsSA, 2009a:10, 46). As previously mentioned, the KNP did not feel the effects of the recession to a large extent, thus it would be in the interest of SANParks to know why and how they can apply the KNP's success to their other parks. This is because it is important to be ready for tourism crises such as recessions, because recessions take place every few years (Table 1.1).



**Figure 1.1:** Countries with the highest international arrival declines, first quarter 2009.  
**Sources:** Bloomberg (2010) and StatsSA (2009a)

### 1.5.3 South African National Parks (SANParks)

SANParks is a South African government-run organisation which was proclaimed on 31 May, 1926. This organisation strives to develop a system of national parks that represent the biodiversity, landscapes, and associated heritage assets of South Africa for the sustainable use and benefit of all (SANParks, 2010). SANParks' three main functions are to develop tourism in South African parks, to protect the natural environment and to do all this in a sustainable manner. This organisation strives towards South Africa's national parks becoming the pride and joy of all South Africans and the rest of the world (Parks-SA: 2000). SANParks currently cover an area of 4 111 113 hectares that includes the following parks: Groenkloof, Kruger, Table Mountain, Marakele, Golden Gate, Camdeboo, Mountain Zebra, Addo Elephant, Garden Route National Park (Tsitsikamma, Knysna, & Wilderness), Bontebok, Agulhas, West Coast, Karoo, Namaqua, Richtersveld, Augrabies, Kgalagadi, Mapungubwe, Tankwa Karoo and Mokala. SANParks also does very well financially by

generating 75 percent of their own total revenue each year, which is a major feat for national parks around the world in general (SANParks, 2010).

#### **1.5.4 Kruger National Park (KNP)**

The Kruger National Park (KNP) is named after the Transvaal's President, Paul Kruger, who requested that, the government put a piece of land aside in the Lowveldt to protect the animals that were rapidly being killed by hunters and farmers, for the benefit of future generations. In 1889, the government accepted the request from Paul Kruger and two areas were set aside for the conservation of land and animals, which were in close proximity to the Pongola River and today's Shingwedzi west camp in the KNP. In 1895, the government accepted the proposal from R.K. Loveday and, in March 1898, the Sabi Game Reserve was established (Erasmus, 2004:275). James Stevenson-Hamilton was the first and long serving chief warden, who nurtured the area for 40 years and gave his nickname, Skukuza, to the main camp. After the establishment of SANParks, the Sabie Game Reserve was incorporated into its management and renamed the KNP in 1898 (KNP, 2010). Today the KNP is one of the African Continents oldest parks (Barker, Dennis & De la Harpe, 1999:17). There are no other existing parks that can rival the biodiversity, advanced environmental management techniques, or policies of the KNP. This park is home to a diverse number of animal and plant species and is equally rich in cultural heritage with cave paintings and amazing archaeological sites like Masorini and Thulamela (South Africa Happenings, 2009). As a result, the KNP experiences very high volumes of tourists visiting it each year and between April 2002 and March 2003, the one million tourist mark was reached (Polity, 2003) of which 80 percent of visitors were South Africans (Scholtz, Kruger & Saayman, 2010:1).

#### **1.5.5 Determinants of tourism demand**

Pearce and Butler (1993:113), and Burkart and Medlik (1981:57-58) state that the determinants of tourism demand are those factors that drive and set limits to the volume of a populations' demand for holiday and travel. These determinants can be external (uncontrolled by visitors) or internal (to some extent controlled by visitors). Uysal (1998:86), Prideaux (2004:783) and Zalatan (1996:124) name the following main types of determinants, economic factors, comparative prices, demographic factors, geographic factors, socio-cultural attitudes to tourism, mobility, government/regulatory, media communications and information and communication technology. Uysal (1998:86), Prideaux (2004:783) and Zalatan (1996:124) state that internal determinants are factors that a person can control since these are part of their personal lives. The following are examples of internal determinants: disposable income, private consumption; demographic factors, people's personal motivations, travel preferences, perception of destination, attitudes towards

destination, amount of leisure and travel time, paid vacations, past experiences, physical and mental health as well as cultural similarities.

### **1.5.6 Types of goods**

In order to improve the understanding of goods, especially within tourism, it is important to look at the different types of goods. Goods may be classified as follows:

#### **1.5.6.1 Luxury goods and Basic needs**

According to Bromma and Bromma (2009), basic necessities include goods that people will always need to consume, in other words, products that people need to survive such as food products, water and energy (electricity). Luxury goods are items such as vacation resorts, cruise lines and high-end retailers. Consumers will thus be deterred from using these products when there is a deficit in disposable income, especially during economic downturns, recessions and depressions.

#### **1.5.6.2 Normal goods and Inferior goods**

Anderton (2006:66) states that the pattern of demand will likely change when income changes. One can furthermore assume that consumers will increase their demand for most goods when income increases. These types of goods are called normal goods. When receiving enough income to be able to afford more expensive goods, the demand for less expensive goods will fall. These types of goods are called inferior goods. An example of inferior goods is bus transport; people that are able to afford cars will not ride the bus for instance.

#### **1.5.6.3 Ordinary goods and Giffen goods**

Ordinary goods are any goods of which the demand will rise when the price decreases, as long as it is a product that consumers need. Demand for this same product will fall as prices increase. Giffen goods are goods of which the demand increases even though the price increases. This is because a substitution takes place. An example of this is of consumers that are used to eating bread as well as meat. When the prices of bread and meat rises, consumers will stop buying meat and rather buy more bread than usual (Runde, Faulkner, Taylor & Aidt, 2007).

## **1.6 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION**

This dissertation consists of four chapters. A brief outline of what can be expected from each of the chapters follows.

Chapter one contains background information on the KNP and the economic downturn, the problem statement, objectives and method of research.

Chapter two contains the first article, in which travel motivations of visitors to the KNP during the 2008/2009 recession period were determined.

Chapter three contains the second article, which analyses the determinants that influence visitors' demand to travel to the KNP.

The final chapter consists of conclusions drawn from the discussion in the previous chapters. Recommendations were be made regarding the motivations, determinants of demand and behaviour of visitors at the KNP during the economic downturn.

# MOTIVATIONS OF VISITORS TO THE KRUGER NATIONAL PARK DURING THE 2008/2009 RECESSION PERIOD

## CHAPTER

# 2

### ABSTRACT

The deterioration in global economic conditions during 2008/2009 has increased pressure on travellers to cut costs on luxury items such as going on holiday and this has led to a global tourism decline of 8 percent. This, however, was not the case in various national parks in the USA or the Kruger National Park (KNP) in South Africa. During the recession period, the KNP's Accommodation Unit Occupancy experienced a sustained growth of 1.6 percent. To sustain this growth, it is of the utmost importance to determine why people visit the park even during a recession. Therefore the aim of this study was to determine the reasons why people travel to the KNP and, to achieve this aim, 400 questionnaires were distributed at the KNP between 15-20 December 2009 (high season). A total of 355 completed questionnaires were included in the analysis of which a factor analysis was done. Six motives were identified and 'escape', 'wildlife experience' and 'family benefits' were rated the most important reasons. The results indicated that both push and pull factors motivate visitors to travel to the KNP. However, the push factors were more dominant to the extent that visitors regard taking a holiday to the park as a necessity. It furthermore seems that visitors adapt their spending behaviour at the park to still be able to afford going to the KNP during recession. This information is important for South African National Parks because it provides a better understanding of visitors' feelings towards the park, especially during recessions, which will, in turn, lead to improved niche marketing and a competitive advantage.

*Keywords:* South African National Parks (SANParks), Tourism, Travel motives, Push and pull theory, Factor analysis

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

During periods of economic prosperity and downturns, the travel and tourism industry has historically behaved like a luxury good. Song and Lin (2010:16) and Papatheodourou *et al.* (2010:44) explain that when an individual's income rises so does the need for luxury goods and services (ordinary goods), because they spend a smaller share of their income on essentials such as clothing and food. The demand for luxury goods such as travel and tourism therefore rises during periods of economic growth. However, during economic recessions, consumers' demand for luxuries, including travel and tourism, decline (Wilkerson, 2003:50) because consumers may prefer to keep their income for basic needs such as food, shelter and family necessities (Papatheodourou *et al.*, 2010:44). According to Fernando and Meedeniya (2009:12) as well as Nyaupane, Morais and Graefe (2004:542) this trend supports Maslow's hierarchy of needs which states that a person will postpone using disposable income as well as putting off recreational activities during tough economic times so that more important needs such as food, drinks and their social security such as current employment, can remain secure.

Papatheodourou *et al.* (2010:44) state that tourism involves discretionary income and, according to Wilkerson (2003:46) and Bramwell and Lane (2003:1), it is for this reason that travel and tourism grows during times of economic expansion, but stagnates during economic recessions.

The 2008/2009 global financial crisis began in July 2007 and resulted in a slowdown of both developed and developing economies around the world (Fernando & Meedeniya, 2009:12; Song & Lin, 2010:16). The recession also significantly influenced the tourism industry since the global demand for travel and tourism declined by 8 percent (Fernando & Meedeniya, 2009:12; Tourism-review, 2009). The Global Travel and Tourism Economy GDP declined by 4.8 percent in 2009, while almost 5 million tourism related jobs were lost (WTTC, 2009:6). The economic recession also had a negative effect on the tourism industry in South Africa with domestic travel decreasing by 8 percent (SAT, 2009:46).

With this in mind, Fernando and Meedeniya (2009:12) and Nyaupane *et al.* (2004:542) point out that a recession does not necessarily influence an individual's will to travel, but rather affects its affordability. This notion is verified when looking at the performance of nature-based tourism during the recession. Despite restricted finances, the demand for nature-based tourism has increased during the recession and, especially, visits to national parks

have escalated. When looking at national parks in the United States of America (USA), a strong growth was visible in parks during the 2009 period. Some of the parks that had a huge growth in visitor numbers included parks such as Utah's national parks where visits increased by an average of 300 000, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area attracted 13 000 more visitors and Arches National Park attracted 7.3 percent more visitors (Davidson, 2010; Seattletimes, 2010). This growth was also evident in South African national parks, especially in the Kruger National Park (KNP). This raises the question, why do people travel to national parks despite a recession?

The KNP is one of the oldest and most profitable national parks in South Africa as well as in the world. The park was proclaimed in 1898 and recently celebrated its 111<sup>th</sup> birthday (SANParks, 2009:31). The park is one of the largest game reserves in Africa, covering about 20 000 square kilometres, which is larger than the area covered by countries such as Israel and the Netherlands. The park's length extends 350 kilometres from north to south, and its breadth is 60 kilometres from east to west (Kruger National Park, 2010). The KNP contains a very high diversity of living organisms including: 1 982 species of plants; 517 species of birds; 147 species of mammals (including the Big 5) and 114 species of reptile. The park has 21 rest camps, 2 private lodge concessions and 15 designated private safari lodges. There are nine gates that provide access to the park, which makes the park much more accessible from the two provinces surrounding it (Mpumalanga and Limpopo). Visitors can also enjoy a wide variety of recreational activities and facilities at the park including game drives, photography, bird watching, accommodation, swimming pools and restaurants.

The KNP is therefore an all-inclusive holiday destination and provides tourists with a unique nature and leisure experience, which is a major drawcard for both domestic and international tourists (Saayman & Saayman, 2009). This national park therefore acts as a strong magnet for tourists, is a major export earner and constitutes an important part of the South African tourism industry (Uysal *et al.*, 1994:18; Cook *et al.*, 2010:212). It is therefore not surprising that, during the recession period, the KNP experienced a sustained growth in Accommodation Unit Occupancy of 1.6 percent (SANParks, 2009:13). One explanation given by researchers for why travel and tourism activities are sustained, or even grow during the recession, is that while spending in general may be a luxury, taking some form of vacation may be a necessity or basic need (Wilkerson, 2003:50).

Based on this, Fernando and Meedeniya (2009:12) point out that visits to a destination such as the KNP are essentially driven by the visitors' desire to visit places for leisure, enjoyment and relaxation while also needing the time and money to engage in it. Lee and Sparks

(2007:505) add that, even though an individual's lifestyle is constantly changing according to personal, social, economic and political circumstances, they may still regard their travel-specific lifestyle as important. However, while visitors had less discretionary income to travel because of the recession, they continued to visit the KNP. Therefore, since the decision to visit a destination (in this case a national park) is a directed action which is triggered by a desire to meet a need (Crompton & McKay, 1997:425; Goossens, 2000:302; Lohmann, 2004:3), it can be assumed that visitors regard travelling to the KNP as a necessity and an important part of their travel lifestyle. Since needs and motivations are interrelated and the existence of the former generates the latter (Kozak, 2002:222), the purpose of this research is to determine why the tourists still visit the KNP during a recession. To achieve this, the article is structured in the following manner: the literature review will be followed by a description of the method of research, which is followed by a discussion of the results, a discussion of the findings, implications and, finally, concluding remarks.

## 2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Travel motivation is considered to be one of the most important variables when making the decision to participate in a tourism activity, because it is a strong force behind all human behaviour (Oh *et al.*, 1995:124). According to Pizam, Neumann and Reichel (1979) as cited by Swanson and Horridge (2005:672), Park and Yoon (2009:100) and Kim and Prideaux (2005:348) travel motivation refers to a set of needs that causes a person to participate in a tourist activity. Motivational factors are psychological needs that play a significant role in causing a person to feel psychological disequilibrium that may be corrected through a travel experience (Crompton, 1979; Kim, Crompton & Botha, 2000:34). Travel motives can therefore be defined as those factors that create a person's desire to travel (Bhatia, 2006b:28). Hence, motivation functions as a trigger for travel behaviour and determines different aspects of tourist activity such as (1) the reasons for travelling or *why*, (2) the specific destination or *where* and (3) the results obtained or overall satisfaction with the trip (Castaño, Moreno, García & Crego, 2003).

There are four frequently-used theoretical frameworks to explain tourist motivation (Cook *et al.*, 2010:34). These are (1) Maslow's *hierarchy of needs*, (2) Iso-Ahola's *escape-seeking* dichotomy, (3) the notion of *push-pull* factors and (4) the notion of *disequilibrium* (Kim *et al.*, 2006:958; Crompton & McKay, 1997:427; Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Swanson & Horridge, 2006:672). Maslow (1943) is acknowledged as the best-known work on motivation (Page & Connell, 2009:81). Maslow argued that an individual's needs fall into five broad

categories and that these five categories form a hierarchy beginning with lower order of physical needs (such as food, water, sleep and shelter) moving through to higher order self-actualisation needs. This is based on the premise that each of the needs expressed in a category should be satisfied before the individual sought motivation from a higher category of need (Cook *et al.*, 2010:34; Page & Connell, 2009:81).

Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it can be assumed that, during economic recessions, individuals will adjourn discretionary income and travel so that more important needs such as food, water and especially employment remain secure (Fernando & Meedeniya, 2009:12; Nyaupane *et al.*, 2004:542). However, taking into account that 1 326 054 visitors travelled to the KNP during 2008/2009 (SANParks, 2009:31), it seems that visitors somewhat disregarded lower order needs and still considered taking a holiday to the national park a necessity. Therefore, while Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be useful in demonstrating the source of individual's initial needs and wants and where the satisfaction of these needs may ultimately lead to the purchase of a holiday (Page & Connell, 2009:82), to find possible explanations for this phenomenon, the theory of push and pull factors may provide more insights into the motives and reasons driving visitors to the KNP during the recession.

Tourism literature emphasises the importance of both push and pull factors in shaping tourist motivations and in choosing vacation destinations. The notion of this theory is that tourists are both 'pushed' to travel by personality traits or individual needs and wants, and 'pulled' to travel by appealing attributes of the destination (Cook *et al.*, 2010:34; Kim & Chaplin, 2004:179; Galloway, 2002:581). Push motives are person-based determinants of behaviour and comprise of socio-demographic characteristics such as age, income, education, gender and occupation as well as a variety of psychological variables which can be grouped under the general headings of needs, personal values and personality (Galloway, 2002:582; Cook *et al.*, 2010:34; Kim & Chaplin, 2004:695). Push motives can thus include the following: a person's desire to escape their everyday environment; to rest and relax; for health and fitness reasons; for adventure; for prestige; for social interactions; for novelty seeking; for the exploration of a new area; for enhancements of personal relationships; to evaluate themselves; to learn new things; to satisfy their desire for pampering; to be entertained and the need to partake in their personal hobbies (Cook *et al.*, 2010:34; Zhang & Lam, 1999 as cited by Kim & Chaplin, 2004:696). In addition, common push factors found in tourism-related studies include knowledge-seeking, relaxation and family togetherness (Jang & Wu, 2006:307). Pull motives, on the other hand, are features external to a person (Galloway, 2002:582) and include destination attributes, features of attractions that are primarily related to the attractiveness of a destination (Bansal & Eiselt, 2004:387). These factors therefore

'pull' visitors to the destination and can include social opportunities and attractions, natural and cultural amenities, accommodation and transport, infrastructure, friendly people, amenities and recreational activities, bars and evening entertainment, natural and historical environment, cost, facilities, safety and ease of access (Fakaye & Crompton, 1991; Kim *et al.*, 2003:171; Jang & Wu, 2006:307).

Klenosky (2002) points out that while push and pull factors have generally been characterised as relating to two separate decisions made at two separate points in time, push and pull factors should not be viewed as being entirely independent of each other but rather as being fundamentally related to each other. This notion is supported by Cha, McCleary and Uysal (1995) and Uysal and Jurowski (1994) who also affirmed that while the internal forces push people to travel, the external forces of the destination itself simultaneously pull them to choose that particular destination. It can thus be understood that a visit to a national park is directed by both push and pull motives. This is verified by previous research done on the push and pull motives of visitors to national parks and nature areas as outlined in Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1:** Analysis of previous research on travel motives

RESEARCHER/S	STUDY TOPIC	MAIN FINDINGS
Uysal, McDonald & Martin (1994)	Travel motivations of Australian tourists to US national parks.	5 factors:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Relaxation/hobbies'</li> <li>• 'Novelty'</li> <li>• 'Enhancement of kinship relations'</li> <li>• 'Escape'</li> <li>• 'Prestige'</li> </ul>
Galloway & Lopez (1999)	Sensation seeking and attitudes to aspects of national parks: a preliminary empirical investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet new people.</li> <li>• Stimulating activities.</li> <li>• Seek and experience animals living in Park.</li> <li>• Facilities such as eating in areas in park which are undisturbed.</li> </ul>
Kim, Lee & Klenosky (2003)	Influence of push and pull factors at Korean National Parks	<b>Push factors:</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family togetherness and study</li> <li>• Appreciating natural resources and health</li> <li>• Escaping from everyday routine</li> <li>• Adventure and building friendship</li> </ul>
		<b>Pull factors</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key tourist resources</li> <li>• Information and convenience of facilities</li> <li>• Accessibility and transportation</li> </ul>

<b>Afwaritefe (2004)</b>	Motivations of people to Nigerian National Parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-actualisation</li> <li>• An educational or cultural context</li> <li>• Recreational or leisure pursuit</li> </ul>
<b>Tao, Eagles &amp; Smith (2004)</b>	Travel motives of Asian tourists to Taiwan`s Tatoko National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning about nature</li> <li>• Participating in recreational activities</li> </ul>
<b>Van der Merwe &amp; Saayman (2008)</b>	Travel motivations of tourists to the Kruger National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Attractions</li> <li>• Nostalgia</li> <li>• Novelty</li> <li>• Escape</li> </ul>
<b>Saayman &amp; Saayman (2009)</b>	Travel motivations to the Addo National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Family</li> <li>• Escape</li> <li>• Attractions</li> <li>• Photography</li> </ul>
<b>Kruger &amp; Saayman (2010)</b>	Comparative study between travel motives to the Tsitsikamma National Park and KNP	<b>Similarities</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge seeking</li> <li>• Nostalgia</li> <li>• Park attributes</li> <li>• Escape</li> <li>• Relaxation</li> </ul>
		<b>Dissimilarities</b>
		<b>The KNP differed in terms of:</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Novelty</li> <li>• Nature experience</li> <li>• Photography</li> </ul>

Collectively, the results in Table 2.1 show that visitors to national parks and nature areas are primarily pushed by the need to relax or to escape their everyday environment, and pulled by nature as well as the attributes of the park and nature area. These results confirm the notions by Kim *et al.* (2003:171) and Qu and Ping (1999) that pull factors of national parks are different between countries and their locations. Qu and Ping (1999:238) claim that different visitors have different motivations for travel and different visitors may engage in the same (park) element and derive different benefits from the experience. Kerstetter, Hou and Lin (2004:491) add that visitors who are engaged in environmentally friendly activities in a

nature area for a certain period of time; have their own unique motives for visiting these areas. This also proves to be true for South African national parks. Saayman and Saayman (2009) identified six travel motivations of visitors at the Addo Elephant National Park. These were nature, activities, family, escape, attractions and photography while Kruger and Saayman (2010) compared the travel motives of visitors at the KNP and Tsitsikamma national parks. Results revealed that the main motives in both national parks were knowledge seeking, nostalgia, park attributes as well as escape and relaxation. The KNP differed in terms of activities and novelty, compared to nature experience and photography in the case of the Tsitsikamma National Park.

Although travel motivations to the KNP have previously been determined, it is possible that the recent economic recession had an influence on visitors' motivations and reasons to travel to the park. The importance of certain motivations could also have changed during this period. It is therefore important to determine the motives of visitors to the park during this period, since Pan and Ryan (2007:289) emphasise that to continue to maintain a sustainable growth rate, to do effective marketing and to apply proper management to national parks, such as the KNP, management should understand and be aware of the underlying reasons why tourists travel. Correspondingly, Kozak (2002) stresses that it is imperative that empirical examination of tourist motivation is undertaken, since this will help to identify the attributes that are to be promoted, or identify markets in which tourist motivations and destination features and resources match. Additionally, research will provide a greater understanding of the importance of travelling to a national park, because no research has to date been conducted of the effects of recession on visitors' travel motives to South African national parks.

### 2.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The method of this exploratory research will be discussed under the following two headings: (1) the questionnaire, (2) Sample and survey and (3) statistical analysis.

### 2.3.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire used to survey the Kruger National Park in 2009 was based on the questionnaire used by Saayman and Saayman (2009), Kruger and Saayman (2010) and Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008) at respectively the KNP and Tsitsikamma National Parks and was adapted with the recent recession in mind. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section A captured the demographic details of the visitors (language, gender, age, race, marital status, country of residents, province, highest qualification and occupation) while Section B measured the economic information such as size of tour group, number of visitors paid for, an indication as to whether visitors were visiting for the day or staying overnight, the type of accommodation they are staying in, the number of nights staying in the park, an indication whether it was their first visit to this national park, the number of previous visits to the park, the number of visits over the last three years as well as their spending dynamics. Section C measured the respondents' travel motivations to visit the KNP. Twenty-one items were listed and respondents were asked to rate the importance of each item on a five-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important; 2 = less important; 3 = important; 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important). Respondents were furthermore asked to describe their feelings towards the park in one word and they had to indicate whether they considered any alternative destinations before deciding on the KNP. In addition, respondents were asked what value added services they would prefer at the park, despite the tough economic conditions. The extent to which the economic situation influenced certain aspects relating to the respondents' visit to the KNP were also measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Completely; 2 = To a greater extent; 3 = To some extent; 4 = To a lesser extent; 5 = Not at all). Lastly, respondents were asked to give their opinion on why the KNP was still visited even though the world was in an economic recession. For the purpose of this study, Sections A, B, and a portion of C were used.

### 2.3.2 The sample and survey

Day visitors as well as overnight visitors were included in the sample. Overnight visitors who were willing, completed questionnaires at Skukuza as well as Satara



**Map 2.1: Kruger National Park**  
(Adapted from African Safari Travel,

camps, because these two camps are the biggest and most popular in the KNP (see Map 2.1). Fieldworkers distributed the questionnaires just before sunset and collected them later in the evening. At day visitor areas, including Afsaal, Nkulu and Tshokwane, questionnaires were handed out to visitors who were willing to complete them. Fieldworkers were well trained beforehand to ensure that they understood the aim of the questionnaire and to guarantee that the maximum number of questionnaires were completed. A total of 355 questionnaires were completed over a five-day period (15-20 December 2009). Since the profile of visitors to the KNP during December has stayed consistent over a period of nine years (2001-2009) (Saayman, Kruger & Fouché, 2009:34-40), the total number of completed questionnaires were sufficient. Microsoft<sup>®</sup> Excel<sup>®</sup> was used for data capturing and basic data analysis.

### **2.3.3 Statistical analysis**

The analysis of data from this research consisted of two stages. The first stage of the analysis compiled a general profile of the visitors to the KNP during December 2009 using the statistical program SPSS (SPSS Inc. 2009). During the second stage, a principal component factor analysis was done on the 21 motivation criteria by means of SPSS (SPSS Inc. 2009) to explain the variance-covariance structure of a set of variables through a linear combination of these variables. In the research, Eigenvalues were used as the criterion. All factors with a load above 0.3 were included, while factors with a loading below this were considered as insignificant. Any items that cross-loaded on two or more factors were assigned to the factor where interpretability was best. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was used to indicate whether sufficient data had been collected to ensure compact factor structures. To determine the reliability of each scale within the factors, a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was computed. Factors with a reliability coefficient above 0.6 were considered as acceptable for this study. The average inter-item correlations were also calculated as another measure of reliability. According to Clark and Watson (1995), the average inter-item correlation should lie between 0.15 and 0.55.

## **2.4 RESULTS**

The results will be discussed in two sections. Firstly, an overview of the profile of visitors to the Kruger National Park will be given and this will be followed by a discussion of the results from the factor analysis.

### 2.4.1 Visitor profile to the Kruger National Park

The main respondent profile of visitors to the Kruger National Park during December 2009 was white, male, Afrikaans-speaking tourists in their late forties. These tourists were married, well educated with a professional occupation, and originating from Gauteng Province, South Africa. They preferred to travel in groups of one to four people, and they were financially responsible for one to two people in their group. The majority of visitors were overnight visitors who preferred to camp and the length of stay, on average, was three to six nights. The majority of visitors indicated that they have previously visited the KNP, with an average of 14 visits. Visitors to the KNP have visited the park as overnight visitors once or twice in the past three years, with the day visitors' figures similar to overnight visitors (See Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2:** Visitor profile at the KNP (2009)

CATEGORY	PROFILE
Home language	Afrikaans (56%); English (34%)
Gender	Male (55%); Female (45%)
Race	White (94%); Black (3%); Indian (2%)
Age	35-49 years of age (Average: 44)
Marital status	Married (63%)
Country of residence	RSA (84%); Netherlands (4%);
Province of residence	Gauteng (59%); Mpumalanga (14%)
Level of education	75% qualified higher than matric
Occupation	Professional (20%); Self-Employed (18%); Management (15%)
Number of people in group	3-4 people (37%); 1-2 people (34%)
Overnight visitors' length of stay	2-4 nights (22%); 5-6 nights (21%)
Number of first visits	First visits (17%)
Number of previous visits	20-29 visits (21%);
Number of day visits during last 3 years	No visits (62%); 1-2 visits (13%)

### 2.4.2 Results of the factor analysis

The factor analysis (Pattern Matrix) using an Oblimin rotation with the Kaiser Normalisation identified six factors, which were named according to similar attributes: Factor 1 = *Escape*; Factor 2 = *Finances*; Factor 3 = *Socialising and exploration*; Factor 4 = *Family benefit*;

Factor 5 = *Wildlife experience*; and Factor 6 = *Loyalty*. The six motivational factors accounted for 63 percent of the total variance. All motivational factors had relatively high reliability coefficients ranging from 0.50 (the lowest) to 0.74 (the highest). The average inter-item correlation coefficients varied between 0.34 and 0.50 for the motivations, and this also implies internal consistency for all factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy of 0.81 also indicated that patterns of correlation are relatively compact and thus yield distinct and relative factors (Field, 2005:640). Moreover, all items loaded on a factor with loadings greater than 0.3 and relatively high factor loadings indicate a reasonably high correlation between the delineated factors and their individual items. Any items that cross-loaded on one or more factors, such as ‘the Park is value for money’ which cross-loaded on factors 1, 2 and 5, were categorised into factors where interpretability was best. This also applied to ‘*For family or to spend time with someone special*’; ‘*The Park offers a unique experience*’ and ‘*I am loyal towards the Park*’. The results of the factor analysis are presented in Table 2.3 below.

**Table 2.3:** Factor analysis results of visitors’ motivations to the KNP

FACTORS						
	1: ESCAPE	2: FINANCES	3: SOCIALISING & EXPLORATION	4: FAMILY BENEFITS	5: WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE	6: LOYALTY
<b>MEAN VALUE</b>	4	2.9	2.9	3.3	3.9	2.9
To relax	0.814					
To get away from my routine	0.709					
The Park is an ideal holiday destination	0.484					
The accommodation is affordable		0.826				
The Park has affordable activities, shops and restaurants		0.762				
It is the closest national park, and therefore an affordable holiday destination		0.731				
The Park is value for money		0.458				
To spend time with my friends			0.717			
To explore a new destination			0.712			

For the benefit of my children				0.804		
Primarily for educational purposes				0.637		
I own a Wildcard, therefore I can visit the Park regularly				0.548		
For family or to spend time with someone special				0.526		
The wide variety of wildlife and activities in the Park					0.758	
To photograph animals and plants					0.715	
It offers the Big 5					0.647	
The Park offers a unique experience					0.54	
Because I grew up with the park						0.828
It is an annual commitment						0.649
I am loyal towards the park						0.635
It is a well known brand						0.515
RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT	0.74	0.7	0.5	0.69	0.7	0.67
INTER ITEM CORRELATION	0.5	0.38	0.34	0.36	0.37	0.34

Factor scores were calculated as the average of all items contributing to a specific factor so that they can be interpreted on the original 5-point Likert scale of measurement (1 = Completely; 2 = To a greater extent; 3 = To some extent; 4 = To a lesser extent; 5 = Not at all). As shown in Table 2, the following attributes were identified of which factors 1, 4 and 5 obtained the highest loading:

**Factor 1: *Escape*:**

Escape (Factor 1) has the highest mean value of 4, a reliability coefficient of 0.74 and an average inter-item correlation of 0.5. Escape (Factor 1) included the following activities: Relax; Get away from routine; and Ideal destination. Based on this factor's high mean value,

it can be stated that visitors to the KNP want to get away from their daily routine, and that they view the KNP as an ideal destination.

**Factor 5: *Wildlife experience***

Factor 5 was labelled *Wildlife experience* and has the second highest mean value (3.9), indicating motivational importance for a variety of wildlife and activity, photography, the Big 5 and a unique experience. *Wildlife experience* has a reliability coefficient of 0.7 and an inter-item correlation of 0.37. This factor reveals that visitors consider wildlife experiences and photography as important reasons to visit the KNP.

**Factor 4: *Family benefits***

A mean value of 3.3 was measured for Factor 4 and the reliability coefficient was 0.69 and the inter-item correlation was 0.36. This factor was named *Family benefits* because it consists of items such as benefits for children, education, Wildcards, and spending time with family or someone special.

Judged against these Factors, Factors 2, 3 and 6 obtained the lowest mean values of 2.9 respectively.

- *Finances* (Factor 2) has a reliability coefficient of 0.7 and an average inter-item correlation of 0.38. Under *Finances*, the following motives were identified: Affordable accommodation; activities, restaurants and shops are affordable, and value for money. *Finances'* low mean value reveals that visitors did not find the fact that the park is affordable as the most important factor and that they visited the KNP regardless of the financial implications.

- *Socialising and exploration* (Factor 3) has a reliability coefficient of 0.5 and an inter-item correlation of 0.34. Activities such as having a good time with friends as well as the exploration of a new destination were most evident within this factor. When reviewing this factor's low mean value, it is apparent that spending time with friends while exploring new areas is not that important for visitors to visit the KNP.

- *Loyalty* (Factor 6) obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.67 and an inter-item correlation of 0.34. Items included in this factor are: people that grew up with the KNP; people that visit the KNP annually, people that are loyal towards the KNP and the brand. Based on this, it becomes clear that visitors are not that brand loyal towards the park because it is part of SANParks, but that they are loyal towards the KNP itself.

Based on the results, the next section will discuss the findings and conclusions.

## 2.5 FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of this research was to determine the reasons why visitors still travelled to the KNP during the recession. The results revealed six travel motives or reasons for travelling. These were *Escape*, *Finances*, *Socialising and exploring*, *Family benefits*, *Wildlife experience* and *Loyalty*. The main motives to travel to the KNP were to *Escape* from everyday environment, to *Experience wildlife* and nature as well as for *Family benefits*. Based on these results, the following findings and implications were identified:

Firstly, the results revealed that a combination of push and pull factors play a role in visitor's decision to visit the KNP. This supports the notion by Cook *et al.* (2010), Kim and Chaplin (2004) and Galloway (2002) that both push (a person's personal motives that are *Escape*, *Socialising and exploration*, *Loyalty* and *Family benefits*) and pull factors (appealing attributes of the park that are *Wildlife experience* and *Finances*) play a role in shaping visitor's motivations and reasons to choose a holiday destination. Although the motives were dominated by push factors that show the importance to visitors of a nature experience regardless of the recession. This could be because the KNP has become part of these visitors' lifestyles or it could even be seen as a necessity. As emphasised by Cha *et al.* (1995) and Uysal and Jurowski (1994) both the identified push and pull factors should thus be incorporated into the marketing campaigns.

Secondly, in line with general travel motivation studies, *Escape* is also the most important motive for travelling to the KNP. This result also supports findings by Uysal *et al.* (1994), Saayman and Saayman (2009), Kruger and Saayman (2010), Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008) as well as Kim *et al.* (2003) who identified *Escape* as an important motive to travel to national parks. Travelling to the KNP can furthermore be seen as a way to deal and 'escape' from stress and issues as a result of the recession as well as to get away from negative economic news reports. In this sense the KNP is seen as a haven. This is verified by Richards (1999:190), Kim and Pridaux (2005:351) and Bentrupperbäumer (2005:85) who regard travelling to national parks as a 'restorer' while Ulrich's (1983) stress reduction theory also emphasises the role of natural settings in generating psychophysiological recovery from stressful experiences. In addition, since visitors will rather travel to parks close to home to cut costs during recessions, the location, proximity and accessibility of the KNP to

surrounding provinces (Limpopo, Gauteng and Mpumalanga) should also be emphasised in the marketing campaign. Aspects such as 'relaxation', 'escapism', 'proximity', 'convenience', 'break away from routine' and 'KNP as the ideal holiday destination' should therefore be highlighted in promotional messages. This can also ensure that the KNP gains a competitive advantage.

Thirdly, visitors considered the *Wildlife experience* as an extremely important reason to visit the KNP. Similar motives pertaining to *Wildlife experience* were also identified by Saayman and Saayman (2009), Kruger and Saayman (2010), Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008) as well as Galloway and Lopez (1999). Emphasis should thus be placed on the variety of wildlife and activities, photographic opportunities, the Big 5 and the unique experience offered by the KNP since these aspects can contribute to, and enhance, the *Escape* motive. Based on this, the KNP should promote the park attributes more intensively and brand itself as an 'all-inclusive breakaway and wildlife destination'.

Lastly, even though *Finances*, *Socialising and exploration* and *Loyalty* were considered slightly less important motives compared to the aforementioned reasons, based on the mean values (Table 2.3) they should not be disregarded as key motives to travel to the KNP. *Socialising and exploration* was also identified by Uysal *et al.* (2004), Galloway and Lopez (1999) and Kim *et al.* (2003), while *Finances* and *Loyalty* can be regarded as unique motives to travel to the KNP. Although *Loyalty* is still an important reason, it is clear that visitors rather base their commitment to the park on their internal motives (push factor) and other park attributes than on previous experiences and the status associated with the brand. With regard to *Finances*, it seems that financial implications did not play a significant role in visitors' decision to travel to the KNP. However, because visitors regard travelling to the KNP as a necessary part of their travel lifestyle, visitors could have changed their behaviour at the park, for example by making use of less expensive accommodation or taking part in fewer activities to be able to still afford going to the KNP. The KNP should therefore continue to offer visitors a range of choices and pride itself in being a 'value for money' destination irrespective of global economic conditions.

## 2.6 CONCLUSION

Based on the results from this study, it is clear that, during the recession, push motives play a more important role than pull motives. Therefore the necessity to visit the KNP carries a heavier weight. Greater emphasis is placed on escape and experiencing the nature and

wildlife of the park together as a family. The results furthermore indicate that, irrespective of economic constraints, visitors regard travelling to the KNP as a primary need (or Giffen good) or a lifestyle instead of a luxury, which forms a vital and necessary part of their travel lifestyle. The increase in visitor numbers at the KNP during the recession also supports the findings of Eagles (2007:28) that visits to nature areas such as national parks will continue to increase as more people are turning to nature tourism. Based on this, the KNP should use the marketing implications of this research to sustain its growth rate over the long term both during recessions and in times of prosperity.

This was the first time that the influence of the recession on visitors' motives to travel to a South African national park was determined and the results provided valuable insights into the reasons why visitors still travelled to the KNP during the recession. The results especially indicated a shift in visitors' needs, reasons and the importance of visiting the park. It is thus recommended that a further analysis be carried out to determine how the recession influenced visitors' spending behaviour at the KNP as this will provide further insights into the influence of the recession on visitors to the park. The findings of this study can furthermore be modified and applied to other national parks around the world in order to strategically manage their parks for when the following recession hits their particular country.

# DETERMINANTS OF DEMAND TO THE KRUGER NATIONAL PARK DURING THE 2008/2009 ECONOMIC RECESSION

## CHAPTER

# 3

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to identify the determinants of demand of visitors to the KNP during a recession. To achieve this, questionnaires were distributed in the park from 15-20 December 2009 (high season), where a total of 355 questionnaires were collected and statistically processed using SPSS. Due to the homogeneous nature of the market, results revealed a few socio-demographic and behavioural determinants that influenced visitors' demand to the park. Behavioural determinants included the motive *Escape* as well as the determinant *Souvenirs* while socio-demographic determinants included *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* provinces. The results indicated that *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* residents are the main markets for the KNP. Visitors to the KNP indicated that visiting the park is a great way of getting away from their busy lifestyles, especially visitors from the metropolitan province, Gauteng. Visitors from Mpumalanga indicated that many of them considered visiting alternative destinations to KNP because this province has so many tourism attractions. The determinant *Souvenirs* indicated that visitors adapted their spending behaviour at the park to be able to afford a visit. This was the first time that the influence of determinants of tourism demand during a recession was determined. This information is important for SANParks because it provides management with valuable insights into what strategic planning should be conducted in case of a future recession. It was also found that the demand to visit the KNP was not greatly influenced by the recession, because visitors could adapt their spending behaviour at the KNP. Furthermore, the study shows that visiting natural areas may have become a primary need (Giffen good) or part of a lifestyle, especially during the 2008/2009 recession period.

Keywords: South African National Parks (SANParks); Kruger National Park (KNP); determinants of demand; demand; recession.

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Kruger National Park (KNP) is one of the world's most renowned wildlife reserves. It was proclaimed in 1926 (SANParks, 2009; SA Places, 2010). The park provides an array of accommodation types (which include tented camps, chalets, bungalows and guesthouses) and recreational activities (such as game drives; photography; birding; accommodation; swimming pools and restaurants) with easy access from two South African provinces (Mpumalanga and Limpopo) as well as a small airport just outside one of the main rest camps, Skukuza. The KNP is in great demand since it is regarded as an all-inclusive holiday destination that provides tourists with a unique nature and leisure experience (Saayman & Saayman, 2009). The KNP attracts over one million visitors per annum and falls in the top five international tourist destinations in the country (Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2008:154; Eagles & McCool, 2002:83; Uysal *et al.*, 1994; Cook *et al.*, 2010). The popularity of the KNP was demonstrated during the 2008/2009 period when the world was gripped by an economic recession and yet the KNP still experienced a sustained growth of 1.6 percent in Accommodation Unit Occupancy (Fernando & Meedeniya, 2009; Tourism-review, 2009; SAT, 2009; WTTC, 2010; SANParks, 2009). Seeing that the world tourism figures dropped, the question arises as to why the KNP experienced a sustained growth during this period.

Weaver and Lawton (2006:69), Lickorish and Jenkins (1997:52) as well as Page and Connell (2009:53), point out that there are various factors that stimulate the demand for tourism and destinations such as the KNP. These factors include economic factors, social factors, demographic factors, technological factors and political factors. Weaver and Lawton (2006:69) also emphasise that these factors are interdependent and should not be considered in isolation. This is especially important because "if possible, the tourism manager will attempt to produce an exact match between the supply and the corresponding demand for a product. This is because, all other things being equal, resources that are not fully used will result in reduced profits". Identifying the determinants that play a role in visitors' demand to travel to the KNP can therefore assist management in focusing on key areas to enhance the park's appeal and attract more people to the park, especially during tough economic times (Faulkner & Valerio, 2003:168). Knowledge of the determinants can also ensure that the park sustains its accommodation and visitors return rate. This is especially important because SANParks generates 80 percent of its total revenue through accommodation and admission fees in the KNP (Mabunda & Wilson, 2009:118).

Based on this, the purpose of this study is to identify the determinants of tourism demand at the KNP and the influence of these factors on visitors' decision to travel to the park during the 2008/2009 recession period. The article will be approached in the following manner: the introduction will be followed by the literature study that will create a better understanding of tourism demand and the factors that influence this demand, followed by the method of research and results, after which there will be an in-depth discussion and, lastly, a conclusion will be reached.

### 3.2 LITERATURE STUDY

According to Microsoft® Encarta® (2009), the word 'demand' can be defined as "the level of desire or need that exists for particular goods or services" or, in short, demand is the customer's interest in acquiring something. Pearce (1991:109) agrees and explains demand as "the quantity of a good or service that consumers, in this case tourists, are willing to buy at a specific price in a given period at a particular place". In recent years, the demand for tourism-related activities has experienced a strong growth, especially activities based on interactions between tourists and wildlife (Davis, Banks, Birtles, Valentine & Cuthill, 1997:261). Orams (1996:39) divides the spectrum of tourist-wildlife interactions into two categories. The first is captive animals as in zoos and aviaries, while the second group is semi-captive animals as is the case with wildlife parks including national parks and reserves. It has become clear through research done by Eagles (2007:28) that a trend is forming wherein more and more people prefer to visit these natural areas. Research shows that accurate forecasting of tourism demand is of paramount importance (Witt & Witt, 1995:447). Archer (1987) as cited by Witt and Witt (1995:447) strengthens this argument by stating that tourism products are perishable because empty beds cannot be stockpiled and used at a later stage. To improve the understanding of how demand works, one therefore has to look into the underlying factors influencing demand. Burkart and Medlik (1981) as cited by Page and Connell (2009) divide these influences into two components. These are internal factors or travel motives (including personal factors such as personality and preperceptions) and external factors or determinants of demand (cultures, demographics, and income for example).

Motivation is the essence of all human behaviour (Oh *et al.*, 1995:124) because motivation consists of psychological needs that cause a person to feel a psychological disequilibrium which may be corrected through a travel experience (Crompton, 1979; Kim *et al.*, 2000:34; Pearce, 1997:18). The most common motives for visitors to travel to natural areas were to escape from their everyday environments, and to relax in a natural environment (Afwaritefe,

2004; Uysal *et al.*, 1994; Tao *et al.*, 2004; Saayman & Saayman, 2009; Kruger & Saayman, 2010; Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2008; Galloway & Lopez, 1999; Kim *et al.*, 2003). The second component, external factors, is more commonly known as the determinants that influence the demand for tourism within a specific population. Page and Connell (2009:53) as well as Lickorish and Jenkins (1997:52), group the external factors that influence demand (the determinants of demand) into three main categories. These are economic, social, and political determinants. A number of factors influencing demand are shown in Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1:** *The factors influencing demand*

<b>Determinants</b>	<b>Researcher(s)</b>	<b>Function/Findings</b>
<b>Age</b>	Jang & Wu (2006:306)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older people experience an increase in disposable income, have more flexibility with their time and are not subjected to seasonality (data collected from senior citizens).</li> </ul>
	Hvenggaard & Deadren (1998:702)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older people visit national parks to experience nature, while younger visitors want to spend time with their families (data collected from individuals through survey).</li> </ul>
	Lohman (2004:5); Weaver & Lawton (2006:78)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older growing society of travellers, because of longer life expectancy while there is a decline in number of children because of lowering fertility in many industrial countries.</li> </ul>
	Bhatia (2006a:26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Younger groups participate more in travel because of more income.</li> </ul>
<b>Holiday entitlements</b>	Page & Connell (2009:54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of holiday entitlements increased over the past two centuries, creating ample leisure time, resulting in travel.</li> </ul>
	Bhatia (2006a:26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leisure time is the strongest influence on tourism demand.</li> </ul>
	Weaver & Lawton (2006:73)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People working on flexitime can do their work whenever they have time to, meaning that they can improve planning for holidays, thus increasing demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	Bhatia (2006a:26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better educated people in society have a stronger will to travel, thus increasing the demand for travel.</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	Weaver & Lawton (2006:79)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technological advances in transport increased the ease as well as the speed of travel, thus increasing the demand for travel.</li> <li>Computerised reservation systems simplify travel by providing greater flexibility and comfort.</li> </ul>
<b>Family</b>	Bhatia (2006a:31)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demand is created for a destination when certain relatives stay there and other family members want to visit them.</li> </ul>

	Weaver & Lawton (2006:75)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family size has been reduced over the years, reducing the costs, thus increasing discretionary time as well as household income.</li> </ul>
<b>Urbanisation</b>	Weaver & Lawton (2006:77)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban congestion and crowding increases the demand for people to travel to more peaceful and open areas to get away and relax.</li> </ul>
<b>Mobility</b>	Bhatia (2006:26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobility has increased due to advancements in modes of transport.</li> <li>When the destination is overseas, people have a choice of travelling either by boat or plane, thus simplifying travel and increasing demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	Goeldner & Ritchie (2003:365)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In general, the greater the cultural difference, the bigger the resistance between two cultures can be. But, when cultures differ to a large extent, it may drive people to go and experience that culture difference, thus stimulating demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Politics</b>	Weaver & Lawton (2006:81)  Narayan (2004:430)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governments can control the ease of access of tourists into and out of a country. The easier they receive access, the higher the demand will be.</li> <li>The greatest hurdle in Fiji's tourism development is the country's political instability, thus lowering demand. This had a huge impact on tourist spending.</li> </ul>
<b>Income</b>	Uysal (1998:88); Ouerfelli (2008:127); Mulhearn, Vane & Eden (2001:20); Smeral & Witt (1996:894); Pearce (1989:25); Weaver & Lawton (2006:71); Lim (1997:842); Crouch (1996:118); De Mello, Pack & Sinclair (2002:509); Garin-Munoz (2009:767); Saayman & Saayman (2008:93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of strongest influences on travel decision.</li> <li>Higher income means that people have more disposable income leading to higher demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Distribution of income</b>	Page & Connell (2009:55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In areas with few wealthy and many poor people, there will be a skewed distribution of income, meaning that fewer people will be able to travel internationally.</li> <li>In wealthier countries, a larger proportion of people will be able to travel abroad.</li> </ul>
<b>Relative prices</b>	Uysal (1998:88); Dwyer & Fosyth (2006:58); Fennell (2003:85); Lim (1997:842); Smeral & Witt (1996:894); Crouch (1996:119); De Mello <i>et al.</i> (2002:509); Garin-Munoz (2009:767)	<p>Two elements that influence price competitiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of travel (petrol prices);</li> <li>Cost of living at destination (goods &amp; services) (High prices can deter people from a destination, while low prices create a perception of low quality).</li> </ul>
<b>Price competitiveness</b>	Saayman & Saayman (2008:93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If one destination's price can be lowered because of competition, demand for that destination will rise. Destinations should therefore keep prices competitive.</li> </ul>

<b>Transport costs</b>	Divisekera (2003:32); Duban (2000:133); Saayman & Saayman (2008:93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destination choice and the quantity of what is demanded (consumed) are influenced by the cost of transport as well as the cost of such services.</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing expenses</b>	Dwyer, Forsyth & Dwyer (2010:80)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased marketing spending and more effective marketing efforts increase the demand for the destination.</li> </ul>
<b>Exchange Rate</b>	Uysal (1998:89); Page & Connell (2009:53); Lim (1997:844); Narayan (2004:429); Crouch (1995:114); Smeral & Witt (1996:894); De Mello <i>et al.</i> (2002:509)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong impact on price;</li> <li>• A devalued currency at the destination creates demand for the destination. A strong currency makes the destination more expensive.</li> </ul>
<b>Tax</b>	Page & Connell (2009:55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The more tax a government demands, the lower the demand for that country will be because of higher prices.</li> </ul>
<b>Supply factors</b>	SANParks (2010); Crouch (1996:119)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example, the impact of tourist infrastructure and superstructure, particularly the supply of hotel rooms.</li> <li>• SANParks, especially the KNP, is a great example of supply. It supplies a nature experience such as wildlife, accommodation, activities, restaurants and other facilities that create demand for the destination.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate</b>	Saayman & Saayman (2008:93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Africa's mild and sunny climate impacted positively on tourist arrivals.</li> </ul>

When looking at the table above (Table 3.1), it is clear that an array of determinants influence the demand of tourists to a destination, but some of these determinants are more influential than others. Collectively, they show that the determinants income, relative prices, transport cost, exchange rates, marketing expenses, qualitative factors (including tourists' attributes that influence time available for travel such as age and holiday entitlements) and supply factors can be regarded as the most important factors in the demand of tourists to visit a destination or country.

The most influential determinant, according to most authors, is personal income, because it relates to the availability of finances such as disposable income that will enable people to travel (Uysal, 1998:88; Ouerfelli, 2008:127; Mulhearn, Vane & Eden, 2001:20; Smeral & Witt, 1996:894; Pearce, 1989:25; Weaver & Lawton, 2006:71; Lim, 1997:842; Crouch, 1996:118). Understanding of this factor can be strengthened by referring to the simple demand and supply model. The model states that demand for a product or service which is needed will increase when the supply of that service/product decreases seeing as demand will be larger than the supply. Furthermore, an increase in prices decreases the demand for the products being consumed or the services being used (Socialist, 2009; Henderson, 2009:29). However, this model only applies to those individuals who have sufficient disposable income to be able to pay for vacations. This is exactly how the tourism industry works because

tourism has historically behaved like a luxury good. When prices of luxuries such as tourism rise, demand for this luxury will fall, but if income rises and prices remains constant or fall, demand will rise (Song & Lin, 2010:16; Papatheodourou *et al.*, 2010:44). Wilkerson (2003:50) as well as Bramwell and Lane (2003:1) agree that the demand for luxury goods such as travel and tourism will thus decline during periods of economic recession because people have less disposable income. This was also the case with the 2008/2009 global economic recession of which signs began to show in 2007 with developed and developing countries' development stagnating (Fernando & Meedeniya, 2009:12; Song & Lin, 2010:16). A decline of 8 percent was experienced in the global demand for tourism (Fernando & Meedeniya, 2009:12; Tourism-review, 2009:542) and a 4.8 percent decrease in the Global Travel and Tourism Economy GDP in 2009, during which 5 million tourism-related jobs were lost (WTTC, 2010:6). The effect of the recession was also strongly felt in South Africa with a total domestic travel decrease of 8 percent (SAT, 2009:46).

Most of these studies have analysed demand for tourism from various destinations which implies heterogeneous markets, and which resulted in various determinants which influenced demand. Not many studies have been conducted on homogeneous markets. According to Kruger, Saayman and Fouché (2009:34) it seems that visitors to the KNP are predominantly homogeneous and this is supported by the fact that the profile of visitors has remained unchanged since 2001. Hence, it would be interesting to analyse the determinants of demand for a more homogeneous market.

National parks and other natural areas are great examples of supply determinants, because they provide a nature experience such as wildlife, accommodation, activities, restaurants and other facilities (SANParks, 2010). A study done by Akama and Kieti (2003), using a structured questionnaire distributed at four different lodges, found that the quality of the natural attractions as well as the services rendered at the Tsavo West National Park in Kenya, were the most important determinants of demand for international tourists at the destinations. With this in mind Fernando and Meedeniya (2009:12) and Nyaupane *et al.* (2004:542) point out that an individual's will to travel is not necessarily influenced by a recession, but rather by the fact that they are not able to afford it. This notion is plausible when one takes the performance of nature-based tourism during the 2008/2009 period into account. Even with lower levels of disposable income, the demand for nature-based tourism, with the emphasis on national parks, has increased rapidly, thus making it a Giffen need. In the United States of America (USA), for example, a strong growth in visits to national parks was experienced in 2009. Utah's national park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area attracted an average of 300 000 and 13 000 more visitors respectively, while Arches

National Park attracted 7.3 percent more visitors (Davidson, 2010; Seattletimes, 2010). This trend was also evident in the Kruger National Park (KNP) in South Africa.

However, the reason(s) for the continued growth in demand for the KNP during the recession is unknown as previous research has also shown that people will not travel if they experience a decrease in disposable income. This could mean that demand is not produced externally, but rather by internal factors such as motives or demand that are created by the destination itself. However, this assumption has to be tested. Based on this, Pan and Ryan (2007) explain how important it is for management to understand and be aware of the underlying reasons why visitors travel, thereby implying that empirical research should be conducted to identify the attributes to be promoted so as to match tourists' motivations/demand, thus creating demand (Kozak, 2002).

### 3.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The method of this exploratory research will be discussed under the following three headings: (3.1) the questionnaires, (3.2) the samples and survey and (3.3) statistical analysis

#### **3.3.1 The Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was developed for the Kruger National Park survey in 2009, with the recent recession in mind. This questionnaire was based upon previous successful surveys conducted by Saayman and Saayman (2009), Kruger and Saayman (2010) and Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008) at the KNP and consisted of three sections. Section A captured all the necessary demographic details of the visitors (language, gender, age, race, marital status, country of residence, province, highest qualification, and occupation), while the next section (Section B) was designed to measure specific economic information (size of the group, number of visitors paid for as well as an indication as to whether visitors were visiting only for the day, or if they intended to stay overnight). The following were also measured in this section: the number of nights respondents stayed in the park; an indication as to whether it was their first visit to this park; the number of previous visits; the number of visits during the last three years as well as their spending dynamics at the park. The final section (Section C) measured the respondents' travel motivations to visit the KNP by using a five-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important; 2 = less important; 3 = important; 4 = very important; 5 = extremely important) with twenty-one items listed. Respondents were also asked to express their emotions towards the KNP in one word, as well as an indication of

what value added services they would prefer at park, despite of the recession. A five-point Likert scale (1 = Completely; 2 = To a greater extent; 3 = To some extent; 4 = To a lesser extent; 5 = Not at all) was used to measure the extent to which the economic situation influenced certain aspects of the respondents' visit to the KNP. The last question determined the respondents' opinions as to why the KNP maintained their visitor numbers during the 2008/2009 global economic recession.

### **3.3.2 The Sample and survey**

The survey was conducted by means of self-administered questionnaires. The two largest and most popular camps in the KNP, Skukuza and Satara (SANParks, 2010), were chosen for surveying the overnight visitors. Questionnaires were also distributed at day visitor areas including Afsaal, Nkuhlu and Tshokwane. The camps, together with the three day visitor areas made up the sample area where all visitors that were able and willing to fill in the questionnaires, completed them. Well-trained fieldworkers who understood the aim of the questionnaire guaranteed that the maximum number of questionnaires were completed. For overnight visitors, fieldworkers distributed the questionnaires to all visitors just before sunset and collected them later in the evening. At the day visitor areas, field workers waited for tourists to arrive and get seated at a table at these areas. The fieldworkers then collected the questionnaires when the visitors had completed them. A total of 355 were completed over a five-day period (15-20 December 2009). Since the profile of park visitors did not change over a period of nine years (2001-2009) (Saayman, Kruger & Fouché, 2009:34-40) on a significance level of 5 percent, the number of completed questionnaires is sufficient. Microsoft® Excel® was used for data capturing and basic data analysis.

### **3.3.3 Statistical analysis**

The analysis of data from this research consists of three stages. During the first stage of the analysis, a general profile of visitors to the KNP between the 15 and 20 December 2009 was compiled using the statistical programme SPSS (SPSS Inc. 2009).

During the second stage, a principal axis factor analysis was done on the 15 behavioural aspects (as listed in the questionnaire) (Appendix 1) by means of SPSS (SPSS Inc. 2009) to explain the variance-covariance structure of a set of variables through a linear combination of these variables. In the research, Kaiser's criterion was used where factors with eigenvalues larger than one were extracted. All items with a factor loading above 0.3 were considered as contributing to the factor. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was also used to indicate whether sufficient data had been collected to ensure compact factor structures. To determine the reliability of each scale within the factors, a

reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was computed. All factors with a reliability coefficient above 0.6 were considered to have acceptable internal consistency in this study. In addition, the average inter-item correlations were calculated as another measure of reliability. According to Clark and Watson (1995), the average inter-item correlation should lie between 0.15 and 0.55.

To determine the factors that significantly influenced visitors' demand to the KNP, a distinction was made between visitors who indicated that they considered an alternative destination before they travelled to the KNP and those who did not. *T*-tests, two-way frequency tables and Chi-square tests were employed to investigate any significant differences between visitors who considered an alternative destination and those who did not. The study utilised demographic variables (gender, home language, age, occupation and province of origin), behavioural variables (length of stay, categories completed in and expenditure dynamics) as well as motivational factors to examine whether statistically significant differences existed among the different groups. *T*-tests, cross tabulations with Chi-square were used to profile the groups demographically.

Although this analysis alone will provide some insight into the characteristics of visitors and their behaviour at the KNP, such analysis does not describe the relative strength or the significance of the relationship between visitors' demand to travel to the KNP (whether they considered an alternative destination before they travelled to the KNP or not) and its different determinants. Such an analysis requires a regression analysis. Visitors' demand to the KNP was a binary question in the questionnaire, and a logistic regression model will therefore be used to analyse the determinants of demand to the KNP since logistic regression can be used to test models to predict categorical outcomes with two or more categories (Pallant, 2007:168; Field, 2005:218). More specifically hierarchical stepwise logistic regression was applied, since this technique is designed to find the most parsimonious set of predictors that are most effective in predicting the dependent variable (in this case demand to the KNP) (Menard & Menard, 2009:117).

Employing a stepwise selection procedure can provide a fast and effective means to screen a large number of variables and to fit a large number of logistic regression equations simultaneously (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000:116). Variables are added to the logistic equation one at a time and significance is assessed via the Likelihood ratio chi-square test. Thus, at any step in the procedure, the most important variable, in statistical terms, is the one that produces the greatest change in the log likelihood relative to a model not containing the variable. The order of entry of the variables can be used as a measure of relative

importance (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000:116; Menard & Menard, 2009:117). The Hosmer-Lemeshow test will be used to assess the fit of the logistic regression model and a poor fit is indicated by a significance value less than 0.05 (Pallant, 2007:174). The Cox and Snell R-Squared and the Nagelkerke R-Squared values will also provide an indication of the amount of variation explained in the regression output (Pallant, 2007:174). The dependent variable is demand, indicated by whether visitors considered an alternative destination before they travelled to the KNP or not, and the independent variables include travel motives, socio-demographic variables (home language; gender; race; age; country of residence; province of residence; highest level of education; as well as occupation) and behavioural variables (size of group; number of persons paid for; day or overnight visitor; type of accommodation; number of nights in the KNP; first visit; how many visits; visits over the past three years; as well as spending dynamics in the park).

### 3.4. RESULTS

The results will be discussed in three sections. Firstly, an overview of the profile of visitors to the KNP as well as visitors' main motives will be given. This will be followed by a discussion of the results from the factor analysis, the chi-square tests, t-tests and, lastly, the results of the stepwise regression analysis.

#### **3.4.1 Visitor profile to the Kruger National Park**

As shown in Table 3.2, white, South African, male, Afrikaans speaking tourists mostly in their late forties travelled to the KNP during December 2009. They were mostly married, well educated tourists from Gauteng, with some form of professional occupation. Their preference of travel was groups of one to four persons with one to two people in their group being financially dependent on them. The majority of visitors were overnight visitors that stayed three to six nights in the park, and who preferred to camp. An overwhelming majority indicated that they have visited the KNP previously, with an average of 14 visits. Day as well as overnight visitors indicated that they had visited the KNP at least once or twice in the past three years. This profile compares well to the general profile obtained by Saayman, Kruger, Fouché (2009) over the past few years indicating how valid this profile is (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2:** Visitor profile at the KNP (2009)

CATEGORY	PROFILE
Home language	Afrikaans (56%); English (34%)
Gender	Male (55%); Female (45%)
Age	35-49 years of age (Average: 44)
Marital status	Married (63%)
Country of residence	RSA (84%); Netherlands (4%);
Province of residence	Gauteng (59%); Mpumalanga (14%)
Level of education	75% qualified higher than matric
Occupation	Professional (20%); Self-employed (18%); Management (15%)
Number of people in group	3-4 people (37%); 1-2 people (34%)
Overnight visitors' length of stay	2-4 nights (22%); 5-6 nights (21%)
Number of first visits	First visits (17%)
Number of previous visits	20-29 visits (21%);
Number of day visits during last 3 years	No visits (62%); 1-2 visits (13%)

### 3.4.2 Motivation to visit the KNP

Scholtz, Saayman and Kruger (2010:12) determined the main motives of visitors to the KNP and identified six factors. These were: *Escape*; *Finances*; *Socialising and exploring*; *Family benefits*; *Wildlife experience* and *Loyalty*. It was found that the most influential motives were to *Escape* from everyday environment and to have a *Wildlife experience*. The following aspects were categorised under the factor *Escape*: 'To relax'; 'To get away from my routine' and 'The Park is an ideal holiday destination', and under the factor *Wildlife experience*, the aspects were: 'The wide variety of wildlife and activities in the park'; 'To photograph animals and plants'; 'It offers the Big 5' and 'the KNP offers a unique experience'. *Finances*, *Family benefits* and *Loyalty* were less important motives to travel to the KNP. Scholtz *et al.*'s (2010) research showed that the recession had an influence on visitors' reasons for travel to the KNP and that more emphasis is placed on escape and experiencing the nature and wildlife of the park together as a family. The results indicate that, irrespective of economic constraints, visitors regard travelling to the KNP as a primary need instead of a luxury, which forms a vital and necessary part of their travel lifestyle. However, in addition to travel motives

other aspects also have an impact on the travel behaviour of visitors to the KNP. This will be discussed in the next section.

### 3.4.3 Results of the factor analysis: The influence of the recession on behaviour prior to and at the Park

The factor analysis (Pattern Matrix) using an Oblimin rotation with the Kaiser Normalisation identified two factors, which were named according to behaviour before visitors entered the KNP, and (spending) behaviour at the KNP. Both factors accounted for 65.8 percent of the total variance. All factors had acceptable reliability coefficients ranging respectively from 0.50 (the lowest) to 0.97 (the highest). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were above 0.9 for both factors, and this implies internal consistency. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy of 0.92 indicated that patterns of correlation are relatively compact and thus yield distinct and relative factors (Field, 2005:640). Moreover, all items loaded onto a factor with loadings greater than 0.3 and relatively high factor loadings indicate a reasonably high correlation between the delineated factors and their individual items. The results of the factor analysis are presented in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3:** Factor analysis results of visitors' behaviour to, as well as at the KNP

	FACTORS	
	1: Planning behaviour	2: Visiting behaviour
<b>MEAN VALUE ± SD</b>	3.7	3.2
<b>STD. DEVIATION</b>	1.14	0.36
The number of rest camps chosen to overnight at (if applicable)	0.966	
Size of the travelling party	0.890	
Type of accommodation you normally choose (if applicable)	0.837	
Choice to overnight in KNP	0.813	
Length of stay	0.699	
The time you made your booking	0.697	
The number of times you visit national parks as a day visitor	0.637	
The hiring of equipment at day visitor areas	0.566	
The number of times you visit national parks as an overnight visitor	0.563	
The hiring of equipment (including kitchen utensils) at camps	0.502	

Purchases of souvenirs		0.934
Visits to the park restaurants		0.893
Purchases at park shops		0.884
The purchasing of supplies (for example food) outside the park		0.658
RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT	0.94	0.90
INTER-ITEM CORRELATION	0.58	0.68

\*Note that a lower mean value indicates a greater influence, while a higher mean indicates a lesser influence.

Both factor scores were calculated as the average of all items that contributed to the specific factors, giving a score that can be interpreted on the same Likert scale used in the survey (1 = Completely; 2 = To a greater extent; 3 = To some extent; 4 = To a lesser extent; 5 = Not at all). As indicated in Table 2, the following two factors were identified:

**Factor 1: *Planning behaviour***

Planning behaviour (Factor 1) obtained the highest mean value of 3.7, a reliability coefficient of 0.94 and an average inter-item correlation of 0.58. This factor (Factor 1) measures the behaviour of people before visiting the KNP. This includes planning of: the number of rest camps chosen to overnight at; the size of the travelling party; the type of accommodation that visitors normally choose; their decision to overnight at the park; the length of their stay; the time the booking is made; the number of times they visit the park as a day-visitor; the hiring of equipment at day visitor areas; the number of times they visited the park as overnight visitors; and the hiring of equipment (including kitchen utensils) at the camp. Based on the mean value, it is clear that the recession impacted the planning behaviour of visitors to a lesser extent. This could be because visitors made their decision to travel to the KNP well in advance, irrespective of the influence of the recession. This result also corresponds with visitors' main motives to travel to the KNP and emphasises that visiting the park is a primary need (Scholtz *et al.*, 2010).

**Factor 2: *Visiting behaviour***

This factor (Factor 2) relates to the behaviour (spending dynamics) of visitors already in the park. It includes: the purchases of souvenirs; visits to the park restaurant; purchases at park shops; as well as the purchasing of supplies (for example food) outside the park. Factor 2 was thus labelled (Visiting behaviour) and obtained a mean value of 3.2, a reliability coefficient of 0.9 and an average inter-item correlation of 0.68. The lower mean value

obtained for this factor clearly shows that the recession had an impact on visiting behaviour at the KNP.

#### **3.4.4 Results of the Chi-square tests to determine the differences between visitors who considered an alternative destination and those who did not**

Two-way frequency tables and Chi-square tests were used to indicate the possibility of any significant differences between the groups of respondents that indicated that they considered travelling to alternative destinations and those who did not. The analysis was done on the socio-demographic as well as behavioural characteristics of visitors to the KNP. According to Table 3.4, there are only three statistically significant differences between the two groups based on '*Language*' ( $p < 0.023$ ), '*Country of residence*' ( $p < 0.003$ ), and '*First visit*' ( $p < 0.003$ ). Pertaining to language, the visitors who considered visiting another destination before travelling to the KNP, were predominantly Afrikaans speaking (47%), while those visitors that did not consider an alternative destination mainly spoke other languages which could include English or foreign languages. Visitors who did not consider an alternative destination are mainly South African residents while visitors who considered an alternative destination were from South Africa as well as from other countries. Those visitors who considered an alternative destination are more inclined to be first-time visitors compared to those visitors who did not consider an alternative destination who tend to be repeat visitors.

There were no other statistically significant differences based on other socio-demographic and behavioural characteristics, both visitor groups are white, married, travel mainly from Gauteng Province, have medium income occupations and are overnight visitors in the KNP. With regard to visitors' spending at the park during the recession compared to previous years, both visitor groups indicated that they spent more necessities such as entrance and conservation fees, accommodation, food and drinks and transport costs to the park. Both groups also indicated that they spent less on luxuries such as activities and souvenirs. The results of these analyses are shown in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: Results of the Chi-square tests**

CHARACTERISTICS	Concidered alternative destination = YES	Concidered alternative destination = NO	CHI SQUARE VALUE	DF	SIG. LEVEL	PHI VALUE
<b>LANGUAGE</b>			5.182	1	0.023*	0.112
Afrikaans	47%	31%				
Other	53%	69%				
<b>GENDER</b>			0.671	1	0.431	-0.044
Male	50%	56%				
Female	50%	44%				
<b>RACE</b>			2.466	1	0.116	-0.085
White	90%	95%				
Other	10%	5%				
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>			2.746	1	0.098	-0.089
Married	54%	66%				
Not-married	46%	34%				
<b>COUNTRY</b>			8.957	1	0.003*	-0.161
South Africa	71%	87%				
Other	29%	13%				
<b>PROVINCES</b>						
Gauteng	Yes=67%;No=33%	Yes=58%;No=42%	1.224	1	0.269	0.064
Mpumalanga	Yes=7%;No=93%	Yes=8%;No=92%	0.078	1	0.779	-0.016
<b>QUALIFICATION</b>			0.487	1	0.485	0.038
Higher level of education	78%	74%				
Matric	22%	26%				
<b>OCCUPATION•</b>						
Low income	Yes=21;No=79%	Yes=18%;No=82%	0.469	1	0.493	0.037
Medium income	Yes=75%;No=25%	Yes=70%;No=30%	0.631	1	0.427	0.042
High income	Yes=54%;No=46	Yes=53%;No=47%	0.036	1	0.849	0.01
<b>DAY OR NIGHT</b>			0.126	1	0.723	0.019
Overnight	92%	90%				
Other	9%	10%				
<b>FIRST VISIT</b>	Yes=30%;No=70%	Yes=14%;No=86%	8.844	1	0.003*	0.159

SPENDING						
Entrance & conservation fees	More=57%; Less/No change=43%	More =54%; Less/No change =46%	0.155	1	0.694	0.023
Accommodation	More=67%; Less/No change =33%	More =69%; Less/No change =31%	0.09	1	0.764	-0.018
Restaurants	More=59%; Less/No change =41%	More =56%; Less/No change =44%	0.096	1	0.757	0.019
Food/drinks	More=63%; Less/No change =37%	More =67%; Less/No change =33%	0.195	1	0.659	-0.026
Transport	More=75%; Less/No change =25%	More =70%; Less/No change =30%	0.421	1	0.517	0.038
Activities	More=43%; Less/No change =57%	More =36%; Less/No change =64%	0.781	1	0.377	0.055
Souvenirs	More=32%; Less/No change =68%	More =40%; Less/No change =60%	1.149	1	0.284	-0.066

\* Statistically significant difference:  $p < 0.05$

- Note: Low income: Housewife, Pensioner, Student, Unemployed  
Medium income: Technical staff, Sales staff, Farmer, Mining, Administrative, Civil service  
High income: Professional, Management, Self-Employed

### 3.4.5 Results from the independent *t*-test

Independent *t*-tests were also carried out to determine whether there are significant differences between the visitors who considered an alternative destination before they travelled to the KNP and those who did not, based on travel motives and behavioural characteristics. As shown in Table 3.5, there are statistically significant differences between visitors who considered an alternative destination and those who did not, based on the travel motives *Escape* ( $p < 0.001$ ), *Finances* ( $p < 0.036$ ) and *Family benefits* ( $p < 0.046$ ) as well as *Loyalty* ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 3.5: T-test results of differences between visitors who considered an alternative destination and those who did not based on travel motivations and travel**

Variables	Visitors considered alternative destinations = YES			Visitors considered alternative destinations = NO			t-value	p
	Mean	Std.Dev	N	Mean	Std.Dev	N		
<b>Travel motives</b>								
Escape	3.65	1.05	56	4.09	0.95	281	-3.67	0.001*
Finances	2.66	0.85	58	2.95	0.97	278	-2.11	0.036*
Socialising and exploration	2.71	1.19	56	2.97	1.27	274	-1.36	0.175
Family benefits	2.99	1.10	56	3.31	1.11	280	-2.00	0.046*
Wildlife experience	3.89	0.94	57	3.96	0.86	284	-0.59	0.556
Loyalty	2.44	1.09	57	2.97	1.12	280	-3.27	0.001*
<b>Travel behaviour</b>								
Planning behaviour	3.66	1.10	55	3.71	1.15	279	-0.36	0.720
Visiting behaviour	3.23	1.38	55	3.14	1.36	275	0.46	0.645

\*Statistically significant difference:  $p < 0.05$

Visitors who did not consider an alternative destination were motivated more by *Escape*, *Finances*, *Family benefits* and *Loyalty* compared to those visitors who did consider an alternative destination before travelling to the KNP. Even though there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups based on the other motives and visiting behaviour, it seems that visitors who did not consider an alternative destination are more motivated by all other motives than the other group. Visitors who did not consider an alternative destination obtained higher mean values for all six motivational factors compared to visitors who considered an alternative destination. Both visitor groups' planning behaviour was influenced by the economic recession to a lesser extent than their visiting behaviour.

### 3.4.6 Results of the stepwise logistic regression analysis

Hierarchical stepwise logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of a number of factors on the likelihood that visitors' demand to the KNP changed during the economic recession. The model contained the independent variables indicated in Table 3.6 that were dummy coded as 1 and 0.

**Table 3.6:** Questions used and their descriptions

Category	Question description	Coding	Variable
Socio-demographics	Home language	Afrikaans = 1; Other = 0	LANGUAGE
	Gender	Male = 1; Female = 0	GENDER
	Age	Open question	AGE
	Race	White = 1; Other = 0	RACE
	Marital status	Married =1; Other = 0	MARITAL STATUS
	Country of residence	RSA = 1; Other = 0	COUNTRY
	Gauteng province	Gauteng = 1; Other = 0	GAUTENG
	Mpumalanga province	Mpumalanga = 1; Other = 0	MPUMALANGA
	Level of education	High level = 1; Other = 0	EDUCATION
	High income occupation	High income = 1; Other= 0	HIGH INCOME
	Medium income occupation	Medium income = 1 ; Other = 0	MEDIUM INCOME
Low income occupation	Low income = 1 ; Other = 0	LOW INCOME	
Behavioural	Group size	Open question	GROUP SIZE
	Number of people paid for Day/Overnight visitor	Open question	PEOPLE PAID FOR OVERNIGHT
	Number of nights in KNP	Overnight = 1; Other = 0	NIGHTS
	First time visit	Open question	FIRST TIME
	Number of previous visits	Yes = 1; No = 0	TIMES
Spending compared to previous years	Entrance and conservation fees	Open question	ENTRANCE
	Accommodation	More = 1; Less/No change = 0	ACCOMMODATION
	Restaurants	More = 1; Less/No change = 0	RESTAURANTS
	Food and drinks	More = 1; Less/No change = 0	FOOD AND DRINKS
	Transport	More = 1; Less/No change = 0	TRANSPORT
	Activities (game drives)	More = 1; Less/No change = 0	ACTIVITIES
Souvenirs and jewellery	More = 1; Less/No change = 0	SOUVENIRS	
Travel motives	Escape	5-point Likert scale	ESCAPE
	Finances	5-point Likert scale	FINANCES
	Socialising and exploration	5-point Likert scale	SOCIALISING
	Family benefits	5-point Likert scale	FAMILY BENEFITS
	Wildlife experience	5-point Likert scale	WILDLIFE
	Loyalty	5-point Likert scale	LOYALTY
Behaviour prior to and at KNP	Planning behaviour	5-point Likert scale	PLANNING
	Visiting behaviour	5-point Likert scale	VISIT

Based on the results of the t-tests, two-way frequency tables and the chi-square tests, the six travel motives and spending behaviour variables were included in the first block of the analysis and the model was statistically significant,  $X^2 (1, N=136) = 7.90, p < 0.001,$

indicating that the model was able to distinguish between factors that influence demand to the park and those that do not. The model explained between 4.8 percent (Cox and Snell R-squared) and 8.6 percent (Nagelkerke R-squared) of the variance (which indicates a low significance), and correctly classified 86.2 percent of the cases. As shown in Table 6, the only significant variables included in the model were Escape ( $p < 0.004$ ) and Souvenirs ( $p < 0.018$ ). In the second block, the socio-demographic variables together with behavioural and spending determinants were included ( $\chi^2 = 6.72$ ,  $p < 0.010$ ). Gauteng and Mpumalanga Province were the only significant variables included in the model. This model then explained between 14.9 percent (Cox and Snell R-squared) and 26.5 percent (Nagelkerke R-squared) of the variance in demand, and correctly classified 87.4 percent of the cases.

**Table 3.7:** Results from hierarchical stepwise logistic regression: Influence on demand to KNP

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Odds Ratio Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Block 1	ESCAPE	-.826	.283	8.512	1	.004	.438	.251	.762
	SOUVENIRS	-1.586	.673	5.550	1	.018	.205	.055	.766
	Constant	1.917	1.136	2.845	1	.092	6.798		
Block 2	ESCAPE	-1.138	.334	11.577	1	.001	.321	.166	.617
	GAUTENG	1.912	.721	7.036	1	.008	6.765	1.647	27.782
	MPUMALANGA	3.402	1.587	4.597	1	.032	30.029	1.339	673.388
	SOUVENIRS	-2.317	.880	6.937	1	.008	.099	.018	.553
	Constant	1.737	1.286	1.822	1	.177	5.677		

Table 3.7 indicates that *Escape*, the provinces *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* and *Souvenirs* had the greatest influence on demand for visitors to travel to the KNP. *Escape* obtained a negative Beta value of -1.138 (odds ratio = 0.321), indicating that visitors who are motivated by *Escape*, have a 3 times higher chance of visiting the KNP without considering an alternative destination. The provinces *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga*, on the other hand, obtained positive Beta values of 1.91 and 3.40 (odds ratios of 6.77 and 30.03) respectively, indicating that visitors from these provinces are more likely to consider alternative destinations before deciding to visit the KNP. The results also indicate that visitors at the KNP who considered alternative destinations are 10 times less likely to spend on souvenirs (odds ratio =0.099) than those who did not consider an alternative destination. The strongest predictor of demand is the province Mpumalanga, recording an odds ratio of 30.03. This

shows that visitors from this province are 30 times more likely to consider an alternative destination before travelling to the KNP. The odds ratio for the province Gauteng was also more than one (6.77) indicating that visitors originating from this province are 6.77 times more likely to consider an alternative destination before making their final decision to travel to the KNP.

### 3.5. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of the research was to identify the determinants that influenced the demand of visitors to travel to the KNP during the 2008/2009 recession. T-tests, two-way frequency tables and Chi-square tests were conducted to determine the significant differences between visitors that considered alternative destinations and those who did not. The only significant differences included: *Language; Country, First visit, Escape, Finances, Family benefits and Loyalty*. Thereafter, a hierarchical stepwise logistic regression analysis was done to identify the variables that were the most influential in creating a demand for visitors to travel to the KNP. Based on the results, the following determinants were significant: the travel motive *Escape*, the provinces *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* which are socio-demographic variables, as well as the price of *Souvenirs*, which is a behavioural characteristic. Based on these results, the following findings were identified:

Firstly, very few variables were identified (these were *Escape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga* and *souvenirs*) in the regression analysis as having an influence on demand. One reason for this could be that visitors are more homogeneous as well as loyal and visit the park annually. The results therefore contradict the notion by Craggs and Schofield (2009) and Kastenholz (2005) which state that a variety of socio-demographic, behavioural and motivational variables influence travel behaviour. Again, the reason for this could be the homogeneous factor, which marketers and researchers need to take in consideration when such analyses are done.

Secondly, with regards to the origin of markets, the results support the notion by Uysal (1998:88), Dwyer and Forsyth (2006:58), Fennell (2003:85), Lim (1997:842), Smeral and Witt (1996:894), Crouch (1996:119), Page and Connell (2009:53), Narayan (2004:429), Querfelli, (2008:127), Mulhearn *et al.* (2001:20), Pearce (1989:25), Weaver and Lawton (2006:71); Bhatia (2006a:31), Havengaard and Deadren (1998:702), Lohman (2004:5) as well as Jang and Wu (2006:306), that *Income* is among the most important determinants for travel. In South Africa, residents living in *Gauteng* province earn the highest per capita

income enabling them to afford to travel. Visitors from *Mpumalanga*, on the other hand, are in close proximity to the KNP, thus the implications of travelling costs are lower. This confirms that location plays an important role in times of recession. These results therefore support the finding by Uysal (1998:88), Dwyer and Fosyth (2006:58), Fennell (2003:85), Lim (1997:842), Smeral and Witt (1996:894), Crouch (1996:119), De Mello *et al.* (2002:509), Garin-Munoz (2009:767), Divisekera (2003:32), Duban (2000:133) as well as Saayman and Saayman (2008:93), that relative prices and transport costs, distribution of income and mobility play a role in visitors' demand to travel to a destination.

Thirdly, the results revealed that visitors from *Gauteng* Province are six times more likely to choose another destination over the KNP, while people from *Mpumalanga* Province have up to 30 times greater chance of choosing an alternative destination. This could be because the visitors from *Gauteng* have more disposable income to travel to alternative destinations while *Mpumalanga* has an extended diversity of other tourism destinations, which creates competition between these tourism destinations in the province. This implies that price competitiveness plays a role in visitors' demand to travel. Saayman and Saayman (2007:93) confirm this in their study on determinants of inbound tourism in South Africa.

Fourthly, the results showed that the motive *Escape* is a strong factor influencing the demand of visitors to travel to the KNP, which is no different to many previous studies which obtained similar results such as Uysal *et al.* (1994), Saayman and Saayman (2009), Kruger and Saayman (2010), Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008), Scholtz *et al.* (2010) as well as Kim *et al.* (2003). Results also suggest that visiting the KNP has become a primary need or part of these visitors' lifestyle instead of being an inferior good, a notion which is strongly supported by Scholtz *et al.* (2010).

Lastly, visitors have adapted their spending behaviour at the park and this is especially true for *Souvenirs*. This is also well illustrated by the factor analysis which showed that visitors that planned to visit the park (*Planning behaviour*) were, to a lesser extent, affected by the recession while visitors' behaviour at the destination (*Visiting behaviour*) was influenced to some extent. This implies that visitors' spending behaviour has changed to compensate for the lower amounts of disposable income experienced during the recession. This emphasises that, even though visitors have restricted finances, they will still visit the KNP since visitors scaled down on normal expenditure at the park such as buying *Souvenirs* to be able to afford travelling to the park.

From these findings, the following implications can be drawn: Managers at the KNP should focus their marketing on the provinces *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* in times of a recession. From this study, it becomes clear that tourists would travel closer to home and adapt their spending behaviour. The fact is that they will still travel. Therefore, marketing should focus on markets closer to the product, especially during a recession. It would also be wise to offer promotions and focus on an escape from the everyday hustle where one could enjoy a nature experience. Park management could also promote the fact that the KNP offers accommodation for all markets. This implies that the greater the variety of products and services on offer, the greater the chances of surviving a recession. From a methodological point of view, it seems that the more homogeneous the market, the fewer the determinants and this is an aspect that researchers and marketers should take note of.

### 3.6. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it is clear that the recession did not have a significant influence on the determinants influencing demand for visitors to travel to the KNP. However, it did, to a certain extent, influence the spending behaviour of visitors at the park. Visitors to the KNP rather scaled down on daily luxuries such as buying souvenirs (inferior goods), stayed in less expensive accommodation or took part in fewer activities at the park. Another reason for the recession not having a significant impact could be the KNP's variety of accommodation facilities and services. It is possible that visitors rather choose to use lower cost (budget) accommodation, such as staying in a tent rather than in a chalet. The results furthermore indicated that visitors regarded travelling to the park as a primary need (basic need) instead of a luxury, thus also showing the irrelevance of the economic constraints (economic recession 2008/2009). The KNP is thus seen as a Giffen good. The increase in visitor numbers to the KNP during the recession also supports the findings of Eagles (2007:28) who stated that visits to nature areas such as national parks would continue to increase as more people are turning to nature tourism.

Based on this, the KNP should continue to do marketing research focusing on the variety of markets that visit the park to retain current loyal visitors and identify potential new markets. Pertaining to the latter, the KNP should continue with extensive marketing to ensure that it stays in the minds of current and potential visitors when they are considering taking a holiday. Marketing should focus on retaining the existing loyal market as well as attracting new markets by means of new product developments and promotions. From a marketing and managerial perspective, the results of this research revealed the following determinants

that influence the demand of visitors to the KNP. This should be taken into consideration to gain a competitive advantage during times of economic prosperity and recessions:

- The proximity of the KNP to people staying in Mpumalanga and Gauteng Provinces.
- A relaxing environment encapsulated by nature and a place where one can escape with family or friends.
- The unique attributes of the KNP (Fauna, flora, Big 5, activities, atmosphere, location, accommodation, facilities etc.)
- The diversity within the park (different types of accommodation and their prices, picnic areas, fauna, flora etc.)
- The development of packages to suit all economic groups.

This was the first time that the influence of determinants of tourism demand to the KNP during an economic recession was determined. The results provide valuable insights pertaining to the determinants that created demand for visitors to the KNP during this period. The results show that visitors' demand to visit the KNP was not greatly influenced by the recession because they just changed their behaviour (spending behaviour, for instance) at the park to afford visits. Visitors also did not travel too far to visit the KNP, implying lower travel costs. Visitors from Gauteng could still visit because they have more disposable income and especially because the park serves as the perfect getaway from the bustling city lifestyle. If KNP management focuses on these things, it will ensure the sustainability of the KNP because this information now allows for well-planned, thorough marketing and management of the park. With a homogeneous market, as in the case of the KNP, the number of determinants identified influencing demand for visiting the park is less than that found in other studies on heterogeneous markets. This study therefore makes a valuable methodological contribution to analysing the demand of homogeneous and heterogeneous markets. The results of this study is of significance to other national parks from around the world, seeing as it can be modified to apply to those parks and it provides a framework for the development of strategic management in order to ready other national parks for future recession periods.

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this study was to determine the influence of the 2008/2009 recession on the travel behaviour of visitors to the Kruger National Park. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were set in Chapter 1 and achieved in their respective chapters.

- The first objective was to analyse literature concerning travel motives and travel behaviour of visitors to national parks and nature areas. This was achieved in Chapters 2 and 3 (Articles 1 & 2) of the study. In the respective literature studies, different theories and models pertaining to travel motivations, as well as the different determinants influencing demand to travel were analysed. Focus was placed especially on the push and pull theory in Article 1 in which the following factors were the most important for visitors to travel to natural areas such as parks: Relaxation, escape from everyday environments as well as the attributes of the park and nature areas. Article 2 focused on the determinants that influence demand to travel, of which the most influential were: income, relative prices, transport cost, exchange rates, marketing expenses as well as qualitative factors.
- The second objective was to determine the relationship between travel motives and the recession. This was achieved in Chapter 2 (Article 1) of the study. Based on the results of this article, it is clear that the recession had an influence on visitor's reasons to travel to the KNP. Emphasis was placed on escaping and experiencing the wildlife and nature at the park and family togetherness. The article furthermore showed that people travelled to the park irrespective of the poor economic conditions, which prompted the bold statement that travelling to natural areas may have become a primary need instead of a luxury and this type of travel might have become a vital and necessary part of their travel lifestyle.
- The third objective was to identify the determinants of demand to the KNP during the recession. This was achieved in Chapter 3 (Article 2). The research showed that the recession did not have a significant influence on the demand of visitors to travel to the

KNP, but rather influenced the behaviour of visitors at the park to a certain extent. This article also emphasised that visitors regarded travelling to the KNP as a primary need instead of a luxury.

- The fourth objective was to draw conclusions and to make recommendations concerning the influence of the 2008/2009 recession on the travel behaviour of visitors to the KNP. This chapter will conclude the findings of the research and use the results to make recommendations regarding the effective management and marketing of the KNP and further research.

## **4.2 CONCLUSIONS**

The conclusions will be discussed with regard to the literature review and the survey, as reported in Chapters 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

### **4.2.1 Conclusions with regard to the literature review**

- According to the theory of travel economics, more income, and especially disposable income, leads to more frequent and extravagant travel, while less disposable income leads to less travel. The impact of the recession is ultimately to reduce peoples' disposable income (c.f. 1.2).
- During the 2008/2009 recession, global tourism as well as domestic travel in South Africa declined by 8 percent (c.f. 1.1; 2.1).
- This was not the case in the KNP, because the KNP experienced a growth in its Accommodation Unit Occupancy of 1.6 percent (c.f. 1.1; 2.1).
- Some national parks in the USA also experienced growth during this period (c.f. 2.1; 3.2).
- A possible reason for this may be that spending in general is seen as a luxury good, but taking some form of a vacation may have become a basic need (c.f. 2.1).
- In this regard, is important for management to understand why people travel, so as to apply the correct management and do effective marketing to maintain a sustainable growth rate (c.f. 1.2; 2.2; 3.2).
- The reasons that people travel can be determined by looking at tourists' travel behaviour. Behaviour consists of both personal motivations of tourists to travel to a certain destination as well the determinants that influence the demand for that particular destination (c.f. 1.2; 2.2).

- Motivation is a person's personal feelings and need for certain things which then compels them towards these things (c.f. 1.2; 2.2).
- Motives of tourists can be measured by using models such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Iso Ahola's model and the push and pull theory. For the purpose of this study, the push and pull theory was used (c.f. 1.2; 2.2).
- Factors that push people to a destination are their feelings and needs such as the need to escape from their everyday environment or to relax while factors that pull visitors towards a destination are the unique attributes of the destination itself, such as the KNP's wildlife diversity (c.f. 1.2; 2.2).
- Determinants of tourism demand are those factors that drive and set limits to the volume of a population's demand for holiday and travel (c.f. 1.2; 3.2).
- Determinants can be either internal (which can be controlled by the visitor) or external (a product of the environment's influence) (c.f. 1.2; 3.2).
- Internal determinants can include personal income, demographic factors, travel preferences and perceptions of a destination (c.f. 1.2; 3.2).
- External determinants include geographical factors; mobility and governmental factors (c.f. 1.2; 3.2).
- The most common determinants of demand include income, relative prices, exchange rates, travelling costs, marketing expenses as well as qualitative factors (c.f. 3.2).
- A combination of all these factors plays a role in the creation for demand to a destination such as the KNP (c.f. 1.2; 3.2).
- It is understandable that the KNP could supply what visitors demand because it is seen as an all-inclusive holiday destination, meaning that it can provide almost all the needs that the visitors demand when travelling to a nature-based destination (c.f. 1.2, 2.1; 3.1).
- It was unclear until recently which factors (motivational and determinants) played a role in the KNP's increased bed occupancy during the research period, because no previous research on the influence of a recession on travel behaviour to national parks had been conducted (c.f. 1.2; 2.2; 3.2).
- This made this study of the great importance to maintain sustained growth in the KNP during a possible future tourism industry crisis (c.f. 1.2; 2.2; 3.2).

#### **4.2.2 Conclusions with regard to the survey**

In Article 1, a factor analysis was conducted to determine which motivational factors were the most significant in prompting tourists to visit the KNP. The results revealed the following motivational factors: *Escape*, *Finances*, *Socialising and exploration*, *Family benefit*, *Wildlife experience* as well as *Loyalty*. The factors with the strongest loadings were *Escape*, *Family*

*benefits* as well as *Wildlife experience*, thus indicating that respondents wanted to escape their everyday environment and experience wildlife and nature at the KNP with their families. Results therefore suggest that travel to a park such as the KNP can be seen as a lifestyle for these loyal visitors and that they would prioritise their expenditure to make the trip. Similar results were also reported for national parks in the USA.

A factor analysis, Chi-square tests, an independent t-test as well as a regression analysis were conducted in Article 2 to determine the factors that influenced the demand of visitors to travel to the KNP during the recession. The Factor analysis was carried out to determine the influence of the recession on visitors' behaviour prior to and at the KNP. From this analysis, two factors were identified: *Planning behaviour* and *Visiting behaviour*. The results showed that *Visiting behaviour* was influenced by the recession to a greater extent than the actual planning (*Planning behaviour*) before visiting the park. This implies that visitors' behaviour at the park has changed. An example of this is that they may have stayed in cheaper accommodation or spent less on souvenirs to still be able to afford travelling to the park. Chi-square tests were also conducted to determine the differences between visitors who considered an alternative destination and those who did not. Significant differences were found pertaining to the characteristics *Language*, *Country* and *First visits*. Visitors that considered an alternative destination before travelling to the KNP were predominantly Afrikaans-speaking, South African and mostly first-time visitors. Visitors that did not consider an alternative destination mainly spoke other languages that included English. They were mainly South African and they are more likely to be repeat visitors.

An independent t-test was also done for the same purpose as the Chi-square tests. Visitors who did not consider an alternative destination were motivated more by *Escape*, *Finances*, *Family benefits* and *Loyalty* compared to those visitors who did consider an alternative destination before travelling to the KNP. Lastly, a hierarchical stepwise logistic regression was done to assess the impact of a number of factors on the likelihood that visitors' demand to the KNP changed during the recession. It was found that the motivational factor *Escape*, the provinces *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* and *Souvenirs* had the greatest influence on demand to the KNP. Visitors, who did not consider visiting a destination other than the KNP, felt that the factor *Escape* was a very strong motivation while visitors from Gauteng and Mpumalanga have a greater chance of choosing an alternative destination. *Souvenirs* also influenced visitors' behaviour at the park, meaning that, if they did not consider visiting any other destination, they regarded things such as souvenirs as unimportant and thus scaled down their spending on such items. Only a few determinants were identified compared to

similar studies. This is most probably because visitors to KNP form a homogeneous market while the markets in the other studies are heterogeneous.

#### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARK MANAGEMENT**

This was the first study done in South Africa concerning the impact of a recession on park visits, which makes this study invaluable in terms of understanding consumer and travel behaviour during economic downturns. In addition, other important managerial and marketing implications can be drawn from this study, which will improve the popularity of the KNP as well as visitors' loyalty towards the park. This will help the KNP to maintain its strong stance throughout future crises in the tourism industry, thereby gaining a competitive advantage. The information obtained in this study pertaining to the recession and visitors' motives to travel to nature destinations even during tough economic times can be adopted by other tourism organisations in South Africa and throughout the world by studying and following the KNP's example.

The implications of determining the factors that motivate people and create demand to travel are immense. They can help marketers to properly develop marketing strategies to attract new visitors and to maintain the current visitor numbers to the park. Marketing can show the importance of escaping to a natural environment, thus answering the demand that is created by the motives. This study shows marketers the markets on which to focus, and the manner in which marketing should be done. These results also have implications for the management of the KNP, thus ensuring that the correct climate is created to host the visitors. The study highlighted the importance of a pricing strategy that will accommodate visitors from any economic background. Based on the results of the research, recommendations are made from a managerial as well as from a marketing point of view.

##### **4.3.1 Marketing recommendations**

With regard to travel motivations, the following factors were the most important when it comes to convincing visitors to travel to the KNP during a recession, *Escape*, *Wildlife experience* and *Family benefits*. Therefore KNP management should focus on these factors when conducting marketing by emphasising that the KNP is the best place to have a relaxing, nature-based experience with loved ones. The KNP should therefore position itself as an all-inclusive holiday destination. This could be done by using the following slogans, "The KNP, the natural family getaway from the everyday rush" or "The KNP, your home away from home" on billboards next to the busy highways in Gauteng or adverts can be

placed on radio which plays calming natural ambient sounds, followed by the words “The KNP, bringing back memories” to relive previous memories. Furthermore, the factor *Escape* is also a very important determinant influencing demand for travel to the park. This can be incorporated into two other determinants of demand to the KNP, the provinces *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga* (the two main markets to the KNP).

Emphasis should also be placed on the demand determinant *Escape* when it comes to the markets originating from these two provinces, especially *Gauteng*, because it is a densely populated, bustling metropolitan area with the highest per capita income in South Africa. This implies that marketing and promotions should focus on the relaxing, isolated environment that the KNP provides. Because *Gauteng* is not in close proximity to the KNP, travel costs can be a potential problem, therefore marketing must convince the different markets that travelling to the KNP is worth the trouble. Visitors from *Mpumalanga* province have a much greater probability of visiting other tourism attractions, because tourism attractions are so plentiful in this province. Marketing should focus on retaining loyal visitors as well as potential visitors by convincing them that the KNP is an all-inclusive destination thereby eliminating the need to visit most other tourism attractions. The focus should also be on the close proximity of the KNP to the province, thus implying lower travel costs and by using a slogan such as “A nature-based family breakaway on your doorstep”.

For *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga*, the pricing and promotion strategy of the KNP should aim at convincing visitors from all economic backgrounds to visit the park. For example, entry-level visitors with a lower income can, for instance, stay in the camping area, while visitors seeking more luxury accommodation can stay in a chalet. For the high-end visitors, there are family guesthouses, luxury chalets and private lodges. During recessions, the marketing focus should be on *Gauteng* and *Mpumalanga*. This strategy should attract loyal as well as first-time visitors.

#### **4.3.2 Managerial recommendations**

The determinant location or province of origin, specifically *Mpumalanga* Province revealed that visitors from this province are more likely to visit other tourism attractions in the province than visitors from *Gauteng* because there are so many attractions in *Mpumalanga*. The KNP should thus work with other tourism companies and organisations in its area to enlarge its economic footprint. For instance, if visitors want to visit the park but no accommodation is available, the park must give the visitors contact details of accommodation bordering the park so that the park can, at least, retain these visitors as day visitors. For the determinant, *Gauteng* Province, management should keep in mind that travel costs to the park are high

and therefore adjust their pricing strategy to accommodate these visitors, thus creating demand for travelling to and visiting the KNP during tough economic conditions.

It is also recommended that SANParks continue doing research to stay aware of changing market trends so that the market segments targeted can be adjusted to create demand in the ever dynamic tourism market. Management should furthermore ensure that the rest camps cater for all age groups and cultures so that the optimum number of visitors can be attracted. Quality service could lead to loyalty towards the park as well as positive word-of-mouth advertising, meaning that visitors will tell other people about the park and convince them to visit. This, in turn, will lead to lower marketing costs. It would be ideal to create the perfect environment at the rest camps based on what tourists expect so that they can realise that the KNP is a one-stop holiday destination.

From this research, destinations can learn how to survive difficult economic times by doing the following:

- Diversify products on offer at the destination. For example, different priced accommodation to attract visitors from any economic background (low, medium and high income).
- Diversify activities to supply a larger array of what visitors demand such as game rooms for children, horseback riding, stargazing and night drives.
- Do comprehensive marketing to know what markets should be targeted, as well as how to adapt to cater for other possible markets.
- Work together with other tourism organisations in the vicinity to supply more to the visitors. For example, a nature reserve wants to attract visitors, but they do not have overnight facilities for people that might come from afar, so they give visitors the numbers of guest houses in the area. This will be to the advantage of both groups.

### **4.3.3 Recommendations with regard to the survey**

From a methodological point of view, it is advisable that one should learn more about the market on which the survey will be conducted before demand can be determined, because it is important to know whether a researcher is working with a heterogeneous or homogeneous market. Such as the case with this study. The market is homogeneous, which made it difficult to determine the determinants that influence demand. Only a small number of determinants were found to have a significant influence on the demand to travel to the KNP. Therefore, the nature and characteristics of the market should firstly be analysed before conducting a regression analysis. It is then also advised to opt for a stepwise regression analysis since the importance of included variables can be determined by the researcher

based on the foregoing analysis. This way, a holistic overview of the market and the determinants of demand can be taken.

#### **4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Based on this research, the following aspects need to be further researched:

- The impact of other tourism industry problems such as natural disasters, changing travel trends and any other economic problems should also be determined in order to develop a strategic plan that will enable SANParks to survive and adapt to such problems.
- To sustain SANParks' current success rate, especially at the KNP, the key success factors at this park should be determined to improve management and marketing by building around these factors. Critical success factors refer to the particular strategy elements, resources, competitive capabilities, product attributes, competencies and business outcomes that spell the difference between profit and loss. These factors thus identify key areas and aspects pertaining to the management of the park and should be determined from a demand (visitors) and supply (park management) perspective. Knowledge of these factors can therefore provide management with clear guidelines to successfully manage the national parks during crises such as economic recessions.
- The critical success factors should also be determined for other national parks, since these factors will differ from park to park. This will allow park management to focus on each park's unique aspects to ensure that they are managed in a sustainable manner.

This research found that travelling to natural areas has become a primary human need, especially during tough times when people need to escape from their everyday situations and relax. This was the first time that this type of research was done at a South African national park, therefore further research needs to be conducted. From this research, interesting findings have surfaced and show that there is a dynamic shift in visitors' travel patterns as well as indicating a change in their travel lifestyles. This means that this research makes an invaluable contribution to tourism as a science, especially in the South African tourism context.

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# APPENDIX 1

VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE

**AFDELING A: SOSIO-DEMOGRAFIESE BESONDERHEDE**  
**SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DETAIL**

1. Huistaal?/ <i>Home language?</i>	English	1
	Afrikaans	2
	Ander/ <i>Other</i> (Spesifiseer/ <i>Specify</i> )	3
<hr/>		
2. Geslag?/ <i>Gender?</i>	Manlik/ <i>Male</i>	1
	Vroulik/ <i>Female</i>	2
3. Ras? (slegs vir administratiewe doeleindes)/ <i>Race? (for administrative purposes only)</i>	Swart/ <i>Black</i>	1
	Blank/ <i>White</i>	2
	Kleurling/ <i>Coloured</i>	3
	Indiër/ <i>Indian</i>	4
	Ander/ <i>Other</i> (Spesifiseer/ <i>Specify</i> )	5
<hr/>		
4. In watter jaar is u gebore? / <i>In what year were you born?</i>	<b>19</b>	<hr/>
5. Huwelikstatus?/ <i>Marital status?</i>	Getroud/ <i>Married</i>	1
	Ongetroud/ <i>Not married</i>	2
	Geskei/ <i>Divorced</i>	3
	Wewenaar, Weduwee/ <i>Widow/er</i>	4
	Woon saam/ <i>Living together</i>	5
<hr/>		
6. Land van herkoms (Indien buite RSA)?/ <i>Country of residence (If outside RSA)?</i>	<hr/>	
7. In watter provinsie is u woonagtig?/ <i>In which province do you live?</i>	Gauteng	1
	KwaZulu-Natal	2
	Oos-Kaap/ <i>Eastern Cape</i>	3
	Wes-Kaap/ <i>Western Cape</i>	4
	Noord-Kaap/ <i>Northern Cape</i>	5
	Limpopo	6
	Mpumalanga	7
	Vrystaat/ <i>Free State</i>	8
	Noordwes/ <i>North West</i>	9
<hr/>		
8. Dui asseblief u hoogste kwalifikasie aan./ <i>Please indicate your highest level of education.</i>	Geen skool/ <i>No schooling</i>	1
	Matriek/ <i>Matric</i>	2
	Diploma, graad/ <i>Diploma, degree</i>	3
	Nagraads/ <i>Post-graduate</i>	4
	Professioneel/ <i>Professional</i>	5
	Ander, spesifiseer/ <i>Other, specify</i>	6
<hr/>		

9. Dui asb u beroep aan. / Please indicate your occupation.

Professioneel/ Professional	1
Bestuur/ Management	2
Self-werkgewend/ Self-employed	3
Tegniese personeel/ Technical staff	4
Verkoopspersoneel/ Sales staff	5
Boer/ Farmer	6
Mynbou/ Mining	7
Administratief/ Administrative	8

Staatsdienswerknemer/ Civil service	9
Opvoeding / Education	10
Huisvrou/ Housewife	11
Pensionaris/ Pensioner	12
Student	13
Werkloos/ Unemployed	14
Ander (Spesifiseer) / Other (Specify)	15
_____	

**AFDELING B: EKONOMIESE INLIGTING**  
**SECTION B: ECONOMIC INFORMATION**

1. **Insluitend uself**, hoeveel persone is in u toergroep? / **Including yourself**, how many people are in your travelling group? **Aantal / Number**

2. **Insluitend uself**, vir hoeveel persone **betaal** u in u toergroep? / **Including yourself**, how many people are you **paying** for in your travelling group? **Aantal / Number**

3. Dui asb aan of u 'n **dag- of oornagbesoeker** is. / Please indicate whether you are a **day- or overnight visitor**.

Oornagbesoeker / Overnight visitor	1
Dagbesoeker / Day visitor	2

4. Indien u 'n oornagbesoeker is, dui asb u **tipe akkommodasie** aan. / If you are an overnight visitor, please indicate your **type of accommodation**.

Nie van toepassing (dagbesoeker) / Not applicable (day visitor)	Ja / Yes	Nee / No
Chalet	Ja / Yes	Nee / No
Gastehuis / Guesthouse	Ja / Yes	Nee / No
Kampeer / Camp	Ja / Yes	Nee / No
Ander, spesifiseer / Other, specify	Ja / Yes	Nee / No

5. Indien u 'n oornagbesoeker is, hoeveel **nagte** bly u in dié Park? / If you are an overnight visitor, how many **nights** are you staying at this Park? **Aantal / Number**

6.1 Is dit u **eerste besoek** aan die Park? / Is this your **first visit** to the Park? 

Ja / Yes	Nee / No
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6.2 Indien nee, **hoeveel keer** het u al van tevore hierdie Park besoek? / If no, how many **times** have you previously **visited** this Park? **Aantal / Number**

7. **Insluitende hierdie keer**, hoeveel keer het u Nasionale Parke oor die afgelope 3 jaar besoek? / **Including this visit**, how many times have you visited National Parks over the past 3 years?

As 'n oornagbesoeker / As an overnight visitor	1
As 'n dagbesoeker / As a day visitor	2

8. In vergelyking met vorige jare, bestee u hierdie jaar meer of minder op die volgende items tydens u besoek aan die Park? / Compared to previous years, do you spend more or less on the following items during your visit to the Park this year?

	<b>Meer More</b>	<b>Onveranderd No change</b>	<b>Minder Less</b>
1. Ingangs- en bewaringsfooï / Entrance and conservation fee	1	2	3
2. Akkommodasie (indien van toepassing) / Accommodation (if applicable)	1	2	3
3. Restourante / Restaurants	1	2	3
4. Kos en drinkgoed / Food and drinks	1	2	3
8. Vervoer / Transport	1	2	3
9. Aktiwiteite (Wildritte) / Activities (Game drives)	1	2	3
12. Aandenkings en juwele / Souvenirs and jewellery	1	2	3

### **AFDELING C: MOTIVERING VIR REIS SECTION C: MOTIVATION FOR TRAVEL**

1. Beskryf in **een woord** die gevoel (emosie) wat u ervaar wanneer u aan hierdie Park dink. / Describe your feeling/emotion when you think of this Park in **one word**.

2.1 Voordat u die keuse gemaak het om hierdie Park te besoek, het u eers ander alternatiewe bestemmings (bv. provinsiale parke, reservate, oorde, ens.) oorweeg? / Did you consider other alternative destinations (including provincial parks, nature reserves, resorts, etc.) before you decided to visit this Park?

Ja/ Yes	1
Nee / No	2

2.2 Indien ja (2.1), hoekom is hierdie Nasionale Park u finale keuse? / If yes (2.1), why is this National Park your final choice?

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2.3 In aggeneem die groot verskeidenheid vakansiebestemmings in Suid-Afrika, asook die gevolge van die onlangse ekonomiese resessie, dui asb die hoofredes aan hoekom u ongeag daarvan steeds hierdie Nasionale Park besoek. / *Considering the variety of holiday destinations in South Africa, as well as the effects of the recent economic recession, please indicate the main reasons why, in spite of this, you still visit this National Park.*

<b>Uiters belangrik / Extremely important</b>					
<b>Baie belangrik / Very important</b>					
<b>Belangrik / Important</b>					
<b>Minder belangrik / Less important</b>					
<b>Glad nie belangrik nie / Not at all important</b>					
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Dit is die naaste Nasionale Park en is dus 'n goedkoper vakansiebestemming./ <i>It is the closest National Park and therefore a more affordable holiday destination.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Die akkommodasie is bekostigbaar. / <i>The accommodation is affordable</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Die Park bied bekostigbare aktiwiteite, restourante en winkels. / <i>The Park has affordable activities, restaurants and shops.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Dit is 'n jaarlikse instelling. / <i>It is an annual commitment.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Die Park is 'n ideale vakansiebestemming/ <i>The Park is an ideal holiday destination</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Die Park is waarde vir geld. / <i>The Park is value for money.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Ek is lojaal teenoor die Park. / <i>I am loyal towards the Park.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Dit bied die Groot 5 / <i>It offers the Big 5</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Ek besit 'n WildCard, en as gevolg daarvan kan ek die Park gereeld besoek. / <i>I own a WildCard, therefore I can visit the Park regularly.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Die Park bied 'n unieke ervaring. / <i>The Park offers a unique experience.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Om weg te breek uit my roetine. / <i>To get away from my routine.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Om te ontspan. / <i>To relax.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Om 'n nuwe bestemming te verken. / <i>To explore a new destination.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Om tyd saam met my vriende te spandeer. / <i>To spend time with my friends.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Tot voordeel van my kinders. / <i>For the benefit of my children.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Vir gesinsrekreasie of om tyd saam met iemand spesiaal deur te bring. / <i>For family recreation (to be with family) or to spend time with someone special.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Die groot verskeidenheid van wildlewe en aktiwiteite in die Park. / <i>The wide variety of wildlife and activities in the Park.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Hoofsaaklik om opvoedkundige redes (om dinge te leer, my kennis te verbreed). / <i>Primarily for educational reasons (to learn things, increase my knowledge).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Om diere en plante te fotografeer. / <i>To photograph animals and plants.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Omdat ek met die Park grootgeword het. / <i>Because I grew up with the Park.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Dit is 'n bekende handelsmerk, daarom ken almal dit. / <i>It is a well-known brand, therefore everybody knows it.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

2.4. Ten spyte van die onlangse ekonomiese situasie, watter ander dienste sal u wil hê die Park moet implementeer? / *Despite the tough economic conditions, what other value added services would you like the Park to introduce?*

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3. Tot watter mate het die huidige ekonomiese situasie die volgende aspekte rakende u besoek aan die Park beïnvloed? / *To what extent did the current economic situation influence the following aspects concerning your visit to the Park?*

**Glad nie / Not at all**

**Tot 'n mindere mate / To a lesser extent**

**Tot 'n geringe mate / To some extent**

**Tot 'n meerdere mate / To a greater extent**

**Volkome / Completely**

	1	2	3	4	5
a. Tipe akkommodasie wat u gewoonlik kies (indien van toepassing). / <i>Type of accommodation you normally choose (if applicable).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
b. Die aantal kampe waar oornag word (indien van toepassing). / <i>The number of rest camps chosen to overnight at (if applicable).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
c. Grootte van die reisgroep. / <i>Size of the travelling party.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
d. Keuse van aktiwiteite tydens besoek (bv. wildritte). / <i>Choice of activities during your visit to the Park (for example game drives).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
e. Lengte van verblyf. / <i>Length of stay.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
f. Keuse om te oornag in die Park / <i>Choice to overnight in the Park</i>	1	2	3	4	5
g. Aankope by parkwinkels. / <i>Purchases at Park shops.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
h. Aankope van aandenkings. / <i>Purchases of souvenirs.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
i. Die aantal kere wat u Nasionale Parke besoek as 'n oornagbesoeker. / <i>The number of times you visit National Parks as an overnight visitor.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
j. Die aantal kere wat u Nasionale Parke besoek as 'n dagbesoeker. / <i>The number of times you visit National Parks as a day visitor.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
k. Besoeke aan Parkrestourante. / <i>Visits to Park restaurants.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
l. Die huur van toerusting by kampe (bv. eetgerei). / <i>The hiring of equipment (including kitchen utensils) at camps.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
m. Die huur van toerusting by dagbesoekerareas (bv. gasbraaiers). / <i>The hiring of equipment at day-visitor areas (for example gas braaiers).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
n. Die aankoop van voorraad (bv. kos) buite die Park. / <i>The purchasing of supplies (for examples food) outside the Park.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
o. Die tyd wanneer die bespreking gemaak is (in vergelyking met vorige jare). / <i>The time you made your booking (compared to previous years).</i>	1	2	3	4	5

4. Ondanks die huidige ekonomiese situasie in die wêreld, het besoekersgetalle aan Nasionale Parke steeds toegeneem. Waaraan sou u dit toeskryf? / *De spite the current economic crisis in the world, visitor numbers to National Parks are still increasing. Why do you think this is the case?*

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**Dankie vir u samewerking! / Thank you for your co-operation!**