

Determining key aspects of ecotourism product development

C. Duruibe



orcid.org/0000-0001-8106-1937

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Supervisor: Prof P. van der Merwe

Graduation: November 2021
Student number: 31244807

DECLARATION

I, **CHARITY DURUIBE**, student number **31244807**, do hereby declare that this dissertation entitled, **determining key aspects of ecotourism product development** is my own original work and that this dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree by myself or any other person to any other university for the attainment of any qualification and all sources used have been duly acknowledged and reported.

C. Duruibe:.....

Signature

Date:

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ABSTRACT

Ecotourism is seen as one of the fastest-growing divisions of the tourism industry. This rapid growth can be attributed to its ability to sustainably protect and conserve the environment, create ecological, socio-cultural and socio-economic advantages for the locals as well as generate foreign exchange. No wonder regions endowed with natural wealth are beginning to see the need to preserve and develop their God-given potentials. However, the ability of ecotourism to sustainably protect and conserve the environment as well as create economic benefits for the nation and the local community is largely dependent on the manner in which these ecotourism products are determined or have received development priority.

The lack of research on ecotourism product development as well as the need for ecotourism products in Nigeria, particularly in the CRNP, has ignited this current study. Therefore, the aim of this study was to evaluate the tourism potentials in CRNP to determine the key aspects of ecotourism product development for the destination based on ecotourists' product needs.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives were put forward; [1] to conduct a literature analysis regarding ecotourism and wildlife tourism. Part of these objectives is to look further at future trends and needs of ecotourists, [2] to research the ecotourism product development literature to determine the critical aspects of importance for tourism product development, [3] to conduct empirical research on the roles played by the government and its agencies in ecotourism product development of the state as well as in CRNP. This objective was achieved by means of a qualitative study, [4] to conduct empirical research on ecotourists to Obudu Mountain Resort (survey site) to determine the ecotourism product development needs of ecotourists by means of quantitative study. Part of this objective is to carry out further investigations by qualitative research on key role players such as the Commissioner, Cross River State Ministry of Culture and Tourism development (CRSMCTD), the Operating Officer, Cross River State Tourism Bureau (CRSTB) and the Research Officer, CRNP, and [5] to draw conclusions from, and to make recommendations based on, the literature and research results of the study.

The first objective of this study was an analysis of the literature on wildlife tourism and ecotourism. This gave an overview of the term 'nature-based tourism' since wildlife and ecotourism are both forms of nature-based tourism. The analysis of the literature on wildlife tourism that originated from nature-based tourism with the purpose of filling the gap created by nature-based tourism and ecotourism in its inability to deal with the issues related to wildlife, revealed that wildlife tourism is the best conservation option, especially when it involves a non-consumptive form of wildlife and passive wildlife observation. However, the analysis of the literature on ecotourism confirmed that ecotourism offered a more promising sustainable objective that is entirely non-consumptive and based on the natural setting, empowers the local community and enhances tourism development.

The second objective dealt with the analysis of the literature on tourism product development. With a general view of the concept 'tourism product', the literature analysis established that the tourism product does not exist in isolation, but rather the tourism product is a bundle of different elements such as attraction, activities, accommodation, amenities, appeal, ancillary services and available packages and they are the principal components that determine a successful tourism destination as tourist destination choice depends solely on these elements.

The third objective was empirical research on the roles played by the government and its agencies in ecotourism product development of the state as well as in CRNP. This objective was achieved through semi-structured in-depth telephone interviews with key role players such as the Commissioner, CRSMCTD, Operating Officer, CRSTB and Research Officer, CRNP.

The fourth objective was empirical research on ecotourists to Obudu Mountain Resort (survey site) to determine the ecotourism product development needs of ecotourists by means of quantitative study. To achieve this objective, a self-administered questionnaire was developed and administered to tourists in Obudu Mountain Resort between December 2019 and February 2020. The survey involved two methods: a self-completed questionnaire (i.e., respondents filling in the questionnaires on their own) and interviewer-completed questionnaire (interviewer writing down the responses posed orally to respondents). In the end, a total of 293 questionnaires were used and retrieved from respondents. The collected data were captured via the direct entry method aided by the Microsoft® Office Excel 2016. The qualitative study was analysed through content analysis, while the quantitative study analysis was performed in two stages. The first stage comprised a descriptive analysis of the respondent's demographic profile involving frequency analysis and percentages. The results were then presented in graphs, charts and tables aided by the Microsoft® Office Excel 2016 tools. The second stage was factor analysis. The factor analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

The results revealed the following key aspects regarding ecotourism product development for the studied area. Direct and indirect aspects were identified. Directly identified aspects; the development of better accommodation facilities is critical (such as eco-lodge, treehouse, nature trail and canopy walkway), better access roads to park, tarred roads in the park, a variety of wildlife activities (e.g., game viewing, birdwatching, Chimpanzee encounter, Gorilla tracking and observing Drill Monkeys), restaurant or places for tourist to eat and decent parking areas. Indirect aspects identified are; to improve the marketing strategy, the need for government financial support and partnership with other stakeholders, the need for financial support from a private organisation (such as Wilderness Safaris (WS) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF)), community support and putting safety measures in place (i.e. provision of safety gadgets, personnel training, the development of Tourism Safety Management Plan (TSMP) as well as employment of the youth as security guards).

Keywords: Ecotourism, tourism product development, key aspects, tourism products and Cross River National Park.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CERCOPAN	Centre for Education, Research and Conservation of Primates and Nature
COMCEC	Committee for the Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation
CRNP	Cross River National Park
CRSMCTD	Cross River State Ministry of Culture and Tourism Development
CRSTB	Cross River State Tourism Bureau
CRS	Cross River State
ECPTA	Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
ESTC	Economic Sustainable Tourism Conference
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NACSO	Namibian Association of CBNRM Organisation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPS	National Park Service
NTDC	Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation
STDG	Sustainable Tourism for Development Guidebook
TIES	The International Ecotourism Society
TSMP	Tourism Safety Management Plan
UNEP	United Nation Environmental Programme
UNWTO	United Nation World Tourism Organisation
WS	Wilderness Safaris
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WWF	World Wildlife Fund for Nature

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is an important tool for enhancing socio-economic development as well as a means for ensuring that nature is given an economic value, particularly in developing countries (Ofem, Lifu, Ogar, Eja & Ajadi, 2012:549). The importance of ecotourism can be seen in its ability to sustainably protect the ecosystem as well as creating cultural, socio-economic and ecological value for the locals. Irrespective of this overwhelming importance, ecotourism can bring about environmental and sociological damage when poorly planned and executed (Buchsbaun, 2004:1). However, when properly planned and prioritised by the government for development, its benefits to the state, adjoining communities as well as to the host community in particular, are great. As a result of these ecological and socio-economic benefits, ecotourism has continued to dominate the tourism industry over the past two decades. Hence, communities enriched with natural wealth are beginning to see the need to preserve and develop these natural resources to derive their inherent benefits. The study by Sharpley (2006:7) on ecotourism consumption demonstrates that the number of tourists engaging in ecotourism activities is growing three times faster than any other tourism activities. By 2024, it is expected that ecotourism will represent 5% of the world holiday market (Starmer-Smith, 2004:4). Based on this, Buchsbaun (2004:1) recommends that it is vital to give it a proper plan as a way to ensuring sustainable ecotourism product development and improvement of policies and practices for the optimum growth of the industry.

Nigeria is, without doubt, one of the wealthiest countries on earth regarding ecotourism potential (Atlas of Nigeria, 2002; Ayodele, 2002; Marguba, 2006). The industry is endowed with natural and human resources that are capable of fostering foreign exchange returns and bringing about a reduction of the over-dependence on the country's mineral resources (Bankole, 2002:74; Matthew *et al.*, 2018:3; Timothy & Boyd, 2006:1; Dele *et al.*, 2018:28; Ayodele & Falade, 1993; Ijeomah, 2007:100; Ayeni, 2013). Its unique tourism attractions include; national parks; archaeological tours, overland safaris; game reserves; hotels, beaches, snorkelling, zoos, and museums (Ayeni & Ebohon, 2012:129). However, despite its recognition as an ecotourism destination, not enough has been done to develop its full ecotourism potential (Omotosho, 2000:5). Most of Nigeria's ecotourism destinations appear inferior when compared to the expected world standard which has, in turn, led to a deficiency in international tourists' patronage (Ijeomah *et al.*, 2007). This perhaps explains why there is a decline in inbound tourism and a positive trend in the domestic travel segment of the industry as it remained stable at three million trips in 2017, following a growth of 4%, this was greater than the 3% growth recorded in 2016

(Westgro, 2017:2). The same study reported 93.2% of domestic travel spending generated in 2016 compared with 6.8% for foreign visitor spending (Westgro, 2017:2). Again, Westgro (2017:2) reported 8% of foreign visitor spending and 92% domestic spending on Nigeria's tourism consumption between the years 2014 to 2015. Also, Ajayi, and Eveso (2017:30) in their study, "*Ecotourism in Nigeria: The Okomu National Park context*", commented that all tourists to the park are Nigerians with a frequency of 50 (i.e 100 in percentage) compared to 0 frequency (i.e. 0.0 in percentage) for foreign visitors. The trend presented above shows a disparity in domestic and international tourism in the country.

As stated, due to the substandard nature of tourism facilities, it has resulted in a lack of patronage by both indigenes and foreigners. One of such ecotourism destinations is the CRNP. It is believed that, through the encouragement of ecotourism in the park, excellent opportunities for capturing revenue can be actualised in CRNP (Ngoka *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, the aim of this research is to determine the key aspects of ecotourism product development for the destination based on ecotourist product needs that will help grow tourism within the park. This chapter will address the literature background, objectives, problem statement, research methods, key terminology and chapter layout of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The study background is divided into two sections, the study area (the CRNP) and literature on tourism product development.

1.2.1 The study area

The study destination, the CRNP, is one of the seven national parks in Nigeria (National Park Service, 2000:3). It is located between latitude 6° 05' N and longitude 9° 02' E in the Cross-River State of Nigeria (Oshuntokin, 2001). The park has two divisions; the Oban and Okwangwo. The Oban division is approximately 3 000km² south-east of Nigeria and lies south and east of a loop of the Cross River and extending along the Cameroon border (Obong *et al.*, 2013:222). On the other hand, the Okwangwo division located in the northern part of the reserve and covers 1 000km² making it a total land area of about 4 000 km² with central coordinates of 5° 25' N and 8°35' E, i.e. an aerial coverage of 280 000 ha. However, this study will focus on the Oban division. This division offers different attractions to tourists and has been operational for the past 30 years. It is a tropical rainforest with unique experiences and one of the United Nation's acclaimed biodiversity hotspots (Adamu, 2008:227). At the CRNP, the following activities abound; waterfalls, mountaineering or hiking, a botanical garden and herbarium, tropical rainforest, wildlife experience, bird watching, gorilla tracking, a zoological garden, and sport fishing to name but a few (Ngoka, 2013:4). A visitor visiting the Oban division can access the park through the Yala-Wukarri-Katsina-Ala-Ikom highway or the Abuja-Makurdi-Ikom highway by car. If

the visitor at the Oban division intends to visit the Okwangwo division, he/she can proceed to Butatong where the Park is situated (Ngoka, 2007).

Facilities have been developed to meet the leisure needs of tourists to the park. One of these facilities is a guest house complete with water, electricity and furnished with TV facilities. Also existing in the park is a hostel for students as well as low budget travellers (Africa Travel Information, 2019:1). Other facilities and activities located outside the park as a complement to the CRNP are Marina Resort, Tinapa Business Resort, and Obudu Cattle Ranch, amongst others. The facilities in the park are poorly developed to meet tourists' standards and hence are unable to attract both foreign and local tourists as expected. This could, among other factors caused by government negligence, lessen attention given to this industry by the state and private organisations (Ngoka *et al.*, 2014:550). All financial support and priorities of the government are centred around cultural tourism and economic activities such as the Calabar Carnival festival, Tinapa Business Centre and Obudu Cattle Ranch, which are the biggest revenue generators of the state while leaving the national park with little or no attention (Ezebilo & Mattsson 2010:10; Ngoka *et al.*, 2014; Ngoka, 2007; Ngoka, 2013; Owem, 2004:15; Eneji, 2006:5).

According to the studies by Ngoka (2013:6), Marguba (2006) and Ngoka *et al.* (2014), the park is faced with uneven use for tourism. Ngoka (2013:6) reviewed 3.5% use of the reserve for tourism, of which 25.7% was international whereas 74.3% was made up of domestic use. The study by Ngoka *et al.* (2014:550) for the same destination, further reviewed that 23.6% of tourists to the park are composed of domestic visitors while 67.4% are international. These expositions from different studies represent a clear indication that there is an unequal report in terms of tourism use as well as underutilisation of the reserve. Factors that have been identified as affecting the use of the CRNP for tourism include; accessibility of the park's tourism product, environmental conditions, ecological impact, publicity of park's tourism products, distance from the city and local hospitality (Ngoka *et al.*, 2014:564). Furthermore, as reviewed by Ngoka *et al.* (2014), the underutilisation of the CRNP for tourism results from non-existence or sometimes insufficient tourism infrastructure, coupled with the naturally rough and uneven park terrain. Again, as a result of the humid state of the park, rough terrain and its highly forested and crisscrossing landscape, ecotours are mostly done on foot, which requires both endurance and patience. In addition, due to low visibility within the vegetation of the dense rainforest of the park, animal sighting is uncommon and thereby accessible only to those who are self-motivated and are willing to go a distance to see and enjoy the beauty of nature (Ngoka, 2013:7; Eugene *et al.*, 2010:52; Ngoka *et al.*, 2014:564; NTDC, 2012). Therefore, the more significant part of the reserve has remained untouched and unattainable. Nevertheless, the park still has enormous potential as an ecotourism destination, as there is a market for these types of products.

Through the determination of aspects of an ecotourism product, this study leans on the belief that, by improving the state of the park and mitigating the identified problems, it will bring about an increase in

the volume of visitors to the park, ensure optimal use and increase the revenue accruable from tourism and for the satisfaction of wants.

1.2.2 Tourism product development

Product development is an essential process that brings about corporate success with a competitive advantage (Mahmutllari, 2014:1). A product means different things to different people. A product, according to Kotler and Keller (2009:325) is something proffered to a market with the purpose of meeting the needs and wants of customers. In this regard, tourism exists as a service that, in many cases, offers intangible products. However, whether tangible or intangible, a product can dependently or independently meet or provide value to a specific set of customers. Tourism products present an opportunity that can be used to examine and distinguish standards for improved competitive advantage. This means that, for a destination to excel, it has to distinguish itself from its adversaries or competitors. Hence, the augmentation of the tourism product becomes very important in this regard (Stickdorn & Zehrer, 2009:4–5). Nevertheless, the demand for a life-changing and memorable experience as well as high-quality tourism products that offer value for money and time by today's tourist is an indication that most of these tourists are demanding, sophisticated and experienced travellers exposed to various destinations and tourism products. As a result, they visit destinations with the necessary products and services, and sometimes they go as far as using electronic media to enquire about a destination, and the types of services offered and also communicate their needs and want to tourism providers before embarking on their journey (Bethapudi, 2013). This, therefore, calls for an insight into the term 'tourism product development' as it has become a prerequisite in ensuring tourist satisfaction and maintaining a competitive advantage that will bring about the desired growth in any destination.

Tourism product development' according to Geremew, Alemayehu and Meskele (2017:1) is the means through which a destination's tourism potentials are transformed to satisfy the needs and wants of both domestic and international visitors alike. These include all processes relating to man-made attractions as well as activities, whether organised or otherwise, that form the central part of tourism products in a destination (Geremew, Alemayehu & Meskele, 2017:1). It also entails a system of events or processes involving strategy, product organisation, concept generation, product marketing, planning, and product examination as well as commercialisation of a new tourism product (Bayih & Tola, 2017:67). Marketing in product development is an essential component of tourism planning and aids decision makers and industry practitioners to achieve environmental, social and economic development in a region (Wassie & Ran, 2017:4). Since product development is connected with the creation of a memorable experience, marketing ensures that the value of the products is presented to potential customers in a manner that the customer will find appealing (Arefayne & Kindeya, 2017:1). This therefore makes destination marketing an essential aspect of product development. Since tourists and their personalities are the

significant targets in tourism services, it is very important to determine the right tourism product that is able to create an impact in the life of the tourist (Schalber, Zehrer & Schobersberger, 2011:14).

In developing a product, there are different aspects to consider. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), product development is a required activity of an organisation. Hence there are essential aspects/processes to consider in ensuring an enhanced competitive advantage, securing the future of the tourism product, increasing profitability, diversification of the products that will bring about destination loyalty (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Kotler and Armstrong (2010) and Bhuiyan (2013:749), reviewed that product development involves eight stages. The stages are: idea generation, idea screening, concept development and testing, marketing strategy, business analysis, product development, test marketing, and commercialisation. According to Buhalis (2000:98), the six 'A's of tourism products must be present before a destination can be considered successful. The six 'A's have been modified to become the seven 'A's. They include attraction, amenities (accommodation), accessibility, available packages, activities, ancillary services and appeal (Saayman, 2006:112-113).

These tourism product development aspects are summarised below;

- **Attraction:** Attractions are the fundamental tourism products in a destination as they define the framework within which visitors enjoy their vacations (Vengesayi *et al.*, 2009:624). They include all types of natural and man-made resources, culture, heritage, history, customs, architectural features, traditional artwork, cuisine, music, and handicrafts that attract visitors. As discussed and indicated previously, the CRNP has a wealth of natural attractions that can be made available to tourists. However, as reviewed by Ngoka (2013), it lacks in man-made attractions such as accommodation and activities.
- **Accessibility:** this entails the means through which customers can access destination products and services (Bernett & Bender, 2001:52), including accessibility with physical access (transit and destination) and access to information (signage). As earlier indicated (Ngoka *et al.*, 2014), this is a huge stumbling block of the CRNP.
- **Amenities:** amenities are products and services linked or situated within a tourism destination that exist to enhance tourists' stay at a destination, particularly when engaging in activities. They can also be seen as facilities provided to meet the needs and want of customers which include facilities such as restaurants, accommodation, transport within the destination, bars and cafeteria (Mandic *et al.*, 2018:4). Again, the CRNP is in dire need for this as the literature reports that the facilities/amenities in the park are poorly developed in terms of attracting both foreign and local tourist as expected (Ngoka *et al.*, 2014).
- **Available package:** a tourist destination requires an excellent intermediary to direct tourist attention. An excellent information centre can be made available for the convenience of the tourist. Currently, there are no tourism packages or links to other products in the area as most

of the tourism packages are situated outside the city and hence inaccessible to tourists (Ezebilo & Mattsson 2010:10).

- **Activities:** Activities are the essential things that motivate a tourist visit to a specific destination. These could be the available sports facilities/recreational activities. Only a few activities exist in the park at the moment.
- **Ancillary services:** The ancillary services are secondary to tourist needs in a destination, though not associated with tourism. They include banks, telecommunication and medical (Camilleri, 2017:16). These also represent a stumbling block in the CRNP.
- **Appeal:** This is the image, perception, and preference of a destination. Tourist perception and preference of a place or the products available in a destination play an essential role in his/her choice of a place to visit (Stickdorn & Zehrer 2009:4). These need to be executed as the park itself has pristine nature, but little appeal, mainly due to poor marketing and products.

Therefore, to determine the key aspects for ecotourism product development for the CRNP, these seven 'A's will form a central part of the plan investigation. Any of these services, when developed in a way that enhances a story behind and creates something more than just a service, will ensure destination marketing. However, it is the collection of different products and activities within the destination as well as tourism product development that ensures a destination realises its full potential.

1.2.3 Product development in protected areas

On a global scale, with proper product development in protected areas, benefits have been acknowledged. Several scholars, (Bushell & Bricker, 2016; Robinson, 2006:94; Jurincic & Popic, 2009; Job *et al.*, 2017), agree that tourism product development is capable of preserving the environment and endangered species. As defined by IUCN, a protected area is *"an area of land or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means"* (Possingham *et al.*, 2006:509). Smith and Robinson (2006:95), argue that product development in protected areas has the further benefit of establishing a mutually beneficial relationship among local people and stakeholders while preserving the environment.

The importance of a protected area in tourism development cannot be overemphasised as it has contributed immensely to the growth of the industry. According to Petric (2008:4), the quest for nature-based tourism is composed of 7% of the world's tourism requirement with an annual development rate that ranged from 10% to 30%, of which ecotourism is composed of 7% and 10% of the global tourist demand with an annual increase rate between 2% and 4%. On the other hand, the annual growth rate of adventure tourism stands at 8%. These tourism trends show that it is an undeniable fact that urgent

attention is needed to revive and enhance the control and all planning processes in protected areas to prevent the occurrence of conflicts that may result from product development in protected area. (Petric, 2008:6). This becomes relevant especially in protected areas of developing countries striving to balance development and environmental sustainability. Based on the analysis of the results presented above, it is obvious that product development in protected areas was all based on the conservation of nature and the promotion of environmental sustainability.

However, despite the importance of the protected area to environmental sustainability and conservation of nature, the CRNP boundaries as reported by Seba (2012:159) which were made using the initial forest reserve depictions, are yet to receive full support from its partner for a long-term process included with establishing legal boundaries. In spite of the fact that Nigeria National Park Service Decree no. 46 of May 1996 coordinates the arrangement of administration committees (Section 21) and completion of administration plans (section 28) and that working administration plans exist for the CRNP, there is no protected region mapped out for the CRNP wildlife protection (Seba, 2012:159). As a result, the decision regarding where to construct infrastructures or where and how to modify environments are being carried out without exact aims and objectives (Seba, 2012:159). This report was, however, made in 2012 and, since then, not much has been done to tackle this issue (CRNP's research officer - personal communication).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The demand for a life-changing and memorable experience by today's tourist can be seen in their constant quest for high-quality tourism products that offer value for their money as well as value for time. Most of these tourists are demanding, sophisticated and experienced travellers exposed to various destinations and tourism products, so they visit destinations with the necessary products and services, and sometimes they go as far as using electronic media to enquire about a destination and the types of services offered and also communicate their needs and wants to tourism providers before embarking on their journey (Bethapudi, 2013). Since the main emphasis of tourism is on product development and product development forms an integral part of the success story of tourism in a destination (Murphy *et al.*, 2000:27; Makuzva, 2018). Studies are deficient regarding the development of ecotourism in Nigeria, especially in the CRNP (Ijeomah & Eniang, 2018:2; Ijeomah *et al.*, 2011:154). For ecotourism development to be sustainable, it is essential to look into the problems associated with ecotourism product development of the study destination.

Given that Ngoka and Lameed (2013) reviewed the inadequacy of park tourism products and general low use of the CRNP for tourism, lack of facilities are problems that need urgent attention. Also, there is no decent tourism accommodation in the park and this and many more reasons have led to low visitation of the park by both local and international tourists (Ijeomah, & Eniang, 2018:2; Ngoka *et al.*,

2014; Ngoka, 2013). Therefore, there is a need to determine the key aspects of ecotourism product development that will help to grow ecotourism in the park. The problem that this research will address is to determine possible product development for the CRNP.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This study seeks to achieve the following aim and objectives to address the lapses revealed in the literature.

1.4.1 Aim of the study

This study aims to evaluate the tourism potentials in CRNP to determine the key aspects of ecotourism product development for the destination based on ecotourists' product needs.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study (qualitative and quantitative)

Based on the above aim, the following objectives were identified for this study:

- Objective one:** to conduct a literature analysis regarding ecotourism and wildlife tourism. Part of these objectives is to look further at future trends and needs of ecotourists (chapter 2).
- Objective two:** to research the ecotourism product development literature to determine the critical aspects of tourism product development (chapter 3).
- Objective three:** to conduct an empirical research on the roles played by the government and its agencies in ecotourism product development of the state as well as in CRNP. This objective was achieved by means of a qualitative study (chapter 5).
- Objective four:** to conduct empirical research on ecotourists to Obudu Mountain Resort (survey site) to determine the ecotourism product development needs of ecotourists by means of quantitative study. Part of this objective is to carry out further investigations by qualitative research on key role players such as the Commissioner, Cross River State Ministry of Culture and Tourism Development (CRSMCTD), the Operating Officer, Cross River State Tourism Bureau (CRSTB) and the Research Officer, CRNP (chapter 5).
- Objective five:** to draw conclusions from, and to make recommendations based on, the literature and research results of the study (chapter 6).

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design can be seen as a technique designed by a researcher comprising various aspects of a study, organised in a unified and orderly manner to ensure that the problem that the study seeks to address is effectively and efficiently addressed. It also serves as a road map assisting with data collection, analysis and interpretation (Kobus 2007:70; Singh & Chibuye 2016:45). A research problem, researcher's skills, research practices, and assumptions determine how data is collected using a research design. A Convergent Parallel mixed-method design was used in this research. Creswell (2011) states that the convergent parallel design, gathers both quantitative and qualitative data, analyses both datasets separately, compares the results from the analysis of both datasets and makes interpretations. The direct comparison of the two datasets by the researcher provides a convergence of data sources.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

Research methods are procedures employed by researchers in carrying out their research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:21). According to Creswell (2014) and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:4), there are basically three methods to research and these are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach. This study made use of mixed methods research to neutralise the weaknesses inherent with either quantitative or qualitative method. A brief discussion of the three methods follows.

1.6.1 Mixed methods research

Mixed method research, according to Tashakkori and Creswell (2007:4), is defined as “research that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate a situation by using two data, carrying out two data analysis, combining the findings and drawing two types of conclusions all in a single study”. Mixed methods were developed as an alternative to the dichotomy of qualitative and quantitative traditions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:4). A number of reasons contributed to the evolution of mixed research methods, the main one being that the complexity of research problems calls for solutions beyond simple numbers in a quantitative sense of words in a qualitative sense. Thus, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative forms of data provides a complete analysis of problems (Creswell & Clark, 2011:21).

Mixed methods research has a unique characteristic of data conversion, also known as data transformation (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:269). This means that collected quantitative data types are converted into narratives that can be analysed qualitatively, or qualitative data types are converted into numerical codes that can be analysed statistically. Combining both methods were the most appropriate for this study as the aim was to determine the key aspects of

ecotourism product development that will assist in growing the park for tourism. This was achieved through self-administered questionnaires for the quantitative study and semi-structured, in-depth telephone interviews for the qualitative research.

1.6.1.1 Quantitative research method

A quantitative research method is a procedure used to confirm objective theories by simply investigating the connections amongst items or variables (Creswell, 2014). Its results, sometimes referred to as statistics, can be summarised in numerical categories as agreed by some scholars (Marvasti, 2004:7; Have, 2004:4; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:94; Creswell, 2014; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:5) that quantitative researchers initially agree to the opinion of scientific methods (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:5). Positivism is a view that researchers from social disciplines should embrace strict scientific approaches that entail a thorough hypothesis testing of quantitative measurements.

According to Creswell (2014), there are basically two types of quantitative research. These are; experimental design and non-experimental design. The experimental designs, examine the effect of interference on a result by treating one group differently from the other to determine their scores (Creswell, 2014:156). The non-experimental designs, on the other hand, are research designs that embody a group of techniques used to conduct quantitative research where there is no manipulation done to any variable in the study (Mertler, 2014). In other words, variables are measured as they occur naturally, without the interference of any kind by the researcher. This study used a non-experimental survey design. The study further made use of non-probability sampling, namely convenience sampling.

1.6.1.2 Qualitative research method

Qualitative research is a form of research that goes beyond data gathering. It is a research approach that uses people's spoken words, opinion, ideas, observations and reactions to generate descriptive data. It enables a researcher to examine and experiment the real world and turn it into a series of representations such as interviews, field note-taking, photographs, recordings, memos and conversations (Taylor & Boydan, 1998:7; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3; Clark & Creswell, 2011). It entails examining features that cannot be impaired or diminished to mere numbers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:94; Neuman, 2014:204). The same scholars agree that qualitative research produces data that are obtained from people's actions, written or spoken words, an object(s), symbols, visual images and sounds. Based on this, qualitative research compares the ideas and opinions of people and investigates how they accord meaning to their life experiences (Berg & Berg, 2001:7).

According to Creswell (2014:190), there are basically five types of qualitative research, and these are conceptual research, historical research, action research, case study, ethnography study and grounded

theory study. The purpose of a historical research design is to collect, verify and synthesize evidence from the past to establish facts that defend or refute a hypothesis. Conceptual research can be seen as a research methodology whereby research is conducted by observing and analysing already present information on a given topic. This form of research doesn't entail conducting any practical experiment. In an ethnography study, the researcher studies an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period by collecting primarily, observational data. In a grounded theory study, the researcher attempts to derive a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction in the views of participants in a study. This is a form of research that begins with data that develops into a theory. Action research can be seen as a process that provides the means by which a researcher explores their experience, gains greater clarity and understanding of events and activities, and then uses those extended understandings to construct effective solutions to the problems on which the study was focused (Creswell, 2014; Stringer, 2007:20; Williams, 2007:69). The qualitative research design followed in this study was action research. For this research, semi-structured telephonic interviews were used involving some interest groups, park management and some government officials in tourism.

1.6.2 Literature review

This involves collecting data from other sources through a literature review. The literature review chapters (chapters 2 and 3) will assist with general knowledge and understanding of the study background. The literature review involved researching books, journals, published and unpublished articles that are relevant to the study. Keywords such as ecotourism, tourism, national park, tourism products, tourism product development, nature-based tourism, eco-destination, and key aspects were employed. After reviewing the selected literature, the instrument for the collection of the primary data was developed as well as the administration of the questionnaires and the sample population interviewed.

1.6.3 Research design and method of collecting data

A research design is a statement arranged in an orderly manner, connecting the data obtained from a study to the study research questions earlier designed as well as linking it to its conclusions (Yin, 2014:28). To achieve the research goal of the study, a convergent parallel mixed-method design was used. This form of research design allows a broader, more complex research problem to be investigated since the researcher is not constrained by using only one method (De Vaus, 2006:1). As mentioned earlier, this study made use of a mixed-method research approach (i.e. both qualitative and quantitative) to better draw on the strengths of qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques to formulate a holistic interpretation procedure for generating possible solutions or a new understanding of the problem.

Qualitative data: unlike quantitative data, qualitative data are not measured in terms of frequency or quantity but rather are examined for in-depth meaning and processes. An in-depth semi-structured telephonic interview was employed. Interviews are widely used as data collection tool in qualitative research, typically as a research strategy to gather information about participants' experiences, views and beliefs concerning a specific research question or phenomenon of interest (Frances *et al.*, 2009:309).

Quantitative data: a questionnaire was designed and used for the collection of the quantitative data. As defined by Cohen *et al.* (2007:317), a questionnaire is a tool used for the collection of information regarding a phenomenon of interest that is self-reported. A closed-ended question was used to obtain data for the study by simply relating it to the area of investigation and allowing participants to select among specific responses. The questionnaire also enables the researcher to easily compare and evaluate as well as analyse data as responses are comprehensible (Patton, 2002).

The CRNP was selected for the study due to the lack of research focus on ecotourism product development and ecotourists' product needs amongst other developmental issues that needed urgent attention. Since the study focuses on the local market, the study population was derived from ecotourists to Obudu Mountain Resort. Again, since the CRNP only receives a few tourists in a year (Ngoka & Lameed, 2013:12), there was a need to survey a tourist destination with similar ecotourism features. Obudu Mountain Resort was therefore selected for the survey because, firstly, is one of the significant ecotourism sites in the state and the country at large with natural and unique features and mostly visited by Nigerians. Secondly, it is situated close to the CRNP (Amalu *et al.*, 2017:36-37). Thirdly, it receives a large volume of tourists in a year, especially during the festive season. The aim is to use the data obtained from the resort to assist in determining the key aspects for ecotourism product development for the CRNP.

The Obudu Mountain Resort is composed of a mountain range extending from Nigeria into the Republic of Cameroon and a part of the CRNP (Ngoka, 2013:3; Caldecott *et al.*, as in Conservation International, 2004:71; Osazuwa, 2015:15; Ngoka *et al.*, 2014:565). The resort also contains the Becheve Nature Reserve located on top of the mountain range, which can be accessed by driving up the winding road or with a cable car. The Becheve Nature Reserve is a vast well-protected forest reserve that occupies a total land area of 85km². The Becheve Nature Reserve is the dwelling place or home to over 250 species of migratory birds and different varieties of monkeys and wildlife (both flora and fauna) (Osazuwa, 2015:15; Osazuwa & Nelly, 2019:15). Some of the attractions in the reserve are a canopy walkway which aids in proper viewing of the forest trees and animals, bird view towers, a treehouse, a camping site, and mini waterfalls (Ngoka & Nzegbule, 2013:176; Osazuwa & Nelly, 2019:15; Okpoko & Okonkwo, 2005:82; Ngoka *et al.*, 2014:569). The reserve is a clear example of a tropical rain forest reserve.

1.6.4 Population and sampling

The term “sampling” can be described as an act or technique of choosing an appropriate sample from a population to examine the features of the entire population (Haira *et al.*, 2008:48). As revealed by Ritchie and Lewis (2003:77), every research, whether qualitative or quantitative, requires sampling. In this research, mixed methods were used and therefore, the need to do sampling. There are basically two methods to sampling, and they include; probability sampling (i.e., random sampling) and non-probability (i.e., non-random sampling). Probability or random samples, according to Clark-Carter (2004:154) are samples that represent the elements of a population with a quantifiable probability of being chosen. The probability sampling method consists of simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. Simple random sampling is a sampling technique where every item in the population has an even chance and likelihood of being selected in the sample. In the systematic sampling method, the researcher selects members of the population by selecting a random starting point and selects sample members after a fixed sample interval. Stratified sampling is generally used to obtain a representative sample, especially when the sample to be drawn does not come from a homogeneous group. Cluster sampling involves selecting randomly from a smaller unit of a divided area since the total area of the research is too large. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:78) and the Copernicus Consulting Group (2008) assert that random sampling is the best method for a quantitative study.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:78) and Copernicus Consulting (2008) agree that non-random or non-probability sampling is the best method when doing a qualitative study. In non-probability sampling, as proposed by Clark-Carter (2004:154), the sample is selected based on non-random criteria, and not every member of the population has a chance of being included. Koerber and McMichael (2008:459), states that non-probability sampling is composed of the following approaches, snowball, convenience, quota and purposeful. Snowball sampling is a form of sampling method that links the researcher to the principal participant or other groups of respondents who could take part in the study. Convenience sampling is a form of sampling that is accidental and haphazard in nature, as it does not have a systematic selection process. Quota sampling is a sampling technique where participants are selected on the basis of the characteristics they possess in the study population in totality (Etikan & Bala, 2017:215-216). Clark-Carter (2004:153) states that the aims of the research will help to choose the sampling method that will be suitable for the research. This study made use of purposive sampling for the qualitative aspect of the study. Tracy (2013:136) defines purposive sampling as the process that allows the researcher to select a representative of a population or a sample with respect to the study purpose as well as the knowledge of the population and the study itself. This is the same situation with the research at hand, especially when it comes to the interest groups (i.e. park management and government officials in tourism who participated as respondents).

The researcher also made use of convenience sampling for the quantitative study, which is a type of sampling method that is accidental and haphazard in nature, as it does not have a systematic selection process. (Etikan & Bala, 2017:215-216). The sample population which was derived from tourists to Obudu Mountain Resort is an example of a purposive sampling method as the samples were selected accidentally.

1.6.5 Sample population

Since the study focuses on the local market, the sample population was derived thus:

1.6.5.1 Qualitative (interviews)

The qualitative data was obtained through an in-depth semi-structured telephonic interview. The sample size for the qualitative study was three (3) involving the following interest group: 1) the commissioner, CRSMCTD, 2) the operating officer, CRSTB and 3) the research officer, CRNP. The respondents for the interview were selected based on the study purpose and their (respondents) knowledge and experience about the population and the study itself as they occupy important positions.

1.6.5.2 Quantitative (questionnaire)

The quantitative data for this study was obtained through a questionnaire. The sample population for the study was tourists to Obudu Mountain Resort in Cross River State.

1.6.6 Development of the measuring instrument

The study focuses on the view and need of ecotourists as regards product development in the study destination and the view of key informants such as park management, government officials in tourism (i.e. CRSMCTD and CRSTB). The measuring instrument was developed as follows:

1.6.6.1 Questionnaire instrument

As stated, the instrument for collection of the quantitative data was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed based on previous research from Saayman and Saayman (2006), Van der Merwe and Saayman, (2008), Geldenhuys, Van der Merwe and Saayman (2016), Saayman and Slabbert (2007), Oberholzer, Saayman, Saayman and Slabbert (2010) and Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001) and then altered to accomplish the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was designed in four (4) sections. Section A highlighted the demographic information of respondents. Section B contained tourist accommodation preferences and questions such as, “what type of accommodation and accommodation unit you prefer?” Section C contained a tourist's travel motives. Section D contained the potential

ecotourism products and personal opinions of the respondents. The questionnaire had a Likert-scale type of responses. The Final section also provided the respondents with the opportunity to make recommendations.

With the help of a research assistant, the questionnaires were administered to tourists at Obudu Mountain Resort (survey site) between December 2019 and February 2020. The research assistant was briefed on the purpose and objectives of the study. The research assistant was also trained on the various sections of the questionnaire and how to explain them to the respondents to ensure quick and efficient data collection processes. Both verbal and written permission were obtained from each respondent before handing them the questionnaire. The written consent is contained in the introductory letter (i.e. page 1) of the questionnaire while the verbal consent was read out to the respondents about the aim and objectives of the study. While some respondents (educated) responded to the questions by filling in the questionnaires on their own, others (less educated) responses were written down by the interviewer who posed the questions to them orally. In the end, 293 usable questionnaires were received back from the ecotourists to the resort.

1.6.6.2 Interview instrument

In developing an interview for the collection of your primary data, a guide or schedule is needed. An interview guide can be described as the compilation of questions a researcher wishes to ask during an investigation or interview (Sharan & Elizabeth, 2016:124). Since the interview type for this research is semi-structured, the questionnaire contained different but specific questions and a few open-ended questions that called for answers together with other issues, topics and areas that required an in-depth knowledge. An interview guide enables one to be more relaxed, confident and focused thereby conducting a more open or closed-ended questioning. This study used open-ended questions which were designed and related to the field of inquiry to obtain responses from the respondents. The information expected from these groups of respondents was; the planning and development of ecotourism in the CRS as well as the CRNP, mode of product marketing, community/government involvement in ecotourism development, challenges to ecotourism development and the mechanism used by the government to collaborate with other key stakeholders in the development of ecotourism and the way forward.

With a sample size of three involving the Commissioner, CRSMCTD, the Operating Officer, CRSTB and the Research Officer, CRNP, the qualitative data for the study was obtained. The participant from the CRSMCTD was interviewed on 5 February 2020, and it lasted for 50 minutes. The participant from CRSTB was interviewed on 10 February, 2020, and the duration of the interview was forty-five minutes. The interview with the respondent from CRNP was on 16 March 2020, and it lasted for thirty minutes.

The validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility of the study is explained in detail in chapter 4 (research methodology chapter).

1.6.7 Data analysis

Mixed method research involves using two methods in the data analysis. It entails analysing the qualitative data separately using a qualitative approach and analysing the quantitative data using a quantitative approach (Creswell & Clark, 2011:203). During the in-depth interviews, the researcher used a voice recorder to obtain the data for the qualitative aspect of this study, which was later transcribed. With the use of content analysis, the qualitative data was analysed following Creswell's six steps for qualitative data analysis which include preparing the data for analysis, exploring the data, analysing the data, representing the analysis, interpreting the analysis, and validating the data and interpretation (Creswell, 2009:185; Creswell & Clark, 2011:204).

For the quantitative data, the raw data for this study was captured via the direct entry method with the use of Microsoft® Office Excel 2016. For ease of data analysis, the raw data was changed into a form by simply allotting a numerical value to the responses, erasing errors entered from the database and establishing the unique items or variables that are required. The data analysis was done in two phases, descriptive analysis of the respondent's demographic profile involving frequency analysis and percentages. The results were presented in graphs, charts and tables aided by the Microsoft® Office Excel 2016 tools. The second phase was factor analysis. The factor analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Also, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), principal component analysis (PCA) and a pattern matrix (PM) were applied for the investigation. After the analysis of the data, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were offered with respect to ecotourism product development plan for the CRNP and for future research.

1.7 DEFINING THE CONCEPTS

The following concepts were used frequently throughout the study and therefore need to be explained.

1.7.1 National Park

“A national park can be seen as the establishment, preservation, and study therein of wild animals, marine and plant life and objects of geological, archaeological, historical, ethnological, oceanographic, educational and other scientific interests and objects relating to the said life or the first-mentioned objects or events in or the history of the park, in such a manner that the area which constitutes the park shall, as far as may be and for the benefit and enjoyment of visitors, be retained in its natural state” (Seeland, 2000:46).

1.7.2 Tourism

Bahar (2006) defines tourism as “a collection of services, activities and industries delivering a travel experience to tourist comprising accommodation, transport, eateries, retail shops, entertainment businesses and other hospitality services provided for individual or groups travelling away from home”.

1.7.3 Ecotourism

Ecotourism is a form of responsible travel to natural areas that preserves the environment and improves the live of the local community (TIES, 1990:1).

1.7.4 Wildlife tourism

Wildlife tourism refers to tourism based on encounters with non-domesticated animals either in their environment or in captivity. It includes both the consumptive and non-consumptive forms of wildlife tourism (Newsome *et al.*, 2013; Higginbotton, 2004).

1.7.5 Tourism product development

“...is the process by which the resources of a destination are shaped to meet the needs and wants of both international and domestic customers. This covers everything from manmade facilities or attractions to activities requiring varying levels of physical input and organised events such as festivals and conferences” (COMCEC, 2013:1).

1.7.6 Key aspects

Key aspects with respect to tourism product development are essential processes/activities required of an organisation in ensuring an enhanced competitive advantage, securing the future of the tourism

product, increasing profitability, diversification of the products that will bring about destination loyalty (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

1.8 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

The study consists of six chapters. A brief outline of the chapters and the content of each chapter follows:

Chapter 1 - Introduction and Background

This chapter included a background to the study that gives a broad overview of the term ‘ecotourism’, the problem statement, the goal and objectives, research methods as well as definitions necessary to understand the context of the study.

Chapter 2 – Understanding Wildlife Tourism and Ecotourism

The literature chapter began with a brief overview of nature-based tourism, analyses of wildlife tourism, its definitions, components, potentials and the place of wildlife tourism within the tourism industry. This was followed by the concept of ecotourism, its definitions, pillars, principles, benefits from ecotourism/wildlife-based tourism, and trends in ecotourism product development, the ecotourism market as well as the future of ecotourism was considered.

Chapter 3 – Tourism Product Development

This second literature chapter discusses the concepts of tourism product development, the tourism product, the definitions of tourism products, types of tourism products, components of a thriving tourism destination (7 ‘A’s of tourism products), the tourism resources of the CRNP and the planning and development of the tourism product. The chapter also discusses barriers to tourism product development in Nigeria as well as in the CRNP.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

Chapter 4 outlines the methodology of this study. The chapter contains the research design and target population, research methods and methodology, sampling methods and development of the measuring instruments, data collection, data analysis as well as ethical considerations.

Chapter 5 – Empirical Analysis

This chapter presents the empirical findings which involved the analysis of the qualitative data (telephone interviews) and quantitative data (questionnaires). This was achieved with the use of a content analysis, descriptive and factor analysis and results presented using tables, charts and graphs.

Chapter 6 – Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter addressed objectives 1, 2, 3 and 5 of the study, thereby marking the end of the study as conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study and recommendations offered with respect to the key aspects of ecotourism product development for CRNP and for future research.

CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING WILDLIFE TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to conduct a literature review of wildlife tourism and ecotourism. The chapter is constructed as follows: First, a brief overview of nature-based tourism will be presented since wildlife and ecotourism are both forms of nature-based tourism. After that, the concept of wildlife tourism will be analysed, thereby ensuring that aspects such as its definitions, components, potentials and the place of wildlife tourism within the tourism industry will be addressed. Second, ecotourism as a concept will be analysed with its definitions, pillars of ecotourism, ecotourism principles, benefits from ecotourism/wildlife-based tourism, trends in ecotourism product development, ecotourism market as well as the future of ecotourism.

2.2 NATURE-BASED TOURISM

The trend towards nature-based tourism is increasing and hence has been described as the fastest growing type of tourism business (Moscardo & Saltzer, 2005:94; Newsome *et al.*, 2005:20). As described by Saayman (2017:4), it incorporates all tourism types that are somewhat calm and where the natural environment constitutes the major part of the setting (Saayman, 2017:4). It can also be seen as “*Generalised and non-complex form of tourism occurring in a natural environment that is unique and engaging*” (Moscardo & Saltzer 2005:95). It includes a variety of activities such as wildlife viewing, trekking and diving in an unusual but unique destinations such as deserts, mountains, islands, forests and savannahs. Its environment and destination features differ from other forms of tourism with respect to conservation and uniqueness. However, just like ecotourism that entails the conservation of the destination and its inherent potentials, nature-based tourism does not involve the idea of conservation of the destination (Fennell, 2003:27).

Nature-based tourism can play the role of poverty alleviation, effective and efficient use of the resource base and also ensures future research in the industry. Tisdell (2013:3) describes nature-based tourism as tourism that relies on natural attractions. The attractions include wildlife in their natural habitat and natural landscapes. For instance, a trip to CRNP to view wildlife in their natural setting and appreciate nature's beauty would be regarded as nature-based tourism. Due to an increase in tourist demand for life-changing and unique activities, the industry has continued to grow and occupies a reasonable proportion of the entire tourism sector (Pickering & Weaver, 2003:7; Machnik, 2013:75). In the light of this, tourists started showing interest in more sustainable products, including tourism products. This is a clear indication that nature, as the major factor, is becoming more and more significant for tourists.

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, nature-based tourism can be classified into wildlife tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism and car camping with each offering the tourists an unequalled experience (Eagles 2004:2).

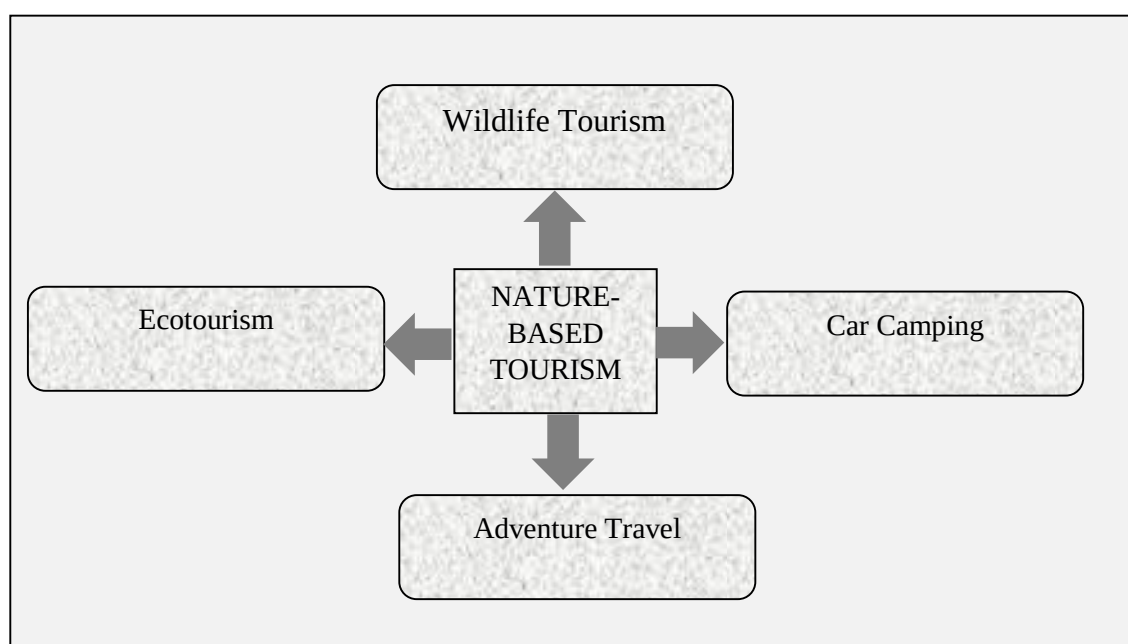


Figure 2.1: Nature-based tourism (Adapted from Bothma, 2015:23).

Adventure tourism depends on tourists' decisions to engage in risky activities for the fulfilment of personal desire (Van der Merwe, 2009:232; Swarbrooke, Beard, Leckie & Pomfret, 2003:7). As indicated by Van der Merwe (2009:225), adventure tourism is a form of a hazardous nature activity that requires both endurance and some form of physical skills. Car camping provides a safer option, especially to family travelling in groups (Van Der Merwe, 2009:232; Higginbottom, 2004:2). Ecotourism can be seen as the only form of tourism that affords one the opportunity of exploring the environment and discovering new natural areas and also studying the natural and cultural environment as well as interacting with them to get a better understanding of how nature works. Wildlife tourism is tourism engaged in by a tourist to encounter and interact with animals and can occur in a range of settings or environments (Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:20). The next section of the chapter discusses wildlife tourism in detail.

2.3 WILDLIFE TOURISM

This section of the chapter introduces the concept of wildlife tourism, definitions, components, potentials and the place of wildlife tourism within the tourism industry.

2.3.1 An introduction to wildlife tourism

Wildlife refers to a term incorporating both flora and fauna of an ecosystem growing or living naturally without any human introduction (Curtin, 2008). Conservation and travel can be said to be associated with the idea of wildlife tourism with a worldwide trend as the industry holds great potential for economic growth and development, a competitive advantage especially for developing countries due to their rich natural resources (Rodger *et al.*, 2007:160; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2009:106). Also, wildlife tourism has been generally recognised as a growth sector of the tourism industry providing a leading foreign exchange earner in many countries of the world (Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001:31; Van der Merwe, 2014:4). Wildlife tourism was born out of nature-based tourism to better deal with any situation and issues that are related to wildlife, which is lost in ecotourism and nature-based tourism (Braithwaite & Reynolds, 2002). This tourism type involves activities such as birdwatching, whale watching, safaris, hunting and fishing (Van der Merwe, 2014:4). Just like the trend in wildlife tourism, particularly of tourists looking for an encounter with wildlife in their natural environment, there is also a notable body of literature describing the revenues obtained from wildlife tourism (Ayodele, 2002:1; Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2003:104; Ayodele, 2002; Meduna *et al.*, 2009:61; Lindsey *et al.*, 2007:20).

2.3.2 Defining wildlife tourism

Wildlife tourism can be seen as a form of tourism undertaken to interact with wildlife (i.e. flora and fauna). It includes a series of encounters such as passive observation and touching or feeding the species. These encounters can occur in a range of settings, from semi-captive, captive, or in the wild (Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:18-19). Curtin (2005:2) define wildlife tourism as “a hedonistic activity; the purchase of which is protected in imagination, myth and intangibility especially given that, in many cases, there are no guarantees that the focal species will be seen”. Higginbottom (2004:2) also sees wildlife tourism as “tourism based on interactions with non-human animals”.

According to Newsome, Dowling and Moore (2005:19-20) and Higginbottom (2004), the encounter between tourist and wildlife can happen while the animal is in captivity or in its natural environment and can be described as “non-consumptive”, and it includes activities like photography, viewing and feeding of animals as well as activities that entail capturing and killing of animals especially hunting of animals in a terrestrial environment and recreational fishing in the aquatic environment. According to Van der Merwe (2014:11), wildlife tourism entails unguided encounters by independent travellers at fixed-sites comprising different attractions, experiences, tours available in association with tourist accommodation and other packages. As Higginbottom (2004:6) and Van der Merwe (2014:12) state, the goal of wildlife tourism is sustainability and maximising benefits to all contributing parties, which

may include conservation of wildlife and the natural environment, improving the life of local people through economic injections and education as well as economic benefits to other contributing parties. This is done in such a way and manner that it remains viable and does not change the environment. This is achieved through maximisation of long-term effect to the natural environment.

Wildlife tourism products as revealed by Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:32), (Table 2.1) involves unique and organised animal watching, nature-based tours, thrill-seeking tours, artificial wildlife attractions and hunting and fishing tours.

Table 2.1: The wildlife tourism product

Wildlife-based products	Description (examples)
Special animal watching	Bird watching or whale watching
Habitat-specific tours	Usually diverse and rich in wildlife
Nature-based tours	Focus in part on wildlife viewing
Eco accommodation	Located in wildlife-rich habitats
Thrill-seeking tours	Where abundant or dangerous wildlife are encouraged to engage in spectacular behaviour by tour operators
Artificial wildlife attractions	Viewing of species kept in captivity
Hunting/fishing tours	Harmful use of wildlife

Source: Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:32-33).

While some type of wildlife tourism products and activities are more appealing to the general public than others, it is essential to note that sustainable environmental practices are of paramount importance in nature-based tourism and therefore should be treated as such (Page & Dowling, 2002:83). Wildlife tourism, though different in a way, can be seen as nature-based tourism and ecotourism forming an important aspect of its natural products (e.g. eco accommodations).

2.3.3 Components of wildlife tourism

Wildlife tourism is a type of nature-based tourism that includes a wide range of experiences and, by categorising the attributes of these experiences, it will aid in a variety of ways. Wildlife tourism is categorised into consumptive and non-consumptive types of tourism (Myra, 1996:95). Wildlife tourism is said to be consumptive when it entails shooting or hunting game animals or sport fishing, occurring either in their natural environment or in areas made for these reasons (Lovelock, 2008:4; Freese, 1998). This tourism type contradicts the other type of wildlife tourism and has the potential to affect wildlife populations negatively, erroneously and therefore is not considered sustainable (Higginbottom, 2004). On the other hand, non-consumptive wildlife tourism is based on mere touching, feeding,

photographing, observing or experiencing animals in the wild, in captivity as well as in semi-captive settings. Furthermore, wildlife tourism can be categorised with regards to how they are used i.e. captive, semi-captive and non-captive wildlife (Tisdell & Wilson, 2012:5). These wildlife tourism categories are illustrated in Figure 2.2.

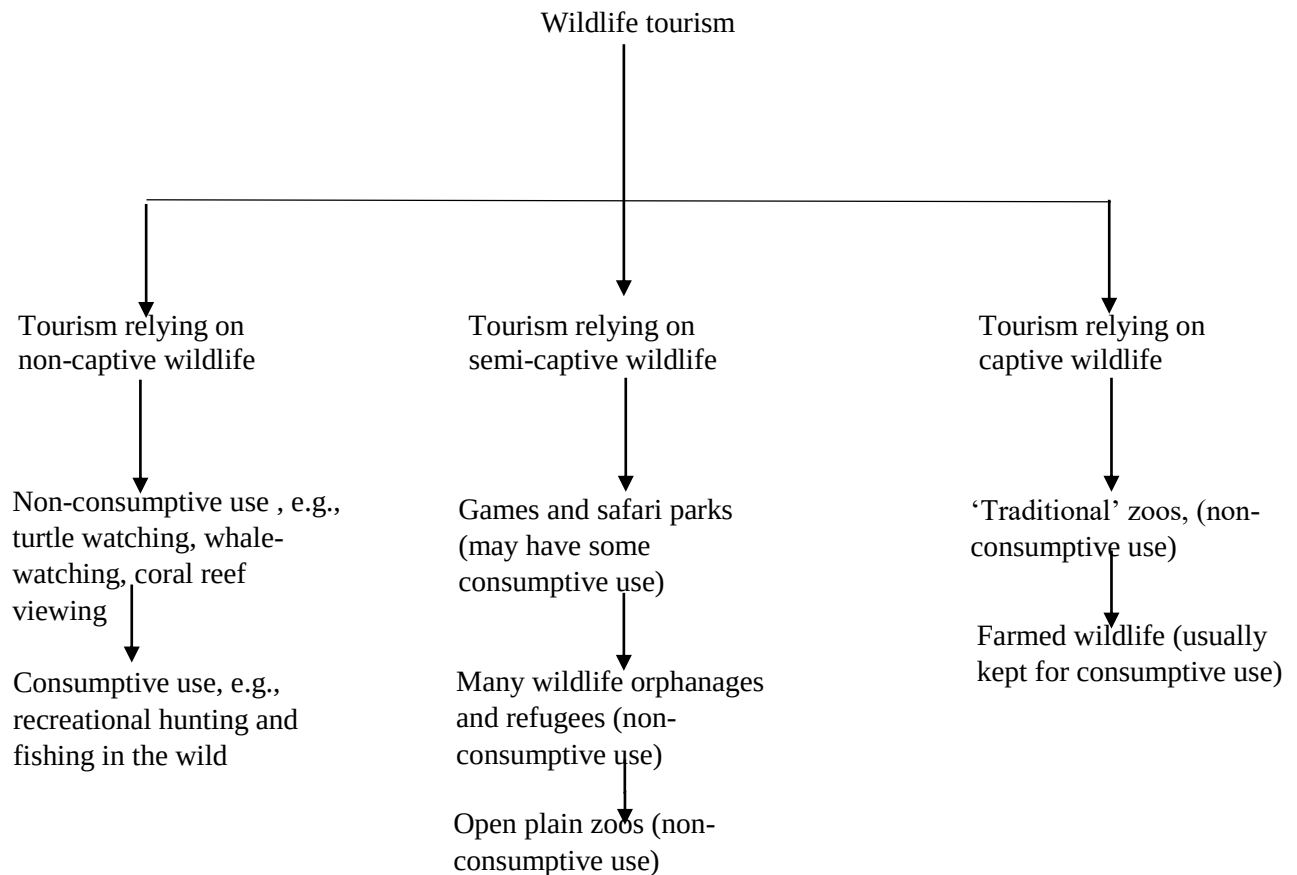


Figure 2.2. Classification of wildlife tourism (adapted from Tisdell & Wilson, 2012:5).

Wildlife tourism, according to Valentine and Birtles (2004), is a form of tourism which is embarked on to experience or interact with a certain type of organism in its natural habitat without any form of harm or removal of the organism. This definition also implies that the non-consumptive form of wildlife tourism has little effect on both the organism and the environment in which the organism lives unlike captive and semi-captive wildlife tourism (e.g. wild animal & parks zoos). Also, this form of tourism is perceived to be more engaging, exciting, memorable and transformative than consumptive wildlife tourism (UNWTO, 2015:9). Although wildlife watching/viewing such as video-recording and photography is considered as a form of non-consumptive wildlife tourism with zero impact and being the most common, non-consumptive wildlife tourism that tends to be regarded as zero impact, it has been seen to cause some sort of damage or have negative impacts on wildlife habitat as well as the animal itself. In particular, distractions or disturbances resulting from taking a close shot of these animals by wildlife photographers. Other noted causes of distraction to wildlife watching as reported

by the UNEP (2006:50) are effects resulting from wildlife watching activities such as directly or indirectly from the construction and operation of tourism facilities, and the general background levels of disturbance from tourism. Based on this, passive observation (observation of animals at a distance) is encouraged as disturbances from feeding, touching or approaching wildlife are also common in non-consumptive wildlife tourism (Knight, 2009; Orams, 2002).

2.3.4 Wildlife tourism possibilities

Wildlife tourism possibilities for bringing about economic development and sustainably finance conservation have been acknowledged (Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2005:2, Meduna *et al.*, 2005; Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001:32). The development of national parks in many African countries was to encourage wildlife-based tourism. Ecotourism and the non-consumptive form of wildlife tourism have replaced the unsustainable form of wildlife tourism (hunting) and has greatly assisted in wildlife conservation and the maintenance of wildlife populations. Also, protected areas provide a lot of support to the communities which range from environmental quality conservation, recreational benefits and provision of services to realisation of revenues from ecotourism (Adejumo *et al.*, 2014:36). An estimate by the UNWTO (2005:5) shows that tourists visiting protected areas in 14 African countries generates at least US\$ 168 million. Tour operator's annual income in Africa accounts for 88% of wildlife watching tours and therefore the best conservation option, especially for developing countries who have shown great interest in conserving their biological heritage (UNWTO, 2015:5). According to UNWTO (2015), the effort to use wildlife tourism as a strategy for wildlife conservation can only be successful if two major objectives are achieved; i) by reducing threats to wildlife population and directly supporting wildlife conservation, ii) by supporting sustainability that will not negatively impact wildlife populations leading to death or harm thereby hindering the effort of wildlife conservation. Studies that focused on wildlife tourism have been identified (Rodger *et al.*, 2007; Valentine & Birtles, 2004; Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001). Nevertheless, the benefits to the industry provided by these interactions as well as their effects on wildlife species is not comprehensible. Hence the need for a more comprehensive overview of wildlife tourism in a more conceptual form which will form the basis for a sustainable development of wildlife tourism that will help in conflict resolution between wildlife conservation and economics.

Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:32), in their study of the interaction of wildlife and other components of the tourism system, conceptualised a framework with six quality factors of the wildlife tourism experience. These are uniqueness, species popularity, duration, authenticity, species status and intensity. Furthermore, Orams (2002:282) identified a decrease in the number of opportunities to encounter and interact with wildlife as the primary reason that people desire to experience wildlife tourism. The model of wildlife tourism product developed by Higginbottom (2004:121), identified;

tourists, wildlife and habitat as well as business/operators and settings as factors impacting the core model components. These impacts, which are said to result from wildlife interactions, are the major effects on the ecosystem, locals, economic returns and tourism providers.

The models developed by Higginbottom (2004) and Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:32) provide a baseline for future study regarding wildlife tourism. Furthermore, the study by Ballantyne, Packer, and Hughes (2009:659) established that practices resulting from wildlife tourism management enlisting tourist as partners in conservation explains the cause of any pressure imposed and also presents a clear picture of the wildlife-tourists-interactions. By examining participants' wildlife memories regarding tourism experience, Ballantyne *et al.* (2011:7-14) established that visitor responses to experiences exist in four phases; 1) what they felt (emotional affinity); 2) what visitors saw and heard (sensory impressions); 3) thought (reflective responses) and 4) what they did about it (behavioural responses). Myburgh and Saayman (2002), in their study of ecotourism practical guidelines and principles, outlined four sub-sectors of wildlife-based tourism as illustrated in Figure 2.3. These are wildlife watching tourism, hunting tourism, captive wildlife tourism and fishing tourism.

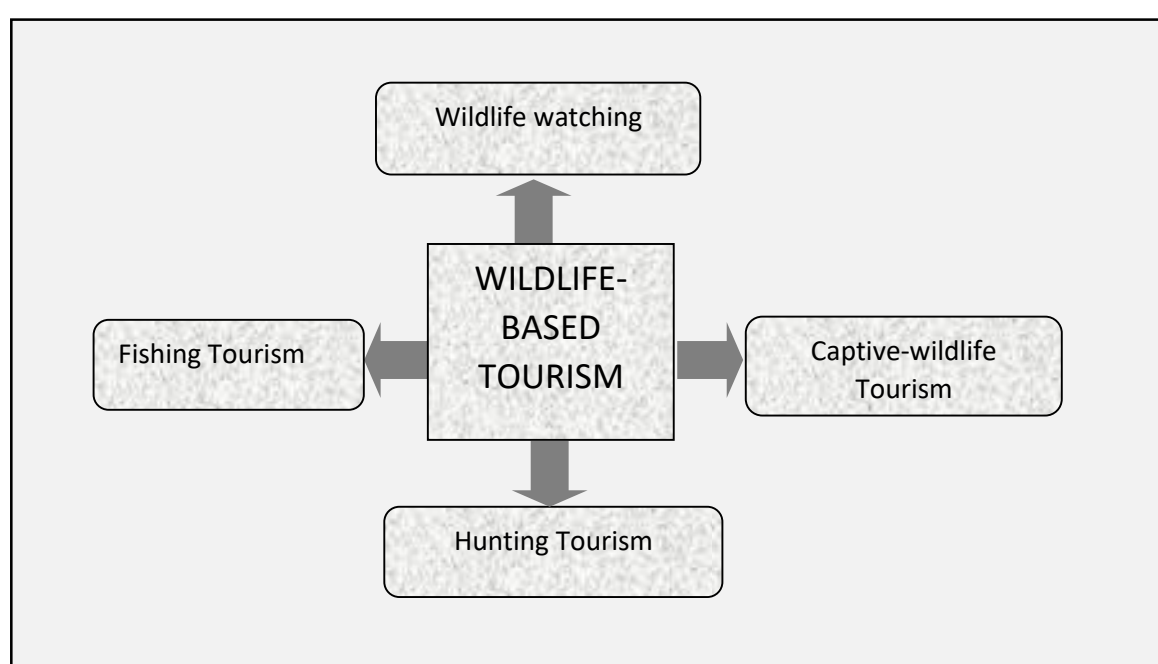


Figure 2.3: Wildlife-based tourism (adapted from Myburgh & Saayman, 2002:11,).

Wildlife watching tourism is seen as an organised form of tourism that is undertaken to watch or encounter wildlife. This form of tourism exclusively relates to non-consumptive forms of wildlife-based activities such as big five watching, bird watching, gorilla tracking and whale watching (UNWTO, 2015:9). Hunting tourism is a special form of selective game hunting such as meat hunting, skill hunting, big game trophy hunting and small game hunting while enjoying the natural beauties of hunting grounds (Bothma, 2015:23; Milojica *et al.*, 2014:3). Fishing tourism involves all fishing activities occurring both

in freshwater and marine ecosystem. Captive-wildlife tourism entails the confinement of animals in a particular place i.e. in man-made settings such as zoos, animal sanctuaries and aquaria (Higginbottom, 2004:4).

Overall, there have been many valuable contributions to the research literature on wildlife tourism (Mazanec & Strasser, 2007).

2.3.5. Wildlife tourism location within the tourism industry

According to Newsome *et al.* (2005:12-13), tourism types and their classifications overlap. This explains why a particular tourism type and its location within the tourism industry are closely linked. These wildlife tourism types and location have been defined by Newsome *et al.* (2005:13) who writes: “*ecotourism is tourism for the environment, nature-based tourism is tourism about the environment and adventure tourism is tourism in the environment*”. These tourism types (ecotourism, nature-based tourism and adventure tourism) merge in Newsome *et al.*'s figure (Figure 2.4) of wildlife tourism location within the tourism field where also wildlife tourism is added.

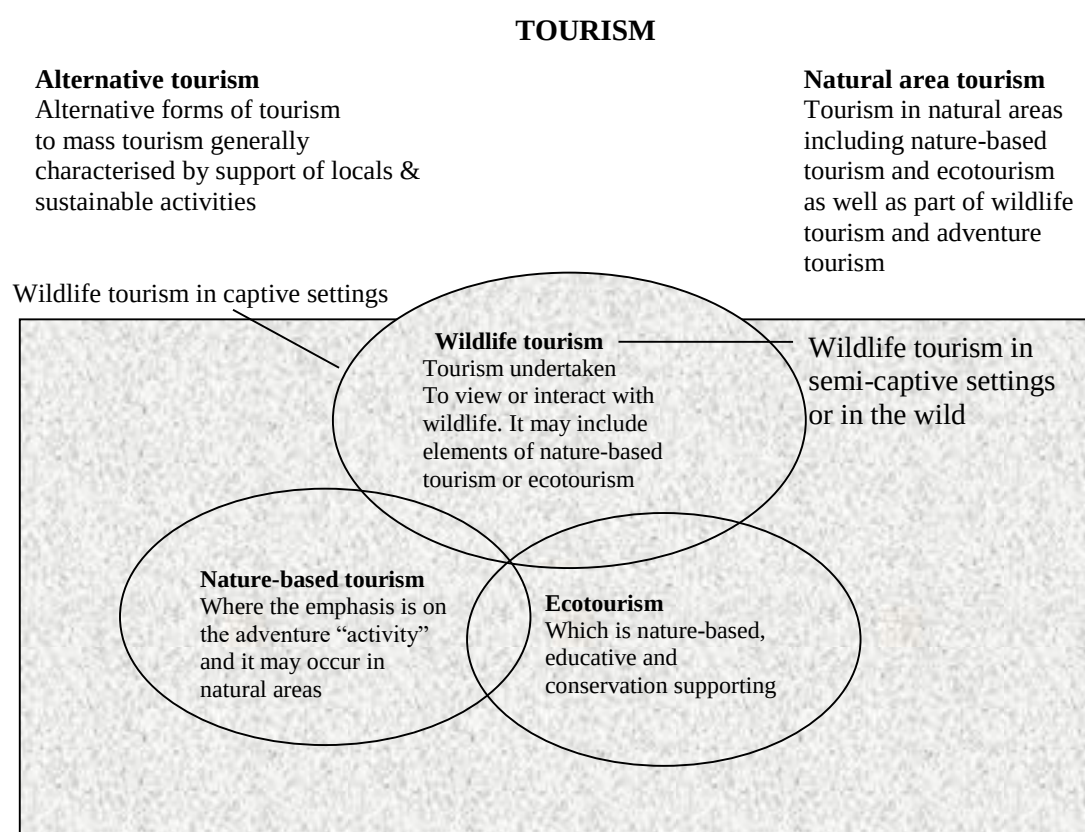


Figure 2.4: An overview of wildlife tourism’s position within the tourism industry (adapted from Newsome *et al.*, 2005:19).

According to Fennell (2003:25), “...wildlife tourism is partly nature-based, may involve an element of adventure travel, and shares some of the key characteristics of ecotourism”. Also worthy of note is the

key differences that can be observed amongst these tourism types and can be highlighted between ecotourism, nature-based tourism and wildlife tourism. While wildlife tourism activities revolve around encountering, appreciating and enjoying nature without a focus on sustainability, ecotourism is exclusively centred on ethics, sustainability, non-consumptive and environmental education (Francesca, Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2015:77). It incorporates many types of tourism due to its activities, environment and type of experience offered with nature-based tourism being the closest of them all.

2.4 ECOTOURISM AS A CONCEPT

The need for an alternative approach to tourism development have been discussed, creating a diversity of terms and concepts such as green tourism, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, ethical tourism, alternative tourism and ecotourism. emerged in tourism literature for new directions in tourism development (Pforr, 2001:68; Angelic & Jithendran, 2012:2). Despite these tourism development directions, a great difference still exists between these terms. While alternative tourism is dependent on sustainable tourism development, sustainable tourism is based on social equity, environmental responsibility, cultural vitality and economic health (STDG, 2013:22). When tourism is managed sustainably, it can fulfil humanity's highest ambition. So, to achieve economic growth and development while still ensuring social-cultural and environmental integrity, it is vital to get all parties involved to play their respective roles in ensuring sustainability in the sector (De Witt, 2011:48). This effort by different stakeholders has led to the evolution of responsible tourism and, therefore, can be referred to as a medium through which sustainability in tourism development is achieved (Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131). The response to this move has led to the evolution of ecotourism which is also a form of sustainable tourism that is entirely based on natural settings and can as well be described as a non-consumptive form of tourism activity (Pforr, 2001:70; Weaver, 2001:81). Figure 2.5 positions ecotourism in a way that takes into account its non-consumptive nature.

The term 'ecotourism', is a sustainable tourism type occurring in a natural environment with the potential to assist in achieving sustainable objectives that will enhance tourism development and also contribute to the long and difficult processes of ecotourism implementation (Pforr, 2001:70). Since the inception of ecotourism or ecological tourism, it has continued to grow since the 1950s, especially as the quest for an environment that is completely free from pollution and all forms of human interference grew as well as nature appreciation. This segment of the tourism industry gradually took shape between 1970 and the mid-1980s (in the USA) and, with a global annual growth rate of 10 to 15%. Also, the growth of ecotourism and other nature-based tourism activities has been proven to be the highest of all tourism segments and is assumed to be around 15% per year (Roche & Wallington, 2014; Ajayi & Eveco, 2017:22).

Weaver (2001:80), in accessing the place of ecotourism in the consumptive and non-consumptive tourism system, describes ecotourism as a form of tourism that involves several forms of consumption such as; the gradual and imperceptible deterioration of the environment through erosion, trampling of vegetation and other stresses incurred during the process of wildlife observation, the keeping of checklists of wildlife species as a type of score-keeping or consumption; that is, once a species has been sighted, it is checked off and is no longer sought, and is thus ‘consumed’, the purchase of material souvenirs, which require at least some degree of resource consumption and the consumption of food and other products for the duration of the ecotourism experience. Despite the above assertion, Weaver (2001:80), however, still considers ecotourism as a non-consumptive form of tourism since there is a distinction between activities that deliberately seek to harm an organism and those that do not. These perspectives are described in Figure 2.5.

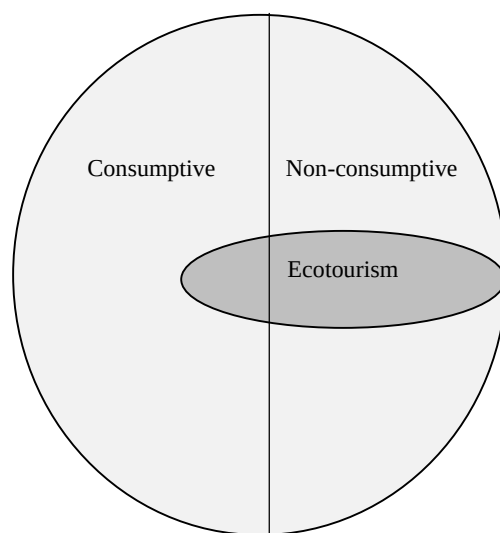


Figure 2.5: Consumptive/non-consumptive tourism and ecotourism (adapted from Weaver, 2001:81).

In assessing ecotourism’s position in the tourism system with respect to consumptive and non-consumptive forms of tourism, Figure 2.5 took into consideration both perspectives as ecotourism is seen occupying the non-consumptive portion of the industry, but extending over into the consumptive aspect although not completely, thereby acknowledging the consumptive side as well.

2.4.1. Defining ecotourism

The term ‘ecotourism’ is generally believed in ecotourism literature to have originated in 1983 by “Hector Ceballos Lascurain” a Mexican environmentalist, who is known as the father of ecotourism. Ceballos-Lascurain, defined ecotourism as “*Travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestation (both present and past) found in these*

areas” (Kiper, 2013:774; Saayman, 2009:3). TIES on the other hand, according to its modified version of ecotourism, defined ecotourism as, “*travel which is small scale, low impact, culturally sensitive, community orientated, primarily nature-based, educational and capable of broadening people’s minds and enlivening their souls but providing a unique experience, firmly grounded in sustainable principles and practices*” (TIES, 2015:1; Conway & Cawley, 2016:3)

This implies that the origin of ecotourism can be said to have evolved from the word ‘*conservation*’ (Myburgh & Saayman, 2002:7). Because ecotourism is based more on nature and sustainability. Yonna, (2018:12) asserts that ecotourism is tourism born by simply combining nature tourism and sustainable tourism (see Figure 2.6).

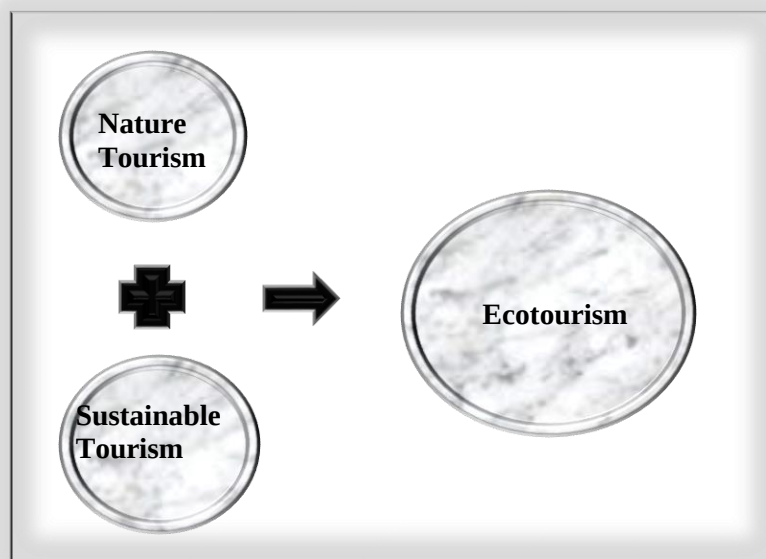


Figure 2.6. How ecotourism is born (adapted from: Yonna, 2018:12)

The following ecotourism definitions were obtained from the literature (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Ecotourism definitions

Author	Ecotourism Definitions
The International Ecotourism Society, 1990:1	<i>'Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people'.</i>
Boo, 1991:4	<i>"Ecotourism is nature tourism that contributes to conservation, through generating funds for protected areas, creating employment opportunities for local communities, and offering environmental education".</i>
Richardson, 1993:8	<i>'Ecologically sustainable tourism in natural areas that interpret the local environment and cultures furthers the tourist understanding of them, fosters conservation and adds to the well-being of the local people'.</i>
Forestry Tasmania, 1994:ii	<i>"Nature-based tourism focused on the provision of learning opportunities while providing local and regional benefits while demonstrating environmental, social, cultural, and economic sustainability".</i>
Tickell, 1994:ix	<i>'Travel to enjoy the world's amazing diversity of natural life and human culture without causing damage to either'.</i>
Eagles and Haggins 1998	<i>'Traveling for the discovery of and learning about the wild natural environment'.</i>
Blamey (1997:127)	<i>"An ecotourism experience is one in which an individual travels to what he or she considers to be a relatively undisturbed natural area that is more than 40km from home. The primary intention is to study, admire, or appreciate the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations".</i>
Ceballos-Lascurain 1993 in Myburgh and Saayman, 1999:7	<i>"Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to enjoy and appreciate nature and (and any accompanying cultural features) that promotes conservation and sustainable development has low visitor impact and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations".</i>
Robinson, 1993:7 in Myburgh and Saayman 1999:7	<i>'Responsible tourism which is sustainable and thus requires the protection of the living and non-living natural resources and the promotion of appropriate and environmentally sympathetic development. It contributes to the justice and enhancing quality of life and stability, especially for the communities near the protected area.'</i>
Weaver, 2001:15	<i>'Ecotourism is a form of tourism that fosters learning experiences and appreciation of the natural environment, or some component thereof, within its associated cultural context.'</i>
Kurt Kutay in Honey, 2008:7	<i>"Ecotourism includes minimisation of environmental and cultural consequences and a contribution to conservation and community projects in developing countries".</i>
Fennell, (1999) in Saayman, 2009:4)	<i>"A sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, and is ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive, and locally-oriented (control, benefit and scale)".</i>

Considering the definitions of ecotourism presented above, it can be seen that the majority of the definitions revolve around environmental conservation, travel to protected areas to admire nature, and improvement of the well-being of local people - mainly describing the benefits the local community stands to derive from this form of tourism. Other authors see it as a responsible travel aimed at minimising environmental, social and cultural consequences. While some of the definitions seem to reoccur, the most remarkable definition amongst all is the one given by Ceballos-Lascurain as it incorporates the major elements of ecotourism, which include conservation, being nature based, promoting environmental conservation with low tourist impact as well as ensuring the involvement of the local population.

According to the UNWTO (2002:14), ecotourism definition and concept are obtained from seven components. These are:

- Biodiversity conservation.
- Responsible actions by the tourists as well as the tourism industry.
- Includes an interpretation/learning experience.
- Sustainability of the well-being of locals.
- Involvement of local people in business opportunities and ownership.
- Is a service delivery by small-scale businesses to a small group.
- Involves a reduce use of non-renewable resources (UNEP, 2002:14-15).

These definitions and aspects of ecotourism can be a grouped into four pillars; these will be discussed next.

2.4.2. Ecotourism pillars

For ecotourism products to effectively assist in the preservation and improvement of the human and natural environment, Van der Merwe and De Witt (2013:879) assert that they must provide opportunities for environmental education, must be sustainably planned, implemented and managed, and should provide the tourist with enlightening experiences. They further established that it is upon these four essential pillars on which ecotourism is founded. The pillars are presented in Figure 2.7 below.

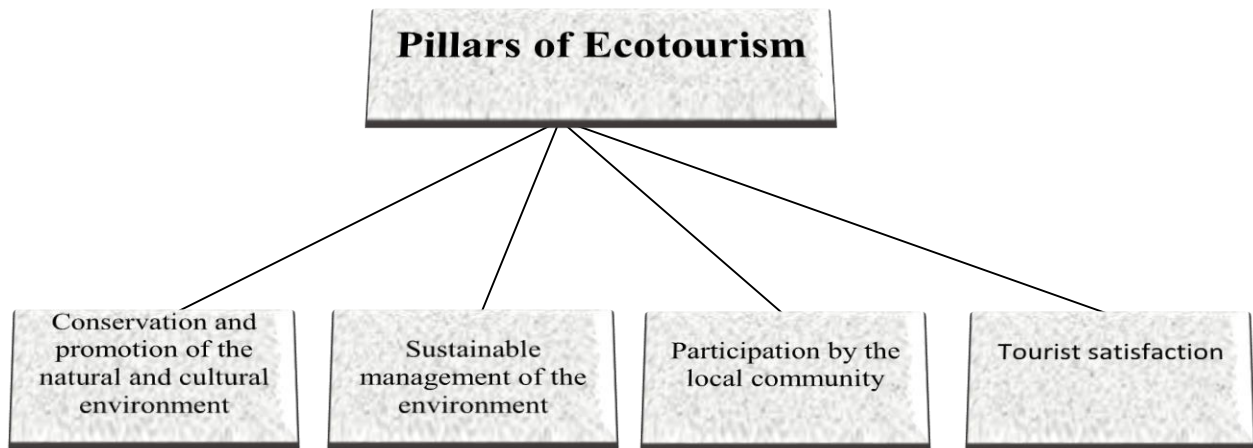


Figure 2.7. Pillars of ecotourism (Van der Merwe & De Witt, 2013:880-881; Saayman, 2009:3; Van der Merwe, 2004:18).

- **Pillar 1: Conservation and promotion of the natural and cultural environment**

Environment promotion and conservation can be seen as those activities intended to improve the natural and cultural environment for both the aesthetic and health benefits of biological components inhabiting such environment (Lovell *et al.*, 2015:2). Typical enhancement and conservation activities include actions such as habitat restoration, litter picking or the re-greening of urban waste sites (Lovell *et al.*, 2015:16). The natural environment is made up of vital resources of biodiversity and cultural heritage, which render these areas attractive sites for development projects (De Witt, Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2014:184). The development of ecotourism in such areas will lead to the advancement of activities such as hiking, climbing and mountaineering, interaction with nature and learning experiences about the local natural and cultural environment (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:163).

Ecotourists are drawn to a particular eco-destination due to the appealing environment which incorporates aspects such as flora, fauna, geographical distinction, as well as the historical or cultural heritage of such an environment (Fennel, 2002:100). When ecotourism is developed in such an area, it will introduce activities such as hiking, climbing and mountaineering and other eco-tours such as interacting with nature and learning about the local natural and cultural environment (Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010:163). According to Myburgh and Saayman, (2002:9), the promotion and enhancement of the natural and cultural environment is a Unique Selling Feature (USF) in the planning and management of the environment to ensure sustainability and that the local population, as part of the environment, shares in the benefits accruing from such enhanced environment.

- **Pillar 2: Participation by the local people:**

The participation of local people in ecotourism activities has been promoted by various stakeholders as a potent approach to ecotourism development since it ensures greater conservation of natural and cultural resources, empowers host communities and improves their socio-economic well-being (Mensah & Ernest, 2012:34). Local participation is an essential characteristic that differentiates ecotourism from any other form of nature-based tourism as it involves environmental education of the local people and interpretation. It can as well be seen as a significant tool to create an enjoyable and meaningful ecotourism experience (Page & Dowling, 2002:61).

According to Godfrey and Clarke (2000:23), the participation of the local people in the management and planning of ecotourism can, however, be viewed from two perspectives:

- Local participation in the decision-making process
- Involving locals in ecotourism development benefits

While the former implies empowering local people to identify their objectives and how they hope to achieve them, the latter presents them with opportunities to take part in ecotourism product developments that might involve stakeholders. When local people are included in ecotourism activities, it will not only bring about community development but will also increase the value of productivity as well as enhancing the quality of the tourist experience since the host communities' interests are being considered (Van der Merwe, 2004:29; Wight, 2003:51).

- **Pillar 3: Sustainable management of the environment**

Some economic, ecological, socio-cultural and management practices adhere to ecotourism principles. These management practices comprise three aspects, economic development, social equity and environmental management. For a tourism product to be sustainably developed, there is need to create a balance between development and management practices (Coetzee & Saayman, 2009:131). According to Saufi *et al.* (2015:5) this entails preserving local culture and also ensuring a zero impact of developmental activities on the environment while, at the same time, assisting in the creation of employment opportunities and the generation of income for the locals.

According to Saayman, (2009:135) in his Self-Control Theory on Sustainable Tourism Development, he asserts that sustainable management of environment natural resources today is essential to ensure their availability for future use. He further stressed the importance of sustainably managing the environment since most of our tourist attractions somehow depend on natural resources, such as water, air, nature, scenic beauty, animals and plants. It is not only the tourism industry that depends on the environment, but life itself. The tourism industry by itself cannot take full control of, nor responsibility

for, sustainability, but it has a definite role to play. Therefore, all nations, countries, governments and individuals have to work together to create a more sustainable environment and society in general.

- **Pillar 4: Tourist satisfaction:**

Tourist satisfaction can be seen as the positive perceptions that tourists form or gain after engaging in tourism activities or the degree to which tourists are pleased with their experiences (Yuksel & Yuksel, 2008:43). It is also ‘the measure of how tourism products and services surpass the expectation of tourists’ (Eleni *et al*, 2016:2). The importance of tourist satisfaction, according to (Saayman, 2009:18), is that it can generate consumer loyalty, more word-of-mouth advertising and increased repeat visits. He further states that a tourist-satisfying destination is likely to grow, and the overall improved service delivery is likely to increase tourist satisfaction levels. Similarly, Alananzeh *et al* (2018:229) emphasised the need for good overall performance by stating that ‘the quality of each of the product areas and how they are delivered contributes to the guest’s perception, enjoyment and satisfaction with the overall experience’.

Ecotourism experiences are created by integrating some factors. The purpose of creating these experiences is to satisfy the needs and wants of current and potential ecotourists (Chan & Baum, 2007; Clifton & Benson, 2006). However, some factors have been identified that influence tourist satisfaction negatively; waste, pollution, overcrowding and litter harm the tourist experience. Other factors that affect tourist satisfaction are the quality of the environment and the way they like the park to be managed (Du Plessis, Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2012:29).

Furthermore, visitors’ satisfaction is important in eco-related activities. To ensure that this is the case, eco-destinations must measure visitors’ satisfaction to enhance quality service. The reviewing of ecotourism experiences by tourism professionals is actively encouraged, as is the business sharing of visitor satisfaction insights (Moore & Polley, 2007: 13). Because tourist satisfaction is seen as one of the major aspects (ecotourism pillars), (Chan & Baum, 2007; Clifton & Benson, 2006; Geldenhuys, 2009), it has become relevant for providers of ecotourism products to examine ecotourists’ perceptions of ecotourism which will, in turn, enable them to gain a better understand of the system and identify ecotourism challenges that may adversely impact the community and the environment (Clifton & Benson, 2006).

2.4.3 The principles of ecotourism

Ecotourism has been promoted by many without a knowledge of its major principles. The establishment of guidelines, rules and regulations and principles as well as certification in the 1990s, enabled regions impacted by ecotourism to adopt these guideline procedures with respect to the materials already

available internationally (TIES, 2002:14). It simply means that tourism providers, participants, shareholders, and all those who execute and engage in ecotourism activities are encouraged to adopt the following ecotourism principles:

Table 2.3 Ecotourism principles

PRINCIPLES
• To reduce social, behavioural, psychological and physical impact that may adversely impact a destination. • To create both cultural and environmental awareness and respect • Ecotourism activities must be in a natural setting. • Provision of a memorable experience for visitors and the host community • All social and environmental limits must not be exceeded during tourism development • Must educate tourist on the importance of conservation • Must maximise the economic benefit for local business and the host community • All facilities must be made and operated on a low-impact basis. • The rights and benefits of the local people must be recognised as well as work in partnership with them to create empowerment • Educate the travellers the importance of conservation • Provides an opportunity to experience the local culture (traditions, food, music) • Must maintain a balance between economy and ecology • Increase the awareness and understanding of natural areas, cultural systems and the involvement of visitors and their influence on these systems • Provide an opportunity to interact with nature • Must provide long-term benefits for the local communities • Provide an enlightenment travel experience (enjoyment and appreciation of nature). • Must be non-consumptive

(Sources: Saayman, 2009:70; TIES, 2002; UNEP, 2002; Fennell, 2008:23; Myburge & Saayman, 2002:24).

A critical analysis of these principles shows that ecotourism revolves around five main components as suggested by the definition provided by the International Ecotourism Society which is also in agreement with the components on the concept and definitions of ecotourism presented by UNEP. The components

include: nature appreciation, sustainability of ecological system, community benefit, environment education, and ensuring tourist's satisfaction.

- **Nature appreciation**

The ecosystem forms the basis upon which ecotourism depends. These include the cultural, biological and physical components that make up the ecosystem. Also, the planning, management and conservation of natural potential in a natural setting may include cultural factors occurring in a natural setting (Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:43; Saayman, 2009:7).

- **Ecological sustainability**

All tourism types, whether ecotourism, adventure tourism, wildlife tourism etc. should be socially, ecologically, and environmentally sustainable. Ecotourism challenges in any given country are how to develop its tourism resources in a manner that it will not adversely affect the environment that supports and maintains its existence. It involves ensuring that ecotourism developments and uses do not cause damage to the natural environment (Drumm & Moore, 2005:54).

- **Environmental education**

Environmental education and ecotourism are closely related, and they both rely on each other to succeed. This means, for ecotourism goals to be achieved, proper environmental education is necessary (Bhuiyan *et al.* 2010:43). The major concern of ecotourism is to attract tourists with the motives of interacting with the environment and increasing the understanding and appreciation of nature. Consequently, ecotourism is expected to bring about a positive action for the promotion of the ecosystem in a manner that enhances conservation knowledge (Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:45). Tourists' activities in natural areas can be sustained for a long period through environmental education being offered to tourists, the industry and the community (Fennel & Dowling, 2003:2). It can also be used for protected area management. Through explanation, tourists are able to view the environment from a positive perspective. Education can also be used to provide the understanding, values and attitudes to protect and improve the environment as well as create opportunities for meaningful behaviour towards the environment (Bhuiyan *et al.* 2010:43).

- **More beneficial for locals**

The quality of the tourist experience is improved when local people/community are involved in ecotourism. Community involvement can be achieved through the provision of secondary services, facilities and other tourism products for tourists' comfort and satisfaction. The benefits derived from these services are expected to exceed any cost of ecotourism to the host community and the environment (Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:43:45).

- **Tourist satisfaction**

When tourists are satisfied with services rendered or the ecotourism experience, they become loyal to a particular tourist destination. Tourist satisfaction, therefore, is an essential component in the long-term viability of the industry. Based on this, all aspects of tourist satisfaction must be taken into consideration. These aspects include tourist safety, providing accurate information about ecotourism opportunities, matching or exceeding visitor's expectations of the ecotourism experience and ensuring that visitors' services and satisfaction come second after conservation and destination protection (Castro *et al.*, 2017:281; Newsome, Dowling & Moore, 2005:43:45).

2.4.4. Ecotourism/wildlife-based tourism benefits

The remarkable benefits derived from ecotourism/wildlife-based tourism across the world cannot be overemphasised. These advantages can be seen in the economic, social, cultural and environmental lives of the people as well as the destination (Kiper, 2011:622). Ecotourism has continued to grow in recent times and has currently gained a widespread positive interest and position with respect to the global tourism industry. The depth of the ecotourism market provides an effective solution that is long term. It provides economic benefits, supports the conservation of biological diversity, the preservation of nature and the ecosystem, socio-culture as well as the earth's heritage (Matthews, 2002:67). Sustainable development can be achieved through ecotourism. It can effectively strengthen local markets and empower local communities globally through poverty alleviation and creating long-term progress in the environment (Medina, 2005:285). In addition, ecotourism can engender encouragement that will help to grow the industry in many ways. Ecotourism, through its sustainable development goal, has made the tourism industry more natural and greener and has become a major part of the industry. Wildlife tourism, on the other hand, can contribute to community development and raise revenues and support for wildlife conservation (Tapper *et al.*, 2006:16).

Furthermore, wildlife is a source for realising the benefits of conservation for local communities with wildlife populations occurring on their land (Ashley & Reo, 2002:61).

Other benefits that can be derived from ecotourism/wildlife-based tourism include:

- Ecotourism fosters an in-depth understanding of tourism impacts on the environment.
- Wildlife tourism improves the understanding regarding animal diversity and behaviour.
- The knowledge about plants' condition and their distribution is enhanced through ecotourism.
- Employment opportunities for local communities. Ecotourism creates direct employment opportunities for the locals through tourist demands for services (food, souvenirs and accommodation) and indirectly in various tourism and resources management sectors.

- Wildlife protection. By engaging in ecotourism, locals have now gained a better understanding of wildlife. It has helped them change their views about wildlife, and now they feel one with them.
- Flora protection. By engaging in ecotourism, the locals have come to understand the value of plants and their dependency on, in particular, native flora and hence they admire and feel connected with them.
- By diversifying the local economy, ecotourism/wildlife-based tourism can assist in rural areas with rare agricultural employment opportunities (Ashley & Reo, 2002:61).

2.5 TRENDS IN ECOTOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The growth rate of the tourism and travel industry continues to increase and has outgrown the annual global economy by 2.5% in 2017 (World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2017:4). The tangible product and intangible services provided by the tourism industry can assist with the provision of unusual but unique experiences. With respect to time, the ancient form of religious tourism (pilgrimage) have been replaced with a few new types. The global GDP contribution of the tourism industry stands at 9.6% and out of every ten jobs globally, the industry offers one (WTTC, 2017:4; International Labour Organisation, 2019:3). Also, there has been an increase in the number of tourists, particularly in the last two decades and among all market segments; an overwhelming growth is expected (TIES, 2017:17).

Since tourism and travel are human-resource intensive, they are projected to indirectly assist more than 10% of global employment by 2017. Globally, the industry employs 3.6% of the total employment in 2016 (WTTC, 2017:7). The phrase “being green is profitable,” has continued to be the agenda at the Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Conference (ESTC) (Centre for Responsible Travel, 2013:2; TIES, 2017:17). Ecotourism, or sustainable tourism, is believed to be a driving force for job creation. Through involvement in ecotourism, the cost of energy, water and waste can be reduced, thereby enhancing the value of biological diversity and the environment as well as the generation of significant returns within a short payback period (Centre for Responsible Travel (CREST), 2013:6).

According to the research by CREST, tourism is expected to become more sustainable as today’s tourist would choose the products and services of product providers that are eco-friendly (TIES, 2017:17). The increase from 55% to 66% of consumers between the years 2014 and 2015 agreeing to support products and services associated with sustainability, creates an avenue that allows for community participation and an interaction with nature. (Green Lodging News & Greenview, 2017). This trend has made the ecotourism industry more prevalent.

One of the factors contributing to this ecotourism growth is the increasing need of travellers embarking on trips that are life-refreshing involving nature, education and the outdoors (Lackey, Joyner & Bricker,

2017:3). Tourists are mostly propelled to travel and learn about nature due to unprecedented attitudes towards the environment, political unrest, the issue of environmental and ecological disasters as well as the strict and rigid rules and regulation at both national and international level. The development of ecotourism products becomes paramount for the satisfaction of tourist changing demands (Lackey, Joyner & Bricker, 2017:3-5; UNEP-UNWTO, 2005:2).

The trends in ecotourism product development can be categorised as follows and discussed in detail in the sub-sections that follow:

- Activities
- Experiences
- Products (accommodation, facilities and amenities)
- Profile and travel behaviour
- Ecotourism markets

2.5.1 Activities

The role of activity in enhancing the attractiveness of a destination cannot be overemphasised, as it presents tourists with a variety of events taking place in an extraordinary landscape, amazing platforms and various landscapes (Brand South Africa, 2012:1; Page, William & Connell, 2006:52). Ecotourism activities, as described by UNWTO (2015), are forms of nature-based activities that enhances tourist understanding and appreciation of the environment, cultural and natural values. The providers of ecotourism activities must ensure that activities support conservation of the natural areas, is ecologically, socially and economically sustainable and must also contribute to the betterment of the local people. According to Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003:5), ecotourism activities are based on a wide range of activities, aimed at satisfying tourist changing demand. Van der Merwe and Slabber (2018:13), and Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003:5) identified a spectrum of nature-based activities types, that range from less energetic activities (i.e. camping, bird watching, sun downing, hot air ballooning, visiting wildlife to experience flora and fauna as well as stargazing) to more thrill-seeking activities (hiking trails, mountain biking, bungee jumping, horse riding and walking safari, boating and fishing).

Ecotourists may take part in different activities such as photography, fishing, sightseeing, camping, hunting, whale watching, birdwatching as well as the discovering of natural areas. As reported by Dimitriou (2016:28), tourists nowadays are not interested in the usual and ordinary tourism activities that can be found easily in many destinations across the world, but will be interested in the amazing and appealing natural attractions and activities that are available at the destination. They want to experience nature first hand. Hence, nature activities such as excursions on camels, bungee jumping and many

more eco-activities will be on high demand. It is these activities that form the basis for tourism demand (Cooper, 2004:76).

2.5.2 Experience

Experience can be defined as one's mind set or state of mind during an encounter with the service provided (Amuquandoh *et al.* 2011:252). It can also be seen as “a personal, engaging event” (Bigne & Andreu, 2004:692). According to Bigne, Addreu and Gnoth (2005), a knowledge about visitors' experiences will not only help conservationists to plan, manage and take decisions regarding product development but will also assist ecotourism managers in the marketing of their products and services. Thus, to sustain visitors' interest in ecotourism products, there is need to know the type of experiences they are looking for as this has the potential of bringing about suitable activities, services, and management plans.

The aim of ecotourism is to enhance and improve the natural environment and cultural value, connect with locals, provide an experience with nature and prevent any form of environmental degradation (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). In agreement, Higham and Carr (2010:277) in studying ecotourism visitors's experiences in New Zealand, report that ecotourist experiences in eco destinations are centred around an interaction with the local community, for educational opportunities, for an experience with the natural environment, photographic opportunities, learning about endangered species, appreciation of cultural values of the locality visited. Lu and Stepchenkova (2012:703) reports that, unlike general travellers, ecotourists in Canada are interested in destinations that have lakes, rural areas, wilderness, streams, parks, coastal areas and mountains. They placed more emphasis on tourists desiring an experience with people with similar interests and physical activity and seeing the maximum possible number of localities in the time available. Similar to the Higham and Carr (2010:277) report, Wight (2001:37) outlined what differentiates ecotourists from mass travellers. These include learning about nature and wildlife, the benefits of culture in a community, being physically challenged, observing plants and animals and visiting remote wilderness areas and uncrowded locations.

The UNWTO, (2002), reports that visiting archaeological sites, wildlife experiences, bird watching opportunities, seeing uncommon animals, taking part in marine and terrestrial activities were essential to ecotourists. One of the essential reasons for promoting tourism products is to assist tourists with a memorable experience (Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2014:1). Van der Merwe and Saayman (2014:1) further stressed that, though most destinations can boast of friendly people, spectacular scenery and a unique heritage and culture, these factors, according to them, are not enough to promote a destination or its tourism products, which has resulted in product marketers and destination managers turning their attention to providing tourists with life changing experiences. This also explains why there has been a

change in today's research focus (a change from mere tourism experience to a more authentic, memorable tourism experience). A memorable experience, according to (Kruger & Saayman, 2012:66) is any experience with mental, physiological and spiritual results on the visitor and being valued even long after the trip or event is over. Tourist's memorable experience in an eco-destination may be determined by two important factors. These are:

- Self-drive
- Guided safari operated vehicles (Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2014:2).

In the memorable self-drive experience, tourists use their vehicle, which could be either hired or privately owned to tour the area visited, thereby generating their own experience. Whereas in the case of guided safari operated vehicles, there are trained tour guides who are experienced and with adequate knowledge about wildlife to guide, tell and show tourists fascinating things, stories and facts regarding the destination visited and the tourist can enjoy the experience created by the tour guide (Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2014:2). Based on this, it has become necessary for destinations and tour operators to know that tourists' expectations and future behaviours will be largely dependent on experiences and previous memories (Curtin, 2010:149). A memorable experience is, therefore, the reason why the hospitality and tourism industry exists (Curtin, 2010:149; Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2014:2).

2.5.3 Product (accommodation, facilities and amenities)

The array of tourism products shape the trend in destination development and the rate of its patronage on display. These opportunities (i.e. products) portray a blend of attraction that determines the success of a destination. Based on this, it is important to provide a highly sought-after experience, as well as to deliver a quality product and experience. People engage in tourism activities for different reasons. But, whatever the motives, they are not without particular tourism requirements. Accommodation is one of such tourism demands and the most sought after as a tourist experience is enhanced by accommodation (Weaver & Oppermann, 2000). There has been a growing trend in ecotourist preferences in resource and eco situated accommodations. Kruger *et al.* (2017:3), assert that today's tourist prefers an accommodation type that is nature-based and sustainable such as a greener and environmentally friendly accommodation that depends on renewable energy and designed in a way that tourists can connect and feel one with nature and where the entire nature experience is a made part of the accommodation unit while extending to the surrounding environment of the destination. Tourists also seek remote and uncrowded areas where they can have nature/wildlife experiences (Kruger *et al.*, 2017:3) This is similar to the findings by the International Finance Corporation (IFC, 2004:7) whose report regarding the development of accommodation in protected areas as well as nature-based tourist's preferences, showed that today's tourists prefers traditional accommodation that is environmentally friendly and expect value

for their money. The study also reports that the accommodation should be situated near places where the movement of animals can be seen with scenic features and the structures must stick to laid down regulations and practices. Findings also revealed that tourists who preferred nature-based activities (i.e. fishing, boating, hunting and camping) are bound to choose accommodation located in places such as wilderness camps and cabins, tents, lock cabins, tree houses, safari tented camps, chalets and farmhouses (Van der Merwe & Slabbert, 2018:2; Weaver & Oppermann, 2000:3). This entails that the environment, scenic features and the atmospheric condition of the place where the accommodation is situated is essential.

2.5.4 Profile and travel behaviour

One of the reasons for studying tourist travel behaviour and profile is to gain an insight regarding travellers' purpose of selecting a particular tourism product over another, and it's also associated with the goals, needs and wants of the travellers. This, therefore, makes tourists' motivations an important aspect to understand as an understanding of tourist motivation can assist tourism product providers to provide the essential products that are able to meet the needs and wants of tourist and also helps them with destination marketing and planning (Van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011:295). Tourists' motivations also helps in determining tourist's behaviour in terms of choosing eco-lodge accommodation. The profile and travel behaviour of tourist will be discussed under the following headings: motivation, travel behaviour of tourists and demographic characteristics of tourist.

2.5.4.1 Motivation

Many studies have identified tourists' motives for choosing to travel, visit a specific destination or choose one particular product over another (Saayman, Slabbert & Van der Merwe, 2009; Scholtz, Kruger, & Saayman, 2013, Kruger *et al.*, 2017, Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2008). According to Andrades *et al.* (2015:112), tourist motivation is influenced by both pull and push factors. These factors describe how an individual is pulled by the attributes of the destination. When the attributes of a destination (such as wildlife, eco-activities, natural attraction and local lifestyle) propel travellers to travel and visit a particular destination, it is described as 'pull motivations' (Andrades *et al.*, 2015:112). When the desire to travel to escape from the regular routine of everyday life by visiting ecologies due to socio-psychological desire, it is known as 'push motivation' (see Figure 2.8 below). The push motivations can also be seen as internal quests or emotions that induce tourists to travel and to go away from home (Kim & Lee, 2002). These motives are similar to the findings by Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008:154), who identified six factors responsible for tourist motives for travelling. These include attractions, nature, nostalgia, novelty, activities and escape from a regular routine.

There are diverse reasons why tourists visit natural areas, attractions or destinations. Franco *et al.* (2019:2) postulate that the main motivations of today's ecotourists are nature observation and appreciation of natural features, meeting people with similar interests, local culture and heritage, and being physically active. Similarly, (Chikuta, Plessis & Saayman, 2017:6) mentioned that recreational needs, pleasure seeking, relaxation in a natural environment, and also to educate oneself regarding specific areas, are the motives of ecotourists to visit natural areas. Other motives include; relaxation, relationship enhancement, self-development, establishing personal relationships, escape from daily life, appreciation of nature and mental and physical health (Ma *et al.*, 2018:16; Chow *et al.*, 2017:3; Cheng *et al.*, 2014:176; Lee *et al.*, 2014). Motivation presents tourist the opportunity to spend quality time with friends and loved ones, to engage in favourite activities, to explore new destinations and culture, indulge in luxury and escape from regular work routine and home etc. (Lee *et al.*, 2014). Also, motivation can assist destination managers in meeting the desires, expectations and needs of tourists efficiently and differently, in segmentation of the market, in defining the tourism products as well as in the use of tourism resources (Venkatesh, 2006). When the push factor motivates tourists, it takes a destination with the right attributes to pull them to itself. Tourism providers are therefore encouraged to make their destination appealing with a mix of activities as these may strengthen and encourage tourists to travel (Van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011:295). Figure 2.8 below presents the push and pull factors as demonstrated by Andrades *et al.* (2015:112)

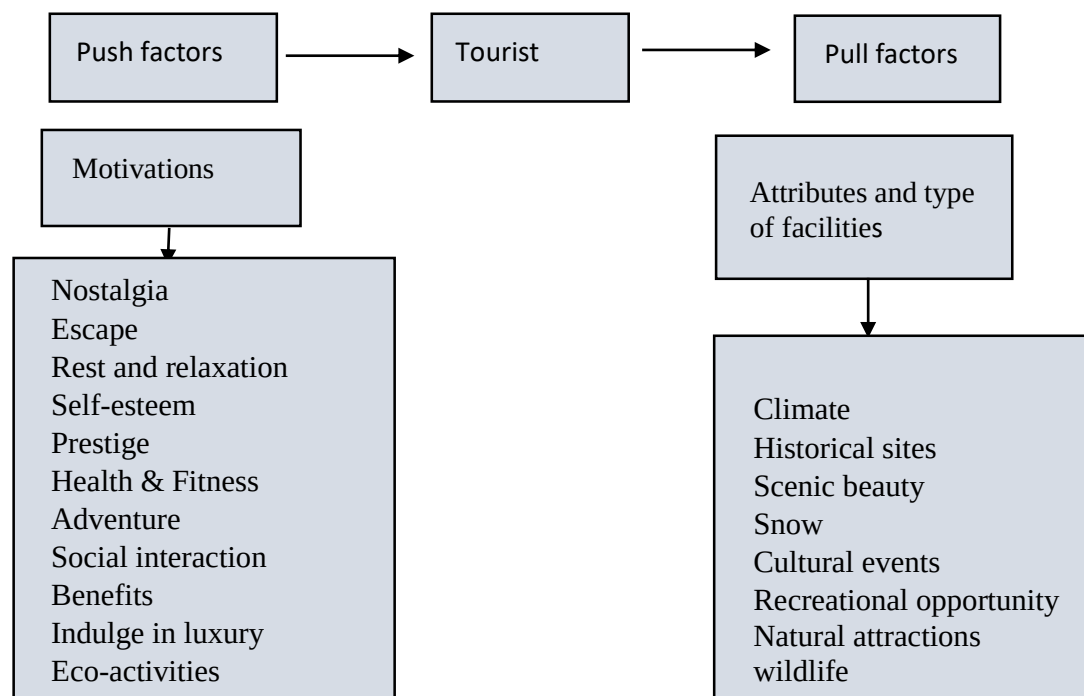


Figure 2.8. Push and pull factors (adapted from Terblanche, 2012:70).

Since motivation plays a vital role in tourist choice of a destination to visit, and as well influencing the travel behaviour of the tourist, gaining an insight into tourist travel behaviour becomes paramount.

Hence, an adequate knowledge of tourists' motivation is crucial to better understand their travel behaviour as this has a huge impact on their decision making and can also create a competitive advantage for tourism products (Slabbert, Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2012:1; George, 2004).

2.5.4.2 Travel behaviour of tourists

Tourists behaviour before, during and, later on, travelling, can be termed 'subjective'. This behaviour, according to March and Woodside (2005:116), results from a continued interaction with environmental and certain personal variables. Tourists travel behaviour is, therefore, the way tourists behave as a result of their state of mind before, during, as well as after travelling towards a particular destination and how they react and respond after the use of the product (March & Woodside, 2005:116). Tourists have been described as logical thinkers, especially when making decisions relating to travel and the purchase of a tourism product as they ensure the maximisation of their utility. First of all, they determine the outcome of their decision by examining the cost and benefits they stand to achieve before making decisions. As a result, products perceived as attractive and offering the best affordable value will be more likely considered by tourists (Van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011: 296). Tourist decision-making processes are, therefore, an effective way of understanding tourist behaviour.

According to March and Woodside (2005:116), certain decisions undertaken by a tourist have a way of influencing his/her behaviour based on certain situations. Since a person's characteristics act upon the characteristics of a situation, March and Woodside (2005:117) advised that gaining an understanding of the evaluative factors influencing destination choice of the tourist and tourist activities makes sense (March & Woodside, 2005:116). There are five aspects of tourist behaviour as identified by Nurmi (2013:8).

- i. Anticipation or pre-buy fragment
- ii. Travel to site fragment
- iii. An on-location experience
- iv. A return travel part
- v. A broadened review and memory stage

In the primary support stage, as reported by (Pearce, 2005:9), many tourists plan for and fantasise about their impending travel for quite a long time. The subsequent stage (i.e. the movement to site stage) can be depicted as an elusive encounter as the traveller anticipates arriving at the location of interest. The focal stage is the on-location experience of being somewhere with an occasion to see, ingest, feel, hear and sense the destination visited (Pearce, 2005:9). The on-location experience stage has been described as *"the enchantment that a few spots hold, that special feeling that embraces landscape and history and our connection, but in one way or another goes further away from the sum of them. Energy, spirit...."*

Call it what you like. It's just words to describe a real experience we can't explain when we get that shiver or the hairs stand up" (Pearce, 2005). The return phase of the travel is as important as the travel to the site phase as every traveller who travels to a destination needs to return to base. The final phase presents the tourist an opportunity to reflect on his experience. The recollection stage is often long lasting. The experience could last for years. This phase and the experienced products do not become obsolete or wear out and may even increase by the ongoing information about the site or a repeat visit (Pearce, 2005:10). This stage and the accomplished experiences don't get out of date or wear out and may even increment by the continuous data about the destination or a recurrent visit (Pearce, 2005:10).

The unmistakable periods of tourist conduct present an immediate aftereffect of association between certain individual and ecological factors constantly. It additionally focuses on the implications of time, on limits and change, spot and personality are generally somewhat determined by the particular periods of the vacationer experience (Van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011:2). Ecotourism visits are improved by conversational practices on how ecotourists get ready for their diary experience such exercises and record their recollections (Stacey, 2012:175).

Since the individual characteristics of a person (personality, lifestyle and tourist roles) interact with the characteristics of a situation (socio-cultural norms and values) to influence behaviour, Slabbert, Saayman and Van der Merwe (2012:137) and Anishchenko (2016:25) asserts that tourists who are motivated to travel to observe and appreciate natural characteristics are obliged to behave or act in a manner that is environmentally friendly even amid dissatisfaction and negative emotions, attitudes and perceptions that may contribute to misbehaviour. He further states that such tourists should make the three 'R's (Reduce, reuse and recycle) their watchword, thereby ensuring that sustainability is achieved (Anishchenko, 2016:25). Choibamroong (2006:6) concord and adds that to develop a specialised tourism product for a memorable experience, there is a need to understand tourist conduct as well as their demographic characteristics for powerful arranging and advertising of the travel industry product (Choibamroong, 2006:6; Slabbert, 2006:84). This now leads us to the final aspects of tourist profile and travel behaviour.

2.5.4.3 Demographic characteristics

The inspiration to travel and the related conduct of travellers are exceptional (George, 2011). Tourist demographic qualities impact travel choices, which thus gives a grid of data edifying either positive or negative mentalities associated with spending design and return to goals by the traveller and can help with anticipating tourist conduct at the locations, as well as in intending to meet tourist's desires (Rajasenan & Ajitkumar, 2004). Studies propose that while socioeconomics can, in themselves, reflect patterns, they can impact patterns in appearance, experience and conduct. Similarly, Limtanakool *et al.*

(2006:329), writes that some of the socioeconomic characteristics that are expected to influence tourists behaviour, mode choice for both short, medium and long-distance travel include age, gender, household structure, income, educational qualification and available car and hence can be regarded as an important determinant of travel choices. Income level, as reported by Okojie *et al.* (2013:1378), also has a huge influence on recreational pursuits particularly on low/middle income earners who cannot afford expensive destination. George (2011) found that demographic qualities of travellers, for example, ethnicity, sex, age, training level, pay, and kind of occupation, influence recreational contribution.

According to Awaritefe (2004:59), there are contrasts among foreign and domestic travellers with regards to the structure of the reason why they choose to travel and the type of activity they engage in at the location; and their participation level can likewise fluctuate along social, religious and ethnic lines. Whiting *et al.* (2010:58) revealed that protected areas of underdeveloped countries of the world are primarily visited by travellers from developed countries such as America, South-east Asia and Europe, while the protected areas of the developed nations are primarily visited by the citizens of that specific nation. Ngoka and Lameed (2013:198), drawing upon the work of Eltringham, deliberated that the travel industry of any sort was moderately affordable to the generally wealthy and that individuals with low paying jobs attempting to fund the basics of life were probably not going to have any extra cash with which to go on a trip or visit a national park, even within their own nations. Hence, they have been known to have a low participation rate in travel industry activities. Camilleri (2018:4), who also accessed travel facilitators and motivators, maintained that the desire to travel is highly dependent on whether the potential traveller has the ability (income) or the desire to do so. He, therefore, concludes that disposable income and leisure time are the two major travel determinants.

Gender, on the other hand, has been found to affect recreational involvement, especially park tourism (Tierney *et al.*, 2008:40). The study by Akarolo-Anthony and Adebamowo (2014:34) shows that leisure-time physical activities are engaged mainly by men with a 60% participation rate. That is to say, a greater percentage of women in Nigeria are recreationally inactive, which is similar to the study by Makuzva (2018:68) and Vumbunu (2020:169). This problem Akindutire and Oyeniyi (2002:76) believed to be caused by factors such as spousal influence and parental upbringing. In contrast to the assertion of Akindutire and Oyeni (2002:76), Adesoye *et al.* (2017:35) believe this inactivity is due more to lack of time as a result to multiple roles, the perception of safety, negative self-perception, environmental access and gender stereotypes than that experienced by their male counterparts. The above expositions show the probability of greater gender disparity in leisure pursuits among Nigerians, and this could have strong implications for tourism development in the country. These findings, however, can be compared to studies conducted in other national parks on the African continent (Morais

et al., 2018:15; Vumbunu, 2020:169; Makuzva, 2018:68). Table 2.4 below depicts the profile and travel behaviour of ecotourists.

Table 2.4. Profile and travel behaviour of ecotourists

Key Point	Consumer profile – Ecotourists
Motivations	• Want to engage in eco-activities • Escape from home and work routine. • The desire to share good times with family and friends • To explore and discover new cultures • To rest and relax • To practice favourite activities, • To indulge in luxury, etc.
Behaviour	• Anticipation or pre-purchase segment (tourist fantasising about a forthcoming trip). • Travel to site segment (tourist looks forward to reaching the destination of interest). • An on-site experience (on-site experience to view, absorb, feel, hear and sense the place visited) • A return travel component • An extended recall and recollection stage (tourist reflect on the experience).
Demographic	• Tend to be highly educated • Relatively well-off (high-income earners) • Predominantly domestic visitors • Visited by both genders • Middle-aged to elderly • Long stayers • Married • They are well educated • Frequent visitors • Higher levels of education
Activities of interest	• See wildlife in natural settings. • Visit national parks, nature reserves and protected areas. • Visit rainforests, jungles, unique natural or geographic habitat • Stay in the wilderness, camping. • Eco activities, e.g. walking, hiking, SCUBA diving.

(Sources: De Witt, Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2014:180; Kruger, Viljoen & Saayman, 2017:331; Francesca, Van der Merwe and Saayman, (2015:74; Wei *et al.*, 2018:797).

The studies by Kruger, Viljoen and Saayman, (2017:331); Wei *et al.* (2018:797) and Francesca, Van der Merwe and Saayman, (2015:74) as presented in Figure 2.4, show that ecotourists are highly educated, which is similar to the findings by Digun-Aweto *et al.*, (2015:101) and Adetola and Ayodele (2013:71), high-income earners, middle-aged to elderly and long stayers who are interested to learn about the ecosystem. Also, Saayman and Slabbert, (2004:5) report that tourists to the Kruger National Park are married with a professional occupation. The study also shows that the tourists are well educated, South African nationals, long-stayers and frequent visitors to the park. Also, De Witt, Van der Merwe and Saayman, (2014:180) found that the profile of ecotourists corresponds with previous works on the profile of the ecotourist market. Also, there is a synergy between income, participation, nationality and the level of involvement in nature activities: noting that ecotourists have notably higher qualifications and are higher income earners than other travellers.

Research on trends in ecotourism product development indicates an increase and greater demand for unique and memorable experiences that will be centred on tourists creating their own experiences. Also, the need for a more sustainable local production that minimises the negative consequences of tourism development on the cultural, social and natural environment will be on the rise.

2.6 ECOTOURISM MARKET

Travellers continued desire to experience and interact with natural wonders of the earth have made ecotourism more prevalent as ecotourists are mainly concerned with a first-hand encounter with nature i.e. an encounter that allows them to see, feel and explore wilderness (Eagles & Haggins, 1998). Knowledge about the consumers of ecotourism products is essential to determine the market for which ecotourism strives. Although some studies offer estimates of the number of ecotourists, several issues make it difficult to discuss the global market of ecotourism accurately. One of these setbacks is the inability of various immigration organisations charged with the responsibility of gathering information about travellers' visits to concentrate more on information regarding this speciality leisure market (Eagles & Haggins, 1998). The international segment of the tourism industry has experienced an increase in recent times. However, this increase is only one part as the domestic segment of the industry is many times greater than international (WTTC 2006). According to the report by the National Bureau of Statistics of China, (2007:7), in China, the number of local travellers surpasses that of international inbound travellers and again shows much greater development. UNWTO (2020:1) also reported a decline in international tourism in 2019 resulting from social tensions, Brexit uncertainty, the collapse of Thomas Cook as well as the global economic slowdown, which was said to have affected mainly developed nations, particularly Asia, Europe and the Pacific while giving rise to a boom in domestic tourism. With the hold on international travel as a result of the pandemic (COVID-19) leading to border closure and travel restrictions, UNWTO stated that the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns have caused a decline of about 22% of the international travel arrivals throughout the first quarter of 2020 as compared to the year 2019 (Han *et al.*, 2020:1-2). This decrease has shown a sign of recovery within the domestic travel segment of the industry, and it's expected to recover even faster than the international tourism demand as a similar report by the UNWTO (2020:14) with special focus on the impact of COVID-19 shows a 24% decline in international travel demand and 45% increase in domestic travel demand.

According to (Buhalis, 2000:98), the market demand for ecotourism is largely centred in the western world. They are particularly concentrated in those cultures in or developed from the countries in northern Europe, most specifically in the area from the United Kingdom, through Germany to Scandinavia. The English-speaking countries of the world are particularly prominent as sources of and destinations for ecotourists. Eagles and Haggins (1998) estimated that the most prominent countries

supplying ecotourists are: Germany, Canada, the United States of America, Sweden, New Zealand, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark and Austria,

2.7 THE FUTURE OF ECOTOURISM

It is very evident that the future ecotourist and the travel industry suppliers will rely more upon innovation. With the presentation of online administrations and cutting edge applications, the travel industry is probably going to be more open and pleasant. Future tourists will not be restricted by organised tours. Also, the use of technology in tourism will enable tourism providers to promote and communicate their products to potential customers and provide easy access to their products and services. With the accessibility of countless alternatives, travellers would want to understand each conceivable wish with regards to the travel industry. It is also believed that, in the not very distant future, all ecotourism facilities and activities will be planned with the most extreme regard for environmental sustainability. One objective of this is to cause investment and interest in ecotourism to contribute genuinely to the preservation of the world's natural and social legacy. Eventually, the process and styles where all different sorts of the travel industry are done, including mass tourism will, without doubt, profit from a trend towards sustainability of ecotourism product development (Lackey *et al.*, 2017:5-6).

2.8 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the literature on wildlife tourism, ecotourism as well as nature-based tourism. Ecotourism is, without doubt, one of the main focuses of investigation in the academic field today. The examination of previous studies shows that reviews have been directed on the importance of wildlife tourism and ecotourism. It is also evident that no orderly and in-depth study has been done so far on the most proficient method to create ecotourism products in the study area (the CRNP), trends and its role when used to develop conservation zones. Notwithstanding the growing number of ecotourists and their overall effects, research in this field, in particular the CRNP, has been limited. Based on this, many fundamental questions stay unanswered. Also, a top-to-bottom investigation of the destination has not so far been conducted. There are no examinations related with ecotourism product development in the study destination. Consequently, in filling this gap, the current investigation is of great importance.

CHAPTER 3

TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Following the previous chapter's analysis of wildlife and ecotourism, the primary purpose of this chapter is to analyse tourism product development. This objective will be achieved using a comprehensive literature review. Firstly, there will be an overview of the term 'tourism product', thereby ensuring that the background knowledge of the concept is analysed. Secondly, this will be followed by the definitions of tourism products. Thirdly, attention is given to the different types of tourism products. Fourthly, a detailed discussion on the components of a thriving tourism destination (the seven 'A's of tourism products) will be presented. Fifthly, attention will be given to the tourism resources of the CRNP, an examination of the planning and development of the tourism product. Finally, the chapter discusses barriers to tourism product development in Nigeria as well as the CRNP.

3.2 UNDERSTANDING THE TOURISM PRODUCT

Tourists are confronted with a variety of tourism resources in the destination that they visit. Understanding the tourist product will not only assist social scientists in knowing the benefits derived from consuming the tourism product but will also help tourism providers in providing the most sought-after products in their destination (Koutoulas, 2004:3; Xu, 2009:607). The fact that the categories of tourism products are complicated and the lack of understanding amongst authors and researchers in the field who have studied the issue makes the concept even more challenging to comprehend (Koutoulas, 2004:3). However, Matilla, (2011:4), Koutoulas (2004:2) and Albayrak *et al.*, 2010:140) argue that, to acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the term 'tourism product', the tourism product could be ascertained on two different levels: the total tourist product and the specific tourist product.

Middleton and Clarke (2001:122) state that there are two aspects for understanding the tourism product, one of which the product is understood by customers and the other seen by marketing officers and tourism providers as being restrictive. In the first dimension, according to Middleton and Clarke (2001:122), the tourism product is offered as a complete set of components, which collectively make up the whole enjoyment of the visitor. The second one defines tourism products as separate services that are introduced by a number of tourism vendors. According to Zain *et al.* (2015:2605), total tourism products usually come in different forms. As Zain *et al.* (2015:2605) suggested, the overall tourism products ought to be regarded as a bundle of physical products such as activities, services and physical plant at a destination that makes the total experience of the tourist. One of the items in the total tourism product is the physical plant like nature potentials such as wildlife, facilities and water that can be found

at the location. Koutoulas (2004:2) asserts that total tourism products are physical products or all the elements consumed by a tourist during his/her stay at the destination such as transport, accommodation, facilities and services provided for tourist's satisfaction. It can also be seen as the collection of tangible and intangible forms of tourism activities where other features related to activities which either attract or motivate tourists to participate in tourism activities at the destination (Koutoulas, 2015:2; Komppula, 2001:3).

On the other hand, specific tourist products, as reviewed by Komppula (2001:1), are tourism products offered as different services and presented by various business/tourism providers. These can also be seen as containing components of the total tourism product and are offered to tourists as individual products such as facilities, attraction, accommodation, transport etc. specific tourism products, in other words, are offered by individual tourist businesses (Matilla, 2011:4). As earlier indicated, the tourism product could be ascertained on two different levels: the specific tourist product and the total tourist product.

- **Components of specific tourist products**

Salamoura and Angelis (2009:2) argued that the specific tourist products consists of three basic components:

- Core product: the basic advantage that the purchaser is looking for and purchasing (for example unwinding or a social encounter).
- The tangible/formal product: the service or good that is offered to the purchaser with explicit attributes, (for example, quality, highlights, styling, brand name or bundling), leading to a fundamental rendition of the product.
- The augmented or expanded product: the extra advantages that a buyer receives in getting the conventional product, which differentiates the organisation's product from other company's offers. In reality, rivalry is at the expanded level, instead of at the core product level (Middleton & Clark, 2001:129; Komppula, 2001:3; Salamoura & Angelis, 2009:2).

Salamoura and Angelis (2009:2-3), further state that the core and augmented tourism products are closely linked to each other by not having a physical form (intangibility). However, its tangible nature spins more on the location and infrastructure as well as the superstructure. Additionally, its intangible components - which are fundamental to general consumer loyalty, focus more upon the emotional idea of the tourism products, for example, observation, friendliness, accommodation, civility, security and general environment (Salamoura & Angelis, 2009). One of the fundamental highlights of a tourism product is its quality, which must be estimated to decide the costs of the product. The nature of travel industry products must be controlled by checking the customers' encounters as to whether the product

has satisfied their desires (Mattila, 2011:13). Likewise, quality gives the proper product correspondence to the sum of fixed value; it is additionally identified with the customers' fulfilment with the tourism product. (Yacob, Jaafar & Marzuki, 2013:356; Mattila, 2011:13).

- **Components of total tourism products**

Just as for the specific tourism product, the total tourism product, due to its complex nature, is made up of numerous components which could come in various forms as described by Koutoulas (2015:2) but existing as complements to each other. These include; individual products (product sold independently on the market such as: air transport, accommodation and attraction admission), public products (product used by tourist during their stay at a destination at no cost such as: destination scenery and climate) and complimentary services (these are products or services offered independently by a tour guard and tourist information officer). Koutoulas (2015:2) further differentiates the total tourism product into six categories: by reason of creation, by origin, by tangibility, by variability, by the time of consumption and by its functional roles with all playing a function of interdependent role as each one provides only a part of the total sum of benefits desired by tourists.

Since tourist demand behaviour changes from time to time, so a destination, or the results of the products, should be in constant development. As per Manente (2008:1), tourism product comprises of a bunch of appealing features, products and services coordinated in accordance with tourist's needs, wants and aspirations. The assortment of items relies upon the manner in which the attractions are created, coordinated, overseen and used. This implies that many destinations, both actual and potential, can be re-situated in the market for the development of new tourism products (Manente, 2008:3). Various customers have various desires that are typically founded on their related involvements and information on the product and services offered (Matilla, 2011:4). To have a significant encounter, Taneva (2009:28) contends that tourism products must hold fast to the details and necessities set by the traveller to give a memorable experience that lives up to their expectations. The thought of this perspective is of great significance since the tourism industry sells nature-based products, satisfaction and experiences.

The tangible and intangible tourism products offered by tourism providers offer features existing to complement each other, Albayrak, Caber and Aksoy (2013:28) and Koutoulas (2004:2) conclude that they influence tourists' travel experiences. Concerning the purpose of this study, attributes of both the total tourist products which, according to Koutoulas (2004:5) can be regarded as bundles of tangible and intangible components of a destination's tourism and the specific products are reviewed in the subsequent sections.

3.2.1 Tourism product defined

The UNWTO (2018:78) defines tourism product as: *"a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific centre of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers. A tourism product is priced and sold through distribution channels, and it has a life-cycle"*. Similarly, Yacob, Jaafar and Marzuki (2013:356) define a tourism product as, *"a service or process that facilitates tourism and promotes activities carried out by individuals beyond their familiar environment; tourism products also consist of natural and cultural resources, facilities, infrastructure, accommodation, and restaurants"*. The definitions presented by the UNWTO and Magnar recognise the main components that make up the tourism product, the total tourist product that tourists use during the course of their trip (such as physical plant, services, waterfalls, wildlife, activities and facilities at the destination that create the entire visitor's experience) and the specific tourism products (such as accommodation, transport and other facilities that are vital for a memorable experience (Middleton & Clarke, 2001:122; Matilla, 2011:4). It is also very clear that from the definitions UNWTO and Magnar brought to mind that tourism exists because of tourism products as it facilitates and promotes tourism as well as the emotional aspects of the tourist towards the product consumed because emotion often helps tourists to make decisions on whether or not to travel or to purchase a particular tourism product (Marciszewska & Grobelna 2015:131).

According to Smith (2001:13), tourism products can be seen as consisting of one or a mix of parts including physical properties, services, locations, organisations or thoughts that are available to the market and are compelling in fulfilling customers' requests. Manente (2008:1) concurs and states that tourism products comprise a bunch of engaging quality elements, goods and services coordinated in accordance with tourists' needs, wants and aspirations. Chaiboonsri and Chaitip (2008) agree with Smith (2001) when the authors explain that tourism products are the elements combined to enhance the satisfaction of traveller's needs. Xu (2009:608) explains the term further using a different dimension when he asserts that a tourism product could be an entire community or an individual facility, for instance, a recreation centre, a national park (as in the case of this research) or a hotel (a property).

The UNEP/UNWTO (2005) define tourism product as: *"the combination of goods and services such as transport, accommodation, food and drinks, guiding services, provision of material and infrastructure for activities. that are necessary to enable the tourists to have a complex experience which starts at them leaving their home and ends at their return"*. The UNEP/UNWTO (2005) highlight the fact that tourism products are a bundle of products and services needed for tourists to have a unique experience at the place visited until they return home. This definition was in agreement with the definition put forward

by (Smith, 2001:112) when he defined tourism product as the sum of different products, goods and services in a place, which serves to satisfy the travel needs of tourists out of their travel places and residence in resting places. Gupta *et al.* (2015:49) characterise a tourism product as any item that is promoted by a nation or a company with the aim of attracting tourists to visit the location and appreciate the experience of the product. They went further to state that, tourism product comprises of a mix of significant products that incorporate attractions and objects, transport, recreation and accommodation. However, every component is set up by an individual or a company and offered independently to tourists (customers).

Considering that the various definitions of tourism product include attraction and facilities, the tourists, the destinations as well as the organisation, Mattila (2011:4) concludes by saying that the tourism product and its associated experiences have become an essential component of the product, which are brought together by various actors interacting with the product i.e. tourists, locals and tourism product providers. Mattila (2011:4) further explains that these interactions are bound to take place either visually or at a place, and they are influenced by various factors, including cultural and social factors.

3.2.2 Types of tourism products

Tourism products can be described as important pull factors that motivate tourists to visit a destination (Middleton & Clarke, 2001). The variety of tourism products found at a destination attracts tourists to the destination. It is the diverse nature of the tourism product that attracts tourists to the destination. The following tourism products classifications (Figure 3.1), proposed by Holodova (2013:2) and Rawat (2016:1) are considered and they include: natural tourism product, man-made tourism products, symbiotic tourism products, site-based tourism products and event-based tourism products. These classifications are based on important similarities.

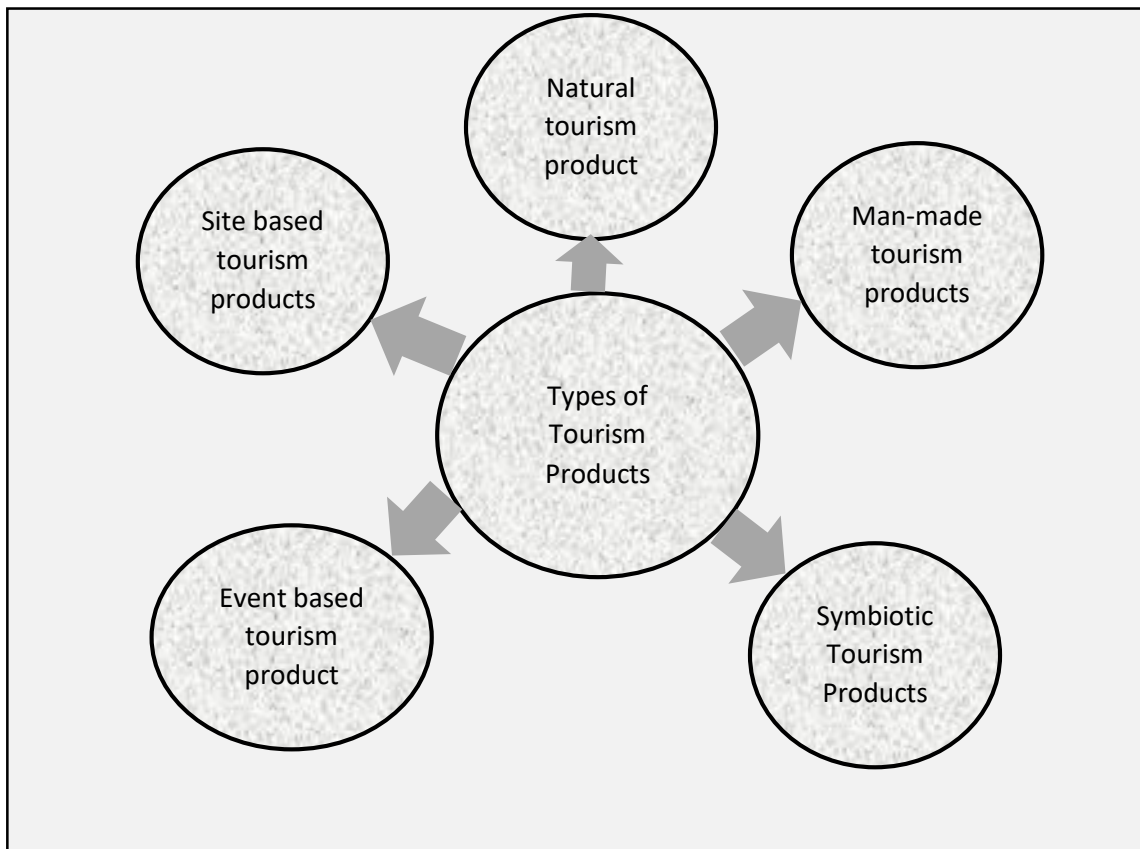


Figure 3.1: Types of tourism products (sources: Central Board of Secondary Education, 2016:60; Holodova, 2013:2; Rawat, 2016:1).

3.2.2.1 Natural tourism products

Tourists' constant interest in natural phenomena, nature and the associated tourism products have been acknowledged (Sinitsyn, 2015:2). These are mainly products such as attractions at the destination acting as a pull factor that motivates a tourist to visit the location. Globally, destinations with unique natural features such as waterfalls, springs, beaches, mountains, wildlife (flora and fauna), dense forest, lakes and climate have been the centre for attraction for tourists (Holodova, 2013; Sinitsyn, 2015:2). The scenery and natural beauty of places have always attracted tourists. Ecotourists, especially, enjoy nature in all its various forms (Sinitsyn, 2015:2). This will also be the focus of this research, namely a tourism product in a national park (the CRNP).

3.2.2.2 Man-made tourism products

Humans have used their ingenuity to manipulate and create facilities for their pleasure, leisure or business purposes. Such manifestations are regular indications of human effort during the time spent in advancement. These indications, fine structure or facilities achieved through human creativity have become a fascination for attraction (Holodova, 2013:1). For example, a) Culture (place and territories

of archaeological interest, chronicled structures and landmarks, sites of legendary importance, historical centres and craftsmanship displays, political and instructive foundations), b) Traditions (journeys, fairs and celebrations, expressions and painstaking work, music, legends, local life and customs), c) Entertainment (recreation and amusement park, games, zoos, films and theatres, nightlife, food), d) Business (Conventions and meetings) (Holodova, 2013:1).

3.2.2.3. Symbiotic tourism products

These are tourism products with mutual benefits. They are tourism products with a mix of both man-made and natural elements. For example, a marine-park or national park that is managed by man through the provision of accommodation, a zoo, a parking lot and other facilities but still existing in their natural state, which are human creations at natural attractions (Holodova, 2013:2). In this type of product, nature is the main product from which humans have provided infrastructure to meet the needs of tourists. These products therefore, can be said to have evolved with man and nature through a process known as symbiosis (Holodova, 2013:2). On the other hand, Gautam (2014:1) defined tourism product as anything offered for attraction, acquisition or consumption. It includes services, physical objects, personalities, places, ideas and organisations designed as an augmented product for the benefit of tourists. A car is an example of a symbiotic tourism product because it has a bundle of physical attributes (wheel and windows engines) and a symbolic object because its physical feature both individually and collectively, connote symbolic values to the consumer such as status and adventure (Rawat, 2016:1)

3.2.2.4. Site-based tourism products

These are tourism products or attractions with a physical setting or situated at a particular site. The sites are usually permanent and irreplaceable but can be modified to meet the needs and wants of tourists (Central Board of Secondary Education, 2016:60; Seaton & Bennett, 1996:113). Historical places, beaches, monuments and hill stations are examples of permanent attractions where tourists flock in large numbers, especially during festive seasons and other remarkable occasions, to experience the scenic nature of these sites (Seaton & Bennett, 1996:113).

3.2.2.5. Event-based tourism products

When tourists visit an event as spectators or participants, such an event can serve as tourist attraction. The events may be an occasional event, a promotional event, a traditional event or a seasonal event (Holodova, 2013:2). The Calabar Carnival is a traditional gathering with more than Calabar indigenes in attendance, the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, the Durban July Horse race, the Royal Reed Dance, and the Arts Alive Festival are some of the event-based tourism products that attract great attention from the public, promote the image of the destination and stimulate their cultural heritage. In

line with the commission and mandate of the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (2015:2), event hosting is regarded as a stimulus that facilitates local tourism products development, helps in marketing the province as a tourism destination and also increases visitor numbers to and within the Eastern Cape province.

Zima (2012:6), revealed that events act as a motivator, motivating and attracting image-makers and tourists by placing a destination in the centre of the market, creating destination image and providing a competitive advantage. Furthermore, Smith (2004:2) posits that event tourism is an essential element of the tourism product of many destinations. Also, Smith (2004:2) articulates that the purpose of event-based tourism product is to create a positive destination profile, increase destination economic revenue, expand the traditional tourist season as well as draw both national and international visitors. Events as tourist attractions are temporary and are often mounted to increase the number of tourists to a particular destination Zima (2012:6). Swart and Bob (2005) however, agreed but maintained that when people with the same interests are brought together by events, such events are of limited duration, yet events still have the ability to be a cornerstone of developing tourism in many developing/underdeveloped destinations. The following section examines some of the elements that make up the tourism product.

3.2.3 The elements of the tourism product

The tourism product is believed to be a combination of elements that are offered to the tourism firm by different service suppliers, such as accommodation, transport, food and beverages, leisure and many more (Balaure, Catoiu & Veghes, 2005:275; Gupta *et al.*, 2015:51; Xu, 2009:607). The tourism product consists of five elements, as demonstrated by Xu (2009:607). These range from the core, i.e. on which elements (such as freedom of choice, hospitality and service) to involvement. There is a corresponding feature of tourism elements when it moves from the core to the shell but with a declining effect on management control, an increase in intangibility, an increase in consumer involvement and a decrease in empirical measurement (Smith, 1994:587). In agreement, Xu (2009:607) opines that the components of the tourism system are positioned from the centre (core) to the shells, as per the amounts of customers' consumption and management control. A product is considered successful when the needs of tourists are met. This can be achieved by careful design and by ensuring that all the other elements are integrated. The tourism product is the result of a mutual relationship among all the elements (Smith, 1994:584). For a better understanding of how these elements work to bring about tourist's satisfaction, there is a need for clarification.

3.2.3.1 The physical plant

The central part of the tourism product is the physical plant, according to Smith (1994:588). It is concrete and is made up of different kinds of product on which tourism depends. The physical plant can be regarded as the destination itself with all the appealing facilities and infrastructure that improves customers' experience, makes the accessibility of product and services easy for customers with several physical abilities and protects the environment (Smith, 1994:588; Xu, 2009:607). Smith (1994:588) further described it as conditions of the physical environment, such as:

- Natural attraction
- Man-made attraction
- Fixed property (accommodation)
- Mobile property (aeroplane)
- Manmade or natural condition (weather, infrastructure) It is, therefore, very important for tourism planners and developers to ensure that the physical plant is appealing and accessible to tourists, and creates a memorable experience (Kleynhans & Zhou, 2012:11343).

3.2.3.2 Service

Without services, the physical plant becomes irrelevant to the tourists. That is to say, services are needed to meet the needs and wants of tourists (for example; housekeeping, food and refreshment arrangements and front desk services) to work, just as an airplane needs a flight group, flight stewards, and the services of an air terminal and airport control to provide transport (Smith, 1994:588). The features of the physical plant are made ready for use for tourists through services. The human resources department provides services by ensuring that services provided to clients are beneficial and satisfactory. The nature of services can be estimated by watching the performance of workers against target standards that determine the sorts and level of specialised information a worker must need to play out his/her work (Smith, 1994:588). This service, according to Aleksander (2017:20), can be classified into three groups:

- **Basic:** A service provider must ensure that its client receives the basic services of the company. Basic services are services that meet the needs and wants of customers which are obtained directly from the services or products provided by an organisation and their services are associated with transport, catering, accommodation and offering various types of tourism (i.e., lodging services, health services. resort services, meeting and conferences).
- **Complementary:** both tourism enterprises and tourist destinations provide services that encourage taking advantages from the tourism industry and destinations, services associated

with data, inbound tourism company, controlling, tourist rental services and travel agent services such as ticket sales for an exhibition, booking etc.

- **Para tourist:** these are services not provided by tourism companies but indirectly by entities of the tourism economy such as banking, telecommunication services, and local infrastructure (Aleksander, 2017:20). The next section explores hospitality as an element of the tourism product.

3.2.3.3 Hospitality

Although service plays a vital role in the tourist's fulfilment chain, is still not sufficient to bring about a memorable experience. Also, since the intangible nature of tourism services has a huge impact on the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of tourists, as explained by Caruntu and Ditoiu (2014:232), it therefore calls for an augmented service. This requirement of augmented services has for a long time now been a part of tourism and can be regarded as hospitality. Hospitality can, therefore, be seen as the manner with which the service is rendered or the fulfilled expectations of the tourists (Koppula, 2001:4). Hospitality involves providing good services and products that will not only meet the needs of consumers but will also deliver these services to customers with happiness, willingness, inexhaustibly and enthusiasm to attend to other demands of customers. It also entails providing information on local restaurants with devotion. For instance, arranging the guest room and serving of food and drinks. The fact that hospitality is more subjective than service makes it hard to manage and assess that service. The human knowledge or experience regarding an event/activities is seen as an essential component of the tourism product, and therefore the two elements that best explains this is freedom of choice and involvement. Hospitality provides the platform and facilitates the introduction of these two elements.

3.2.3.4 Freedom of choice

When a customer is allowed to choose from the available options to increase their experiences, it is termed, 'freedom of choice'. Customer's freedom to choose from the available options depends largely on tourism type, the tourist's budget, previous experience or even on reliance on a travel agent (Smith, 1994:589). Customers' choice must be taken into consideration when providing products to them. The choice from the available options gives customers confidence and puts them in charge of the product. Having the freedom to select accommodation, food or refreshment, a seat, etc., can improve tourist's freedom (Williams, 2004:236). Freedom also entails astonishment. Freedom of choice also gives the customer the feeling of being very fortunate to make his own choice, hence, gaining extra value from the company (Smith, 1994:590).

3.2.3.5. Involvement

The fifth element relies on the nature of the other four components. These components prepare tourists for physical, scholarly, and enthusiastic participation in the tourism services (Smith, 1994:590). Involvement isn't just actual cooperation but provides, in addition, a feeling of commitment in an activity which might be for fun or business. The more a tourist is involved in tourism activities; the more fascinated they become and the more willing to engage in conversation with others, and even more inquisitive to explore new things and time passes quickly without them seeming to notice (Smith, 1994: 590). Competent service and as well as a great physical plant (i.e. attractive infrastructure, accessibility of products and services, and good weather) virtually guarantee quality and satisfying tourism product. Useful information about the needs and wants of customers, as well as even suggesting yield management and new ways of client data can be obtained from customers (Weiermair, 2004:4). Just as the seven 'A's (attraction, accessibility, accommodation, activities, amenities, appeal and available packages) of the tourism product determine the success of a tourism destination, so is the combination of the element of the tourism product (i.e. the physical plant, good service, hospitality, freedom of choice and tourists' involvement) as it also determines the successful participation by customers in producing tourist product (Komppula, 2001:4; Smith, 1994:590).

In agreement with Smith's (1994) five elements of a tourism product, Xu, (2009:608) explained that freedom of choice and physical plant are perceptible elements while the other elements are imperceptible. Nevertheless, by attracting tourists and also concentrating on a particular leisure venture, every aspect of the tourism industry can be regarded as a tourism product. For instance, a national park conserves wildlife and also receives visitors for a leisure tour. The tangible and intangible elements of the tourism product differ in some industries especially with respect to the development mechanism involved (Xu, 2009:608). An onion shell diagram of the tourism product is presented in Figure 3.2 on the following page.

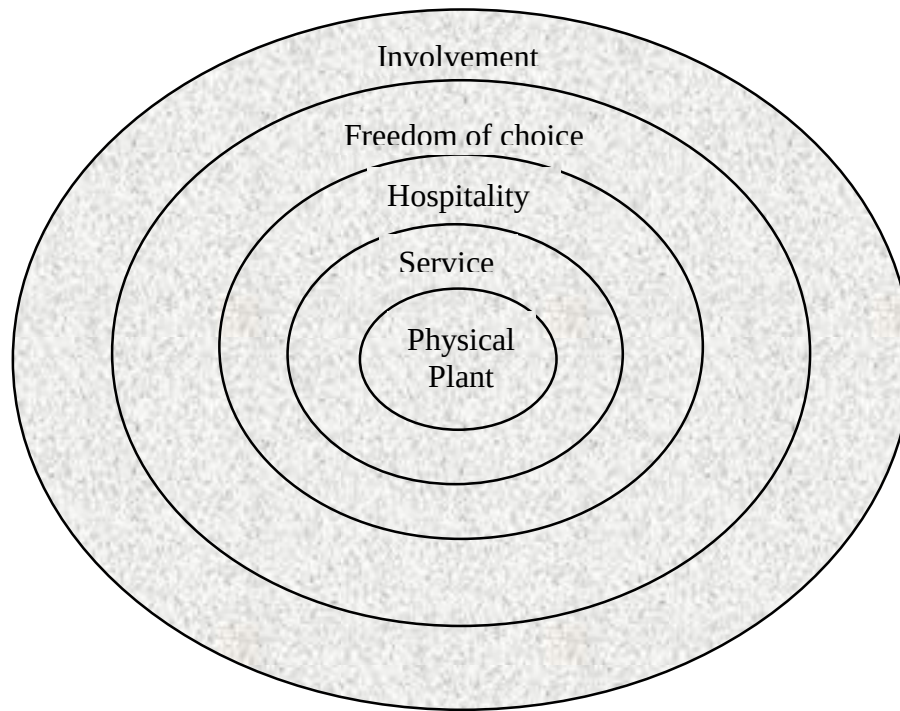


Figure 3.2: Elements of tourism products (Sources: Komppula, 2001:4; Xu, 2009:607; Sinitsyn; 2015:31).

Figure 3.2 shows an orderly arrangement of the elements ranging from the core (physical plant) to the outer shell (involvement), thereby indicating a downward movement of an organisation management control system. It also shows the importance of a customer's involvement in an organisation. The interaction of the five elements of a tourism product not only makes the product unique but also creates a memorable experience for the customer. The creation of a tourism product starts with the physical plant, and develops through the management and planning processes. This stage is then followed by the services offered by the organisation, hospitality, customers' freedom of choice and, lastly, tourist's personal involvement. It is the coming together of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), businesses and public organisations to provide products and services to bring about travel and leisure activities engaged by tourists that defines the tourism industry (Aleksander, 2017:20). Without an emphasis on the tourism product characteristics and how these products are produced, it may be difficult to achieve a successful product development plan for a destination.

3.2.4 Characteristics of the tourism product

The nature and characteristics of the tourism product are complex. They are made up of different elements that, in themselves, constitute a product with each one of the products playing a unique role in this "amalgam of tangible and intangible elements" (Sharma, 2007:36; Albayrak *et al.*, 2010:140). These components complement each other, i.e. they are practically interdependent as each one contributes only a portion of the entire benefits sought by visitors (Koutoulas, 2004:2). Makuzva (2018:16) emphasised the fundamental importance of understanding these unique characteristics as they

offer insight into how the tourism product should be developed, marketed, and advertised, and sustainable strategies implemented. Figure 3.3 below presents the characteristics of the tourism industry products, as outlined by Madafuri (2018:233) and they are as follows: intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, perishability, seasonality and complementarity

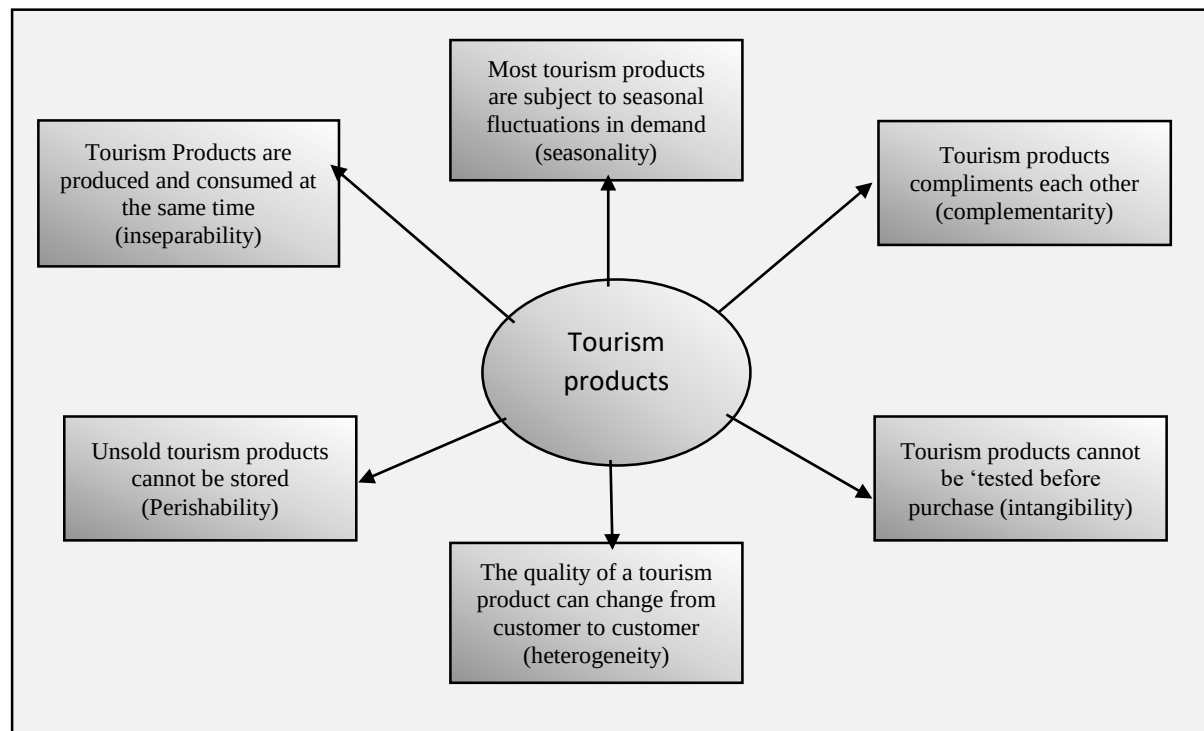


Figure 3.3: Characteristics of the tourism product (adapted from Keyser, 2009:210).

3.2.4.1 Intangibility

There's no transfer of ownership in tourism as it is the case with a tangible product (car, television, etc.). An intangible product can neither be seen nor examined by the potential customer before they are priced or purchased. This concept is generally supported by Bennett and Strydom (2001:5), Laws (2004:16), George (2011:24), Sharma (2007:36) and Tassiopoulos (2011:268). The intangible nature of tourism products is characterised by the experience to be enjoyed at the destination, but consumers take the risk of buying a product they cannot see or feel. Since the product can neither be tasted nor experienced before purchase, Tassiopoulos (2011:268) postulates that tourists rely mainly on word-of-mouth referrals from previous travellers or travel agents to make their decision to purchase a tourism product.

George (2011:34) proposes that because tourism products are intangible, the marketer of the destination should make it saleable through visible physical aspects, to create an image in the minds of tourists as to what to expect at the destination. Laws (2004:16) gave a clear distinction between tourism products

and manufactured products, and he maintained that a manufactured product could be tested and inspected by the customer before purchase. An example is a car, which the customer can test drive before buying it. In contrast, the tourism product can only be experienced after purchase, which is termed “palpable intangibility” by Mok *et al.* (2013:17). Also, Sanyal (2014:1) explains that manufactured products are first created, before they are sold and then consumed by consumers, whereas tourism products are first sold, and then produced and consumed at the same time. Mok *et al.* (2013:17) articulate that, due to the intangibility of tourism products, tourists or travellers are offered an abstract concept of what they will experience before they visit the destination. Mok *et al.* (2013:17) call this ‘mental intangibility’ whereby tourists perceive what their holiday experience will be based on the activities and previous experiences they are shown.

Mok *et al.* (2013:17) reviewed that not all tourism services are intangible but a combination of tangible and intangible products. He offers an example of airlines, which render tangible services such as seat, and meals, and intangible product like transport. Nevertheless, the rule is that tourism services cannot be displayed and experienced before purchasing the services (Sanyal, 2014:1). Due to the intangible nature of a tourism product, George (2011:34) asserts that there are difficulties in selling the tourism product as there is nothing physical to show the customer except images, which do not reproduce the holiday experience. Also, the customer may sometimes feel uncertain about the quality of the service (Weiermair, 2004:4). However, Mok *et al.* (2013:17) claim that, to reduce the problems involved with the intangibility of tourism products and services, tourism marketers, for example, tour operators and travel agents, are encouraged to show images of the destination to potential buyers, as well as explaining the benefits that are attached to each package. Weiermair (2004:4) agreed with Mok *et al.* (2013) and added that the tourism product could be improved in quality by augmenting it (e.g., pattern, aroma, emotional attachment, and light). Based on these changes made on the products, it is believed that the emotional value of the tourism experience will be changed.

3.2.4.2. Heterogeneity

Tourism products are heterogeneous since its standard and quality varies over time (Mok *et al.*, 2013:18; Sharma, 2007:37). The services provided by tourism companies are people-based, and so there is room for diversity and also, there is no consistency with services provided, such as a package tour (Bennett & Strydom, 2001:5). George (2011:28) describes heterogeneity as the most challenging characteristic of the tourism product making standardisation of the product a major risk as consumers have different tastes. This means that by satisfying one consumer, it is not guaranteed that the next consumer will also be satisfied. However, Tassiopoulos, (2008:207) suggested the development of service standards and employee training programmes as the key to ensuring consistent service delivery.

Similarly, Mok *et al.* (2013:19) posit that it is of great significance to maintaining consistency in the service industry. However, it is not easy to maintain consistency in the service industry because the service delivery of a tourism service is complete only when the customer receives the services, and this will depend on the customer and the services provider (Mok *et al.*, 2013:19). Mok *et al.* (2013:19) and Tassiopoulos (2008:207) concludes that tourists who perceive that they receive consistently good quality service at a certain destination may continue to visit that destination and become regular visitors, whereas if the service delivery is inconsistent, they will look for destinations that strive for consistency.

3.2.4.3. Inseparable

Inseparability, as defined by George (2011:26), is a situation that occurs where service and the provision of that service happen at the same time, and both the provider and the consumer (tourist) are involved in the process of delivery. This means that tourism services require the service provider and the customer to be at the same place and at the same time for the tourism product to be consumed. For instance, in the case of a tour, the driver and the guide are part of the product, and the tourist has a direct encounter of the service at the same time it is produced (Tassiopoulos, 2008:207). The production and consumption of the tourism product are simultaneous, unlike manufactured products, which are created beforehand and then sold to customers (Tassiopoulos, 2008:207). Mok *et al.* (2013:18) also explained that tourism services could not be manufactured in one place, transported for sale to another place, and then sold and consumed again in another place, but rather, they are consumed, produced and sold at the same time and place. Furthermore, Bennett and Strydom (2001) assert that the ownership of a tourism product is not transferred to the buyer. However, the buyer can only use the tourism product for the period concerned and must then leave the product for the next user. Because the tourism products are permanently bound together (inseparable) George (2011:28), concludes that service production and consumption, as well as service encounter, is likely to be different, thereby leading to perishability.

3.2.4.4 Perishable

Tourism products cannot be stored for future use. The production of a tourism product happens when the consumer is present for its consumption and the moment consumption starts, it cannot be interrupted or stopped until it has been completed (George, 2011:28). This means that a tourism product that is not used or a destination not visited by tourists loses its chances and opportunities. It is as a result of this that the hospitality and the transport sectors offer a huge discount particularly during the off-season (Gupta *et al.*, 2015:50). Using the accommodation and attraction sector as a case study, it is clear that if sales were not made for a certain day, the revenue lost could not be recovered, even though the hotel room or the attraction is still physically present. To reduce the impact of perishability, George (2011:36) suggested managing supply and demand. To him, this can be achieved by a change in working hours for staff, extended working hours during peak season and reduced working hours for off-peak times.

3.2.4.5. Seasonality

According to Goran (2019:24), seasonality is '*a limited imbalance in tourism occurrences, specified with respect to the customers' expenditure, number of customers, admission to attractions, employment, traffic congestions and other types of transportation*'. The concept of seasonality has been well documented in the tourism literature. As a result of its universal nature, businesses and locations associated with tourism are either negatively or positively impacted by seasonality. The unsteadiness in the number of visitors and tourists to a destination is caused by seasonality which can bring about a destination having more visitors and tourists above the destination's carrying capacity whereas, at other times, the destination may receive very few visitors (Lee *et al.*, 2008:v). Seasonality is generally believed to hinder the smooth functioning of the tourism product as the economic returns that can be derived from tourism are hampered as well as the economic gain that might be obtained from visitors who visited the destination throughout the year. Corluka *et al.* (2016:57) opine that seasonal fluctuations in tourism demand are of great importance to tourism based on the fact that tourists have different motivations and needs that vary according to the seasons. They then conclude that tourists are looking for different benefits of the tourism product through the seasons.

Trajkov *et al.* (2016) recognised two major factors that determine seasonality of tourism products: natural factors such as the physical properties of the destination like climate change etc. and social factors (institutional or sociocultural: vacations, holidays, free days and school breaks). Lee *et al.* (2008:2) who are worried about the implications of seasonality assert that facilities and services may be underutilised and that locations can confront ceaseless wastefulness as they hook with the crests and troughs of requests. These factors, whether natural or social, influence the dynamics of tourism activities and also influence tourist decisions in engaging in tourism activities (Traikov *et al.*, 2016:487). Since most tourism products are subject to seasonal fluctuation, for instance, peak season may be subject to seasonal fluctuation since key attractions are, as it were, useable at that time of the year. Keyser (2009:208) suggest that destinations may offer diverse and extra attractions exterior to the peak season. Events (festivals) and attraction (displays) that do not rely on weather condition are the most common attractions used in this instance. Cape Town Tourism's 'Cape Town on Sale' campaign is an example of such an event (Koutoulas, 2004; Keyser, 2009:208).

3.2.4.6 Complementarity

As explained by Madafuri (2018:233) tourism is a combination of symptoms and relationships that arise from the interaction between the community, tourists, tourism providers or companies and the government to attract and render services to tourists and other customers alike. Tourism products are interdependent as they complement each other as each one provides a portion of the whole benefits sought by visitors (Koutoulas, 2004:2; Keyser, 2009:210). Although the tangible and intangible nature

of the tourism products are dissimilar in characteristics, Albayrak *et al.* (2010:140) postulate that they have the ability to complement each other and their effects can be felt by the customer's satisfaction or combined for improving customer satisfaction. The goods and services (such as accommodation, transport, shopping, attractions, events) offered by tourism providers are demanded by tourists in a relationship of complementarity and substitutability during their holiday experience. Following this idea, Albayrak *et al.* (2010:140) suggests that the provision of complementary supply of tourism products can offer assistance within the definition of a satisfactory range of products for a destination

Aside from these characteristics of a tourism product, it is also critical to know the components that constitute a successful tourism destination. There have been different views by different scholars regarding what constitutes a successful tourism destination/product. The next section explores the components that constitute a successful tourism destination.

3.3 COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL TOURISM DESTINATION (THE 7 A'S OF TOURISM PRODUCTS)

Tourism destination's operations are dependent on the available tourism products. Unless the tourism product in a location meets the wants and desires of visitors, the destination cannot realise its full potential. Some destinations centre their consideration on the improvement and conveyance of the different attractions and activities that are capable of attracting tourists or the products that define a tourism product (UNWTO, 2011:4). Product development in any destination, therefore, is the prerequisite for a practical and appealing product, and can be considered the foundation for successful tourism development as it ensures sustainable development in any destination or community (Acha-Anyi, 2014:1). Various components form the tourist's destination, either particularly related or situated to tourism, but whose presence increments the probabilities of drawing in visitors since they contribute to the feeling of consolation in any area and can fortify the expansion of the stay (Acha-Anyi, 2014:1).

According to Gupta *et al.* (2015:50), there are three basic elements of a tourism product - attractions at destinations, facilities at destinations and ease of accessibility to destinations. Commercii (2001:94) and Verma (2016:1), on the other hand, identified five main components of a tourism product, which are attractions, accessibility, destination facilities/amenities, image, and price. Bulhalis (2000:98) argues that successful destinations are structured as containing the six 'A's of tourism product and especially for a destination. The six 'A's have been modified to become the seven 'A's. Figure 3.4 presents the tourism product as demonstrated by Saayman (2006:112) and they include attraction, accessibility, accommodation, available packages, activities, ancillary services and appeal (Saayman, 2006:112-113; Taneva, 2009:28).

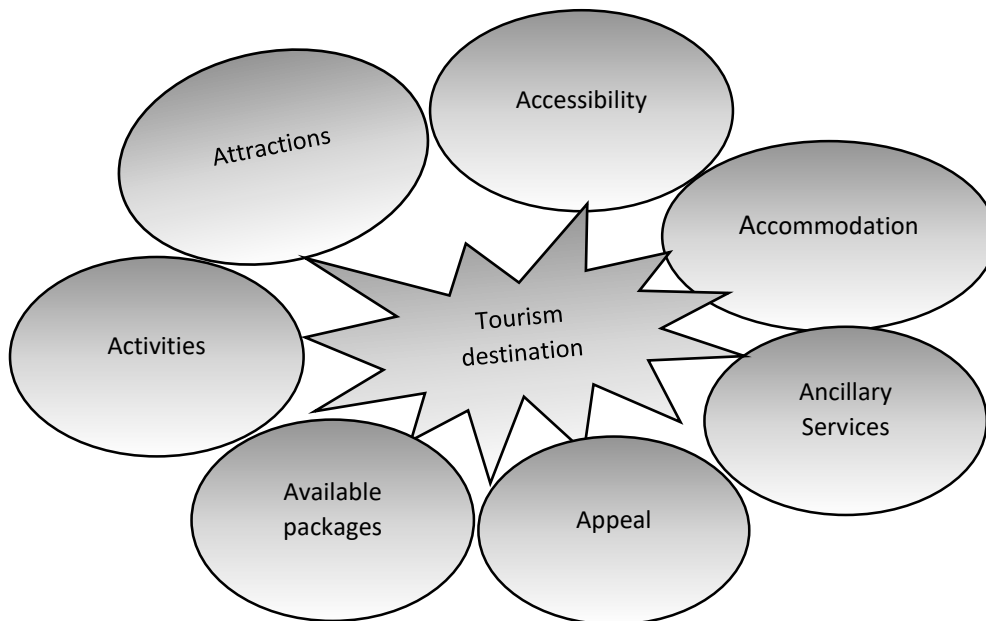


Figure 3.4: The tourism destination products (sources: George, 2008:401; Saayman, 2006:112-113; Taneva, 2009:28; Buhalis, 2000:98)

These components are planned to deliver the visitor an all-round memorable encounter of the tourism product. A detailed explanation of these components is provided below, which forms the central part of the study.

3.3.1 Attractions

The role of attractions in tourism cannot be overemphasised since it is common information that attractions are the pull factor in any destination, and without them, there would be no tourism. According to Middleton and Clarke (2001:125), the primary component, which is the driving force that most motivates and influences the tourist's destination choice, is the attraction. Since one of the characteristics of tourism products requires the tourist visiting the destination to consume the product of interest, it is this attribute that makes tourists' attraction an important component in a destination. For instance, a tourist desiring to visit the Kwa Water Falls in the CRNP will need to travel to the park where this attraction is situated to have this desire satisfied. There have been incredible commitments to the writing regarding tourist attraction (Middleton & Clarke, 2001:125; Swarbrooke, 2002:4; Lubbe, 2003:104). Middleton and Clarke (2001:125) opines that tourist attractions are basic elements for effective tourism destination advancement. So also, Benur and Bramwell (2015:213) state that tourism destinations depend on their essential tourism products (attractions) as components to drag and propel visitors to visit them. Swarbrooke (2002:4) gives us a picture of what attractions are. He clarified that attraction may be a highlight in a destination, setting or centre of activities. A tourism product in a destination is considered an attraction when it:

- Attracts visitors/day guests from inhabitant or visitor populations and is overseen appropriately.

- Provides a fun and important encounter for visitors to spend their recreation time.
- Is created to realise this potential.
- When customers' needs and wants are met
- Availability of facilities and other amenities as well as services that cater for the wants and interest of its customers.
- May/may not charge confirmation for passage (Swarbrooke, 2002:4).

Hu and Wall (2005:619) give a more precise definition by including the types of attraction. To them, the attraction may be a lasting asset that can either be natural or man-made and whose primary reason for improvement/development and administration is to draw in visitors. So also, Lubbe (2003:104) outlines all the categories of attractions into two primary types, natural attractions and man-made attractions. Natural attractions are attractions that have been created naturally without any human intervention such as the CRNP Waterfalls, while man-made attractions are attractions made by humans either to draw in visitors, for example, the theme parks. Moreover, Middleton and Clarke (2001:125) and Verma (2016:1) classified attraction into natural attractions (scene, seascape, shorelines, and climate), built attractions (memorable and/or unused townscape as in recently built resorts), purpose-built attractions such as theme parks, social attractions (introduction of history and fables composed as celebrations and exhibitions, historical centres and theatres), and social attractions (the host community way of life). Goeldner and Ritchie (2009:214) classified attraction into natural attraction, Cultural attractions, events, recreations and entertainment. Figure 3.5 gives an overview of tourist attraction, according to the classification of Goelder and Ritchie (2009:214).

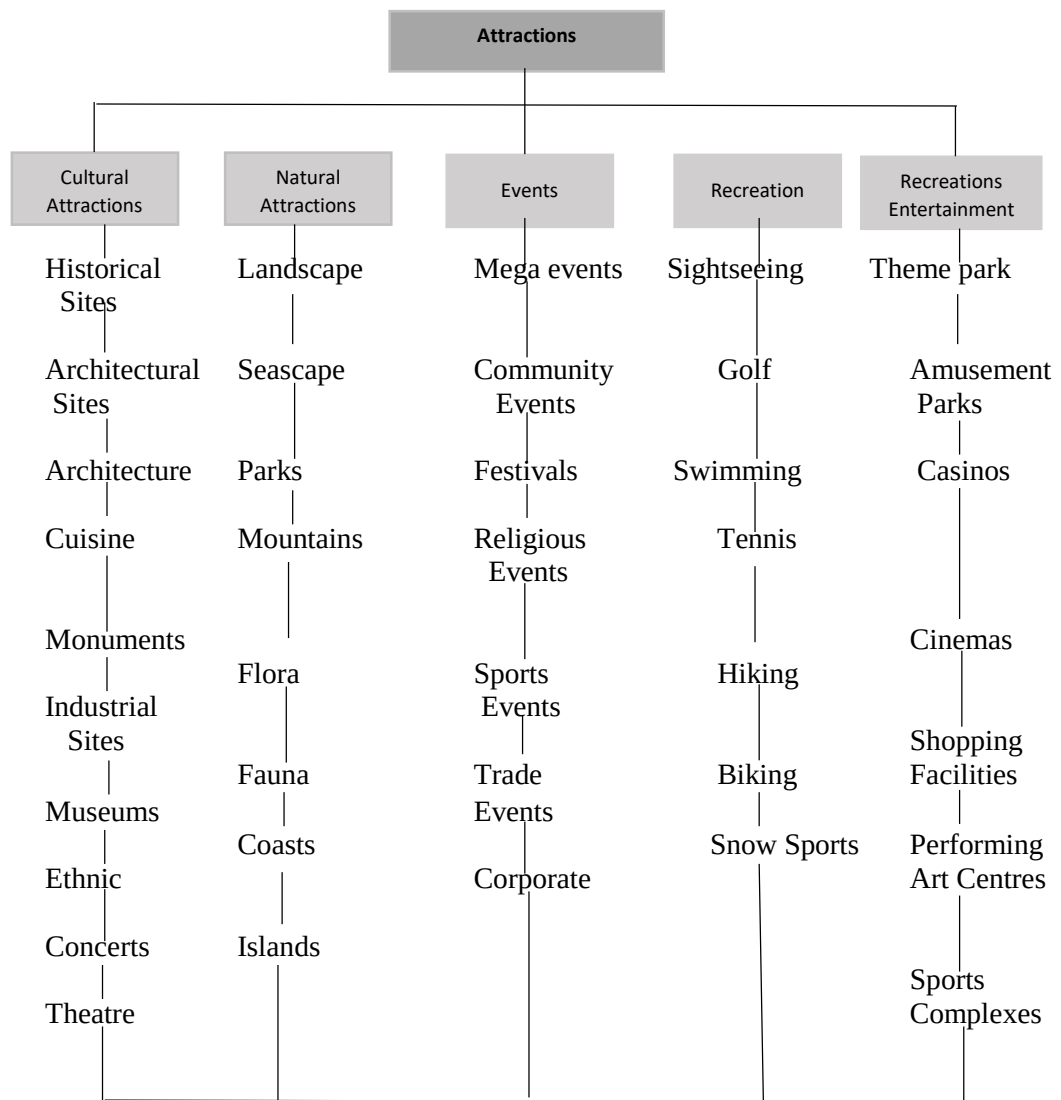


Figure 3.5: An overview of attractions (adapted from Goeldner & Ritchie, 2009:214).

In Verma (2016:1) viewpoint, businesses and other non-recreation tourists, such as visits to friends and relatives, the essential inspiration is given by their fondness and association with the destination, but the leisure attractions may still be an influence. Dwelling on the words of Garner, Ivanovic *et al.* (2009:169) reviewed another form of tourist attraction, ambient attractions such as climate, the atmosphere or vibe of a place, hospitality and other intangible characteristics of tourism resources. This is because the ambient attraction is believed to be the heart of the attraction, which develops the motive of the tourist to visit the attraction or destination.

For a better understanding of attraction, Richard (2002:3-4) used Leiper's (1990) framework of tourist attraction. Concurring with this author, attraction comprises three interconnected components: a visitor or human component, a core or central component and a marker or informative component. The primary component comprises individuals travelling in search of recreation exercises. The core alludes to location and a place where a visitor encounter is made, experienced and consumed. The informative

component or marker is an item of information within the potential core inside a visitor attraction. This attractiveness of a location creates ‘pull’ components (Richard, 2002:3-4). Richard (2002:3-4) notes that Leiper’s framework of tourist attractions has many potential uses, including understanding how destinations draw in visitors, exploring the designs and nature of attractions visited and examining the part of attractions as essential components of destination districts. The importance of tourist’s attraction has been acknowledged in many ways. They have been seen as the reason for tourism (Hu & Wall, 2005:617). Since attractions are the reason individuals travel to a place, Kassean and Gassita (2013:5) postulates that they are pull factor pulling visitors to a particular place. Swarbrooke (2002:1) affirms that tourist attractions are the core elements that constitute tourism products. Goeldner *et al.* (2009:213) conclude that the development of other tourism products such as transport, lodging and food dissemination is reliant on the presence of destination attractions.

3.3.2 Accessibility

Jubran and Bert (2008:2) and Litman (2007) refers to accessibility as all those components that influence the means, speed and comfort with which a tourist destination can be reached. He considered the following components vital in this respect: Infrastructure (such as roads, aeroplane terminals, railways and seaports), equipment (i.e. estimate, speed, and extent of open transport vehicles), operational components (counting routes serviced, recurrence of administrations and costs charged), government regulations and prescriptions (particularly those that relate to transport operations). On the other hand, Medlik (2011:4) defined accessibility as “*a function of distance from centres of population, which constitutes tourist markets, and of external transport, which enables a destination to be reached and is measured in terms of distance travelled, time taken, or the cost involved*”. The elements of accessibility according to Anuar *et al.* (2012:62-63) determines whether or not a destination can be easily reached and it also connects the tourist to the destination of interest either by air, land, sea or any other transport modes. Based on this, Gupta *et al.* (2015:50) articulate that accessibility, as one of the elements that determine a successful tourist destination, plays a vital role as it influences tourist’s destination choice especially in terms of costs and ease of access of the location. Similarly, Haarrhoff (2018:4-6) affirms that tourists’ destination image, is regularly affected by costs, motivations (ease of access), internal factors, personality, past experiences and destination marketing. A tourist presented with the choice of choosing among similar destinations will choose a more convenient and accessible one. In this regard, close destinations would be more likely to be visited over destinations providing advertising comparable products that are not close. When a tourist destination is inaccessible, such a destination cannot realise its full potential and tourists will look for alternative destinations that are accessible. How a tourist’s destination products are patronised is, to a large extent, determined by their accessibility. That is to say; an inaccessible destination can bring about loss resulting from unused tourism product by tourists, which can bring about perishability (Gupta *et al.*, 2015:50).

Accessibility is seen as an attractive feature in a destination. Kassean and Gassita (2013:3-5) explored tourists push and pull motivations to visit Mauritius as a tourist destination, particularly about the ‘push-pull’ motivations. The study recognises accessibility as the main pull factors which attract tourists to Mauritius. Anuar *et al.* (2012:60) identified infrastructure (transport system: roads, highways, airports, railways system and others) and superstructure (transport and accommodation, food services and several main places of attraction) as important components that ensure easy access to a destination that brings about the success of a tourism destination. Another important aspect of destination accessibility is a well-developed transport system for tourist convenience that will aid easy movement between attractions within the destination. Ngoka (2007) mentioned that the CRNP is easily accessible by road. This mode of transport to reach this destination may influence the motivation of the tourist to the park to experience the tourism potentials in the destination. For instance, tourist’s recognition of the inadequacy of infrastructural components to satisfy their desire and poor state of the transportation network.

The study by Ngoka and Lameed (2013:197) on the trends in use of Yankari and CRNP, identified accessibility as one of the challenges affecting the level of visitation and trends in the study destinations. Also, Crouch and Ritchie (2003:65) and Anuar *et al.* (2012:63) opine that the accessibility of a place is determined by a variety of impacts, many of which may depend on much broader political, financial and social concerns such as aircraft control and landing slots amongst others (Crouch & Ritchie, 2003:65). These influences are described by Ritchie and Crouch (2003:65) as micro and macro factors. From this point of view, Crouch and Ritchie, (2003:65) conclude that evaluating the accessibility of a destination will be a very difficult task, especially from the supply side. Kassean and Gassita (2013) suggested that the relative contrast within the time could measure accessibility, cost, distance or effort applied to visit other locations. Despite the stumbling blocks posed by these micro and macro factors towards the easy accessibility of tourism product, tourism product should be made accessible to the tourist by tourism providers and those responsible for providing tourism products.

3.3.3 Accommodation

Accommodation is seen as an essential element of the tourism product since the sort, scale and nature of accommodation accessible at the location determines the sort and scale of tourism that is conceivable at such a location (Poudel, 2013:1). Bennett (2000:53), postulate that the accommodation product is a diverse phenomenon as the product experience is broad. It includes physical components (food and drink), sensual benefits (sight, scent, sound, touch, and taste) and, additionally, mental benefits encountered as mental states of well-being, status, consolation and fulfilment. Accommodation is the biggest sub-sector in the tourism industry. With few exceptions, visitors require accommodation where

they can relax within a destination visited during their travel (Cooper *et al.*, 2008:344). Tourists cannot visit a destination without accommodation or any other camping opportunity. Poudel (2013:13) opines that accommodation plays a vital role in the life of tourists during their trip, more especially comfortable hotels and other forms of accommodation facilities. A person is bound to be attached to a place visited when he/she can also feel the warmth or appreciate the same facilities he/she has in his/her own place. He clarified further that, in the event that a guest ends up with a terrible lodging or an accommodation infrastructure, it may mar the interest or the love he has for the place.

Since accommodation is an essential need in the travel industry, Poudel (2013:14) posits that development of accommodation facilities should be made a fundamental component of a destination's overall planning procedure to achieve the development of tourism products. Ndebele (2019:26), categorised the accommodation system into commercial (hotel, motel, bed and breakfast, time-share facilities) and non-commercial (private, non-private and institutional) accommodation. This categorisation is illustrated in Figure 3.6, as shown below.

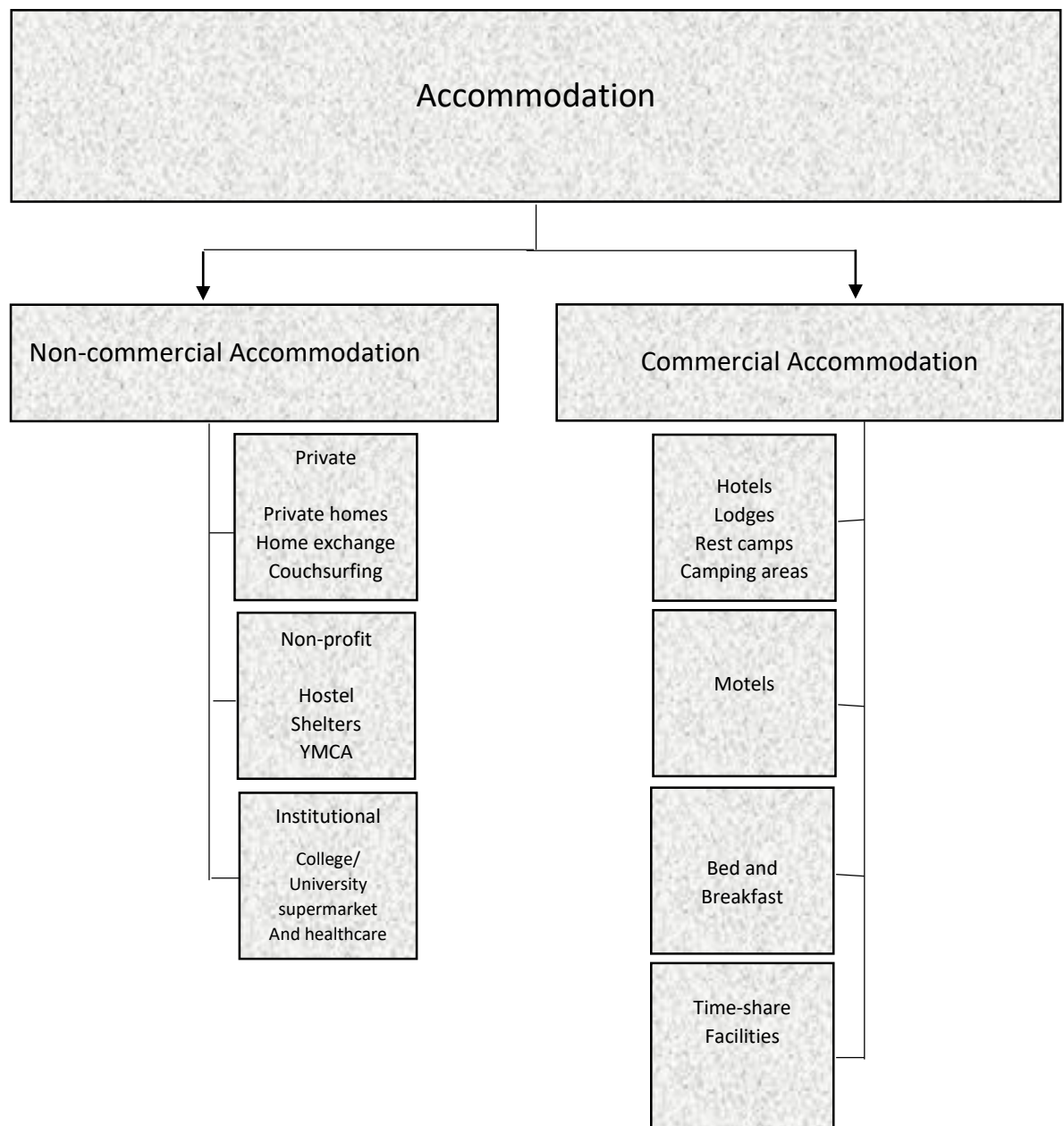


Figure 3.6: Structure of the accommodation sector (modified from Ndebele, 2019:26).

As reported by Africa Travel Information (2019:1), the CRNP can boast of lodges, guest houses and a student hostel for low budget travellers, unfortunately, these facilities are inadequate, underdeveloped to meet international standards and to draw in foreign tourists. This has greatly constrained the opportunities the reserve can offer to the host community, adjoining communities and the state in particular (Owem, 2004:15; Eneji, 2006:5) and hence the need to develop a plan to mitigate the effects these problems might have on the park.

3.3.4. Activities

Beside attractions, activity is another important reason why tourists choose to travel. The elements of activities in a destination are so important that, without them, the destination will attract few or no tourists. Hence Ritchie and Crouch (2003:60) referred to activities as ‘trip motivators’ and ‘generators of expenditure’. Every visitor experiences an attraction, but how they experience it depends on the activity they select, or that is available at their disposal. Also, a destination may offer one or more particular kinds of experience, but it all depends on the activities present. Ritchie and Crouch (2003:60) emphasise that the importance of activities as an element of a tourism product is increasing as tourists seek new experiences. Subsequently, important parties ought to brainstorm activities required by visitors and, additionally, consider preferences of the accessible products and chronicled values (Anuar *et al.*, 2012:65). Bunghez (2016:8) attest that the sum of tourism commitment to a destination's economy depends to a large extent on various components; such as the level of improvement in terms of facilities, services, capacities of the neighbourhood specialists and private investors, the level of activities displayed at the destination, the financial improvement level of the destination as well as the promotion of the destination product.

In using tourist typologies, many authors have classified ecotourist using different dimensions that are based on activities completed at a destination (Mehmetoglu, 2007:652; Anishchenko, 2016:14; Hvenegaard, 2002:7-8; Dey & Sarma, 2006:3; Weaver, 2002). While some of these typologies were based on trip indices, interactions, travel behaviours, interests, and opinion, the most remarkable among them is the one put forward by Hvenegaard (2002:7) and Dey and Sarma, (2006:31). The Hvenegaard (2002:8) study considered all tourists engaging in a particular activity or participating in certain tours to be an ecotourist. Dey and Sarma (2006:31) and Hvenegaard (2002:8) classified tourists into a four-part typology, based on the tourist's desire for familiarity and the level of involvement or preferred activities at a destination. The categories are drifter (this set of tourists is very reserved, restrictive and cautious and does not want to associate with others, so they create their activities themselves), explorers (these are tourists who are interested in exploring their environment and engaging in different activities at a destination), individual mass tourists (these are tourists engaging in activities alone or with a group of people) and organised mass tourists (the organised mass tourist loves to travel with others and enjoys activities that are organised and involve a large number of tourists with the same interest, e.g., an organised trip by the International Competence of Network Tourism in Education and Research, involving German students to South Africa and South African students of the Tourism Research in Economics, Environs and Society (TREES) to Germany for research-based activities).

Furthermore, considering that most of the tourists arrive at a destination for leisure, all activities must be centred on recreation, either to renew or to be re-created or a total vitality (Mandic, Mrnjavac & Mrnjavc, 2018:2). Mandic, Mrnjavac and Mrnjavc (2018:2) went further to categorise activities into

different specific indoors and/or outdoors activities. While some organised events and activities tend to be formal, there are still informal activities that are refreshing (e.g. hiking, fishing, picnics, barbecuing and camping). Anuar *et al.* (2012:65) categorised activities at a destination based on: first, the physical properties of the destination i.e. topography. These characteristics also consider people value and adhere to community regulations as well as providing activities that complement each other for tourists' fulfilment. Secondly, the activities ought to comprise entertainment, instructions, low or high cost, advancement, activeness, passiveness, indoor or outdoor activities, difficult or simple experiences, unwinding and family oriented activities (Anuar *et al.*, 2012:65).

Ritchie and Crouch (2003:110) stated categorically that a destination established within the concept of nature would have activities based on common conditions and the encompassing environment in which it is situated. To this end, they advise that relevant parties should use the importance of nature without jeopardising the value of the people of that community. As Anuar *et al.* (2012:65) have noted, these activities should be presented in a way that will be appealing to the tourist, and that will consider local values. For instance, activities packaged in the CRNP, which is believed to be a tropical rainforest and one of the United Nation's acclaimed biodiversity hotspots (Adamu, 2008:227), should be surrounded by nature. The natural occurrence of the waterfalls in the CRNP can be used for swimming, diving and canoeing. Other activities such as mountaineering or hiking, touring the botanical garden and herbarium, tropical rainforest experience, game viewing, bird watching, gorilla tracking, etc. abound in the park. These tourism products in the CRNP are some of the activities that tourists can engage in while on tour and these activities can also influence tourist's decision to visit this destination.

3.3.5 Ancillary services

The ancillary services are secondary to tourists needs in a destination, although not associated with tourism. Also, a destination's ancillary services are not ordinarily created with the visitor in mind, but ought to incorporate infrastructure and services that are aimed at meeting tourists' needs and wants. Smith (2012:12) defines ancillary services as *"Any additional service offered by travel and tourism providers beyond the main product or service"*. Lenoir (2011) sees it as the main source describing the 'additional' services other than main products associated with travel and tourism services. Lenoir (2011) see it as "all those facilities that tourists use when they leave their home, reach their destination and return home". The elements of such facilities include banks, telecommunications, medical services and hygiene, water, security, sewerage and waste water (Camilleri, 2017:16). Imbruglia (2012:94) affirms that all these services can improve the customer experience and have the potential not only to boost the revenue of a destination but also to present a more competitive and tailor-made offer to consumers. Ancillary services, as argued by Imbruglia (2012:98), are strategic variables through which companies achieve differentiation of the product. Jovanovic and Ilic (2016:289) assert that the infrastructural facilities at a destination are the basis of tourism development and destination's resource utilisation.

This significance can be reflected within the reality that it can contribute to expanding the production of products, service delivery and increase remote destinations' supply of tourism services. Without these facilities, as indicated by Bennett *et al.* (2005:9), many potentially attractive tourists' regions will remain underdeveloped.

The importance of the provision of ancillary services has been acknowledged. Kozak (2004:92) contends that the infrastructure at the location is vital for making return business and the tourism product ought to have appealing and well-kept amenities for the destination to stay ahead of competitors. These auxiliary services can enhance the tourist encounter as tourists have the choice to include extra paid services relating to what they are paid (salaries) and their needs for life-experiences, extravagance and fulfilling trips (Imbruglia, 2012:94). Kozak (2004) asserts that revenues generated from ancillary services account for 20% of the total revenue generated from other tourism products. This is because tourists are willing to pay for services that add value to their experience. Also, the revenue earned on the sale of these services is often higher than the actual revenue obtained from core tourism products, so they are the main source of additional income to the organisation. Since ancillary services aim at enhancing customer's experience, Imbruglia (2012:119) advises that service providers should keep their core product prices low so as not to further discourage customer demand and to optimise ancillaries to offer the right tourism product and services to the right customers at the right moment.

3.3.6 Appeal

Appeal is yet another essential element of the tourism product. This is the image, perception and preferences of a destination. Tourist perception and preference of a destination or the products available in a destination determine their destination choice (Bennett, 2000:12; Bennett *et al.*, 2005:10; Stickdorn & Zehrer, 2009:4). Tourist's travel expectations, experiences and appeal are connected in the tourist mind. Tourist destination choices are ascertained by tourists' characteristics and the attributes of the destination (Lopes, 2011:308).

3.3.6.1 Image

Image, according to Aksoy and Kiyici (2011:479) is ones' idea, thought and emotions regarding an element; a thought of all data or information received from various sources or one's intellectual motives concerning something beyond physical recognition. Haarhooff (2018:1) see destination image as "*the sum of perceptual beliefs, knowledge, affective feeling, and the total impression that a visitor holds about a destination, and it plays a critical role in ensuring customer's decision regarding a purchase in the destination choice process and the attractiveness of a destination*". Tourist destination choice is mainly examined by tourists' characteristics and the attributes of the destination (Lopes, 2011:308).

The arrangement of the image is created by the properties or attributes offered by a destination as well as the information the visitor receives regarding the destination (Molina *et al.*, 2010:723). These components are known as external components. Other components that impact image arrangement are desires, one's state of mind and past encounters (Chen *et al.*, 2011:249). These are known as internal components. From this, it is obvious that images are based on individuals' perceptions. An image perceived, as observed by Beerli and Martin (2004:663) is shaped through the image anticipated by the destination and the individual's personal desire, inspirations, earlier information, preferences, and other individual attributes. In this way, people construct their mental picture of the destination, which, in turn, results in a person's personal image of the place.

Concerning the factors that influence tourist's choice of destination to visit, Tasci (2007:23) postulates that demographic variables (e.g. age, race, a previous visit to the tourist destination, etc.) strongly impact tourist image about a destination. Similarly, Beerli and Martin (2004:624) reveals that inspiration, socio-demographic variables and encounters are critical components for the development of a tourism destination. On this basis, Govers and Go (2003:4) postulate that image is the foremost critical concept for translating the choices made by tourists, but concludes that a tourist who has not visited a destination may not have a clear image of the place. Also, they assert that tourists without prior knowledge about a destination can only be motivated to visit such a destination based on motivations and information about the destination.

3.3.6.2 Tourist perception

Perception is when a person chooses, arranges, and translates stimuli into a reasonable and consistent image of the place visited (Haarhoff, 2018:2; Rajesh, 2013:68; George, 2008). Also, it's one's insight, or will, and that may differ from one person to another and can result in either a positive or negative attitude towards a product or as a result of fluctuation in services provided. When buying a product, perception enables a consumer to decide by simply interpreting messages through their senses (Cakici & Harman, 2007:134-135). Consumers' perception of a product or services is sometimes based on value, familiarity or motivation (Bajs, 2011; Beerli & Martin, 2004:663; Cakici & Harman, 2007:134-135; Henkel *et al.*, 2006:271). Kortanje (2009) opines that tourist perception of a destination is more relevant than its products and a tourist is likely to visit a destination because of its image rather than its reality. Image is formed through tourist perceptions regarding the attributes of a destination's products and activities (Rajesh, 2013:68).

Using a tourist loyalty model as presented in Figure 3.7, Sadeh (2012:1558-1559) and Rajesh (2013:72), identified tourists' satisfaction, destination image, perceived value as well as destination loyalty as influencing the formation of the tourist's future behavioural intentions.

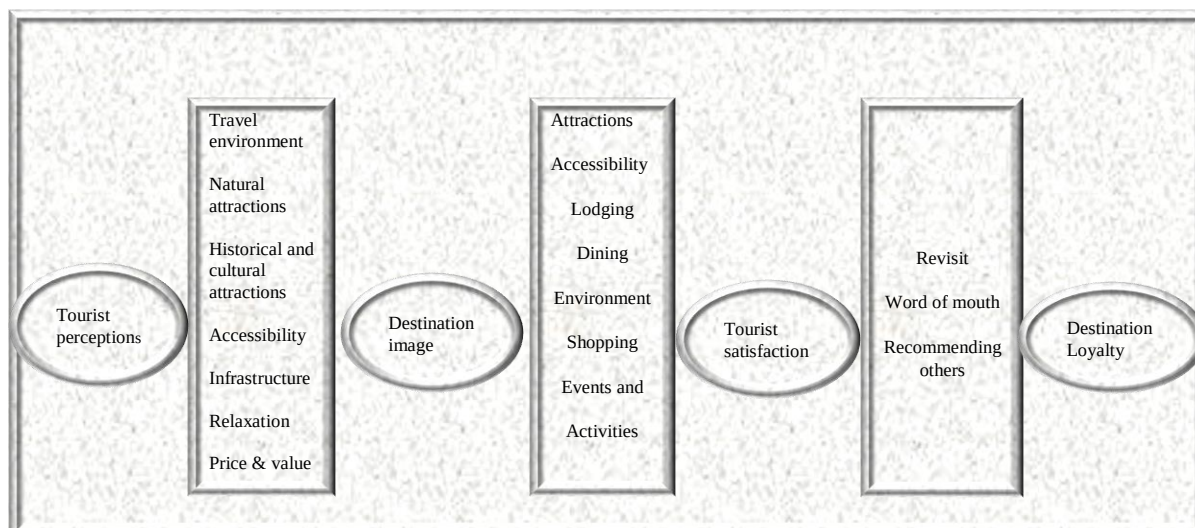


Figure 3.7: Impacts of tourist perceptions, destination image and tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty (Rajesh, 2013:73)

Figure 3.7 above shows the effect of the positive perception of a tourist for a destination. A great perception brings about a good image that leads to tourist's satisfaction and, in turn, results in destination loyalty. Customers are said to be loyal to a product/service or a destination when their patronage is regular by either repeating same-brand use despite price fluctuation, inflation or switching behaviour.

3.3.6.3 Preferences

According to Amir *et al.* (2014), tourist preferences are the decisions made by tourists with respect to the tourism destinations visited. The information of tourist preference can be used to highlight the benefits offered by these tourism destinations so that visitors want to have another visit and may suggest it to others. Destination competitiveness is decided by perceptions held in the marketplace (Pike, 2005:3). Also, the strength of the tourist preferences will determine what facilities they like in tourism destinations. Tourist preference is closely related to personal information held about a destination visited. As reported by Amir *et al.* (2014), tourist preference for a destination or a particular tourism product is determined by four motivational factors: physical inspirations (such as the quality of food or convenience, the effectiveness of a general transport system etc.), social inspirations (such as the desire to encounter the international traditions, history, legacy and culture), social inspiration (such as going to see relatives and loved ones and conferences) and fantasy inspirations (elude from the everyday schedule, relaxation, and occasion). All of the preferences, according to them, are made from the image of that specific goal. In a comparable manner, Hsu, Tsai and Wu (2009:290) express that individual preferences, like inspirations, may be both natural, reflecting person's likes and dislikes, and outward. Hsu, Tsai and Wu (2009:290-291) indicated that preference could be an uncommon case of one state of mind in which product options are compared, and the one is chosen over the other. What this implies is

that travellers need to select which location to visit and which to ignore which will, in turn, lead to the purchase of tourism products based on preferences (Hsu, Tsai & Wu, 2009:291).

Marketing also plays an important role in destination appeal. Customers' perceptions, or appeal, are mainly formed based on the following attributes as proposed by Bennett *et al.* (2005:10).

- Marketing communications
- Previous encounter of the destination
- Word of mouth suggestions from family and loved ones
- The expected tourist's prompt needs (Bennett *et al.*, 2005:10).

The expectations of tourists to the CRNP as an eco-destination may be influenced and shaped by marketing messages. As suggested by marketing research, the mode of information of various tourism products can impact customer's intention to purchase or their evaluation of a product (Munger & Grewal, 2001:186). Also, as suggested by this study, the attributes of the destination as well as the way they are presentation can influence tourist's decision making. To this end, Munger and Grewal (2001) suggest that destination marketers should highlight the price or other attributes on which these destinations have a better chance to compete. Tourist's previous experience of a destination visited plays an essential role in their destination choice. The destination phase of the tourist's experience determines one's preferences. Bennett *et al.* (2005:13) assert that the appeal and perceptions of a tourist towards a destination are shaped by previous encounters and the type of service he was offered while he was at the destination. According to Moutinho (2000:48), consumer's choice is influenced by previous encounters that are linked to their day-to-day lives.

Therefore, repeated positive experiences may lead to a very strong preference about a situation which will eventually influence their decision-making process. As already stated, the previous experience of customers concerning a destination is very important and topmost in their minds as it determines whether or not they will suggest the destination to friends and relatives or whether they are likely to have a return visit. Also, immediate tourist needs for a holiday destination and how these needs are met is, indeed, a special appeal to destinations.

3.3.7 Available packages

A tourist destination requires a good intermediary to direct tourist attention. Tourism packages are an integral component of the tourism and travel industry and their rise in popularity in recent times demonstrates that they still an attractive option for many clients in meeting their travel needs (Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), 2015:9). Destination packages can be seen as the coming together of various services and product designed by tour organisers including products and

services such as transfer and transport services, guided safari tours, lodging services, food, entertainment (theatre performance, stage show etc.), shopping, events/festivals, car hire, tourist guiding services and tours, venue and equipment hire (ASEAN, 2015:9). These tourism products and services can be packaged by various tourism businesses and presented as a single or combined product to their clients. According to Swarbrooke (2002:49), packaging manufactured goods requires external wrapping that is designed to make the product attractive to potential customers, attraction products packaging, on the other hand, requires the following elements:

- Providing information (signposts) that will assist visitors to locate the destination
- Introducing packages, facilities and other services for easy access.
- Offering the product of another company to customers as though they were part of the package (Swarbrooke, 2002:49).

Tourists buy packages for various reasons such as suggestions from friends. Packages offer value for money, for convenient planning and for the type of services and experiences offered during the tour (Akova *et al.*, 2017:115). Tourism products, as described by Middleton and Clarke (2001), represent the central part of the experience sought by tourists in a destination. But the rate at which these products can satisfy tourist needs depends on how appealing the tourist sees them. Also, the reward that these services can provide for destinations can be seen to be positive. Tourism providers are therefore encouraged to package and make available tourism products at their destinations, especially the most sought-after ones. Also of great importance is the need to develop existing tourism products to make them appealing to potential customers.

3.4 TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

Tourism product development and planning can be seen as the chief “cornerstone” for the sustainable development of a destination (Acha-Anyi, 2016:1). The need to plan and develop tourism products is necessitated, among other factors, by the complex nature of the tourism product, stakeholder’s administration and also because the consumption or provision of one tourism product leads to other services (Leask, 2010:155). From this, it can be deduced that planning will not only ensure efficient service delivery but also service quality and coordination. With good planning and stakeholder administration, a tourist location enriched with great and unique products can achieve great social and economic return for the locals, draw more tourists and arouse subsidies and attract investment and foreign exchange into the country (Tao & Wall, 2009:90). For effective tourism product development, background knowledge of the term “product” will not only assist in the determination of a viable tourism product but will also aid in the development of a sustainable product that will bring about a memorable experience.

3.4.1. What is a product?

Using marketing theory, Zhang (2011) and Sharma (2007:26) defined ‘product’ as “anything that can be offered to a market for attention, purchase and has the ability to satisfy or meet the need or want of customers”. A product can provide a solution to a problem, whether real or latent. For example, consuming an intangible product like drinking a Coca-Cola product to quench your thirst (Mckercher & Du Cros, 2002). A product is made up of the following features or one of such components like services, events, physical products experiences, and organisation (Kotler, 2000:183). Whether it is a TV show organised by Disney, a pizza (offered by Romans’) or a DVD player (presented by Sony), it is regarded as a product. Every product, irrespective of its origin, target market or marketing mix, is developed with the sole aim of meeting customer’s need (Kotler, 2000:183). The definition presented above by Kotler and Turner emphasises the sense of ‘satisfying customer needs’. Through the marketing of destination products and services, and providing memorable experiences, customers’ needs and wants could be satisfied Kotler (2000:181). People purchase a product for different reasons but it is important to know that the major reason that people buy products is because of the benefits they provide or its ability to solve their problems rather than for the purpose of the product itself. Based on this, Zhang, (2011:11) concludes that, rather than concentrating on a particular product that may lead to failure, attention should rather be given to the benefits that a product offers.

According to Mckercher and Cros (2002), a product is made up of four parts; the core, expected, augmented and potential as illustrated in Figure 3.8.

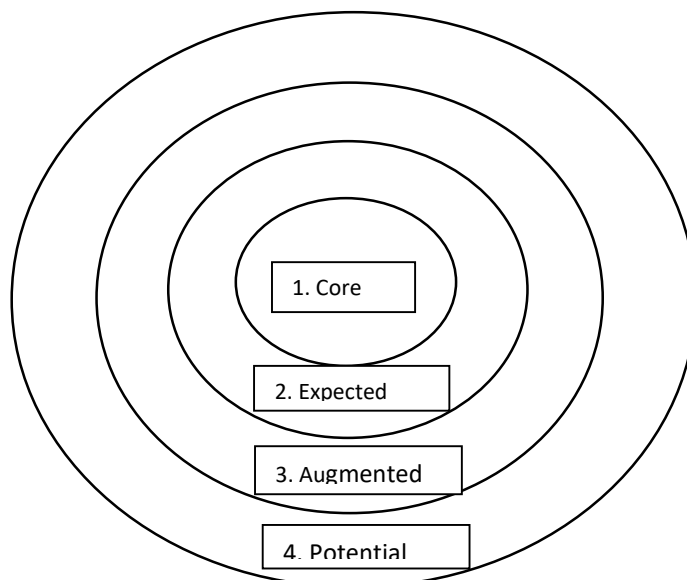


Figure 3.8: The four levels of a product (sources: Smith, 2001:16; Kotler, 2000:184, Swarbrooke, 2002:45).

The core product is the tangible and intangible product without which there will be no product (Smith, 2001:14). To Zhang (2011:11-12), marketers of core products need to consider whether the customers' desires are met by the advantages provided by the product. This is because customers patronise products that offer solutions to their main or core challenges and meet their expected needs and desires. Until customers' expectations are satisfied, the core product cannot be sold (Smith, 2001:15). For an eco-destination, the expected products could be: natural environment and endemic wildlife (flora and fauna). McNeill (1999) considers the core and expected products as the 'must-haves'. To him, the core products do not motivate the sale of a product but can demotivate its sale when they are absent (McNeill, 1999). When products are augmented, they give the producer a competitive advantage and also distinguish one product from another (Smith, 2001:16). The additional shape or form derived from augmented products (tangible products) helps to facilitate easy customer satisfaction and can give customers even more than that with which they are familiar or used to receiving (Zhang, 2011:12; Smith, 2001:15).

According to Kotler (2000:185), what a company adds to its services or product such as packages, services customer advice as well as other services, is what brings about competition. The potential product, which is the final component is the potent feature of the product in totality. As suggested by Levitt, the content of the potential product is what is needed to keep potential buyers. It all relies on the changing condition of the product and not just on the knowledge of competitors or consumers (Smith, 2001). The last two products are seen by McNeil (1999) to combine the advantages and parts of the product to consumers' desires and needs.

Products are judged by customers based on three critical components: services mix and quality, price appropriateness and product features and quality (Kotler, 2000:183). Based on this, Kotle (2000:181) advised that products' features must be set at the appropriate level by marketers so that customers' needs and wants are met while ensuring that they derive the benefits and qualities that are inherent in the core, augmented expected and potential products. Middleton *et al.* (2009:47) distinguish tourism product/services from manufactured goods, as presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Distinguishing tourism product/services from manufactured goods

GOODS	SERVICES
Are manufactured	Are performed
Made in premises not normally opened to customers (separable)	Performed on the producer's premises, often with full customer participation (inseparable)
Delivered to customers where they live	Customers travel to places where services are delivered
The right to use at ones convenience is conveyed by simply purchasing the goods	Purchase conveys the temporary right of access at a prearranged place and time.
Goods can be inspected before sale since it is intangible	Services are intangible at the point of sale; often cannot be inspected (other than 'virtually').
Stocks of a product can be created and held for future sale	Perishable and therefore cannot be held for future sale.

Adapted from Middleton *et al.* (2009:47).

A product is the essence of any business while its development gives the product an augmented or a polished look.

3.4.2 Tourism product development

For two decades, the circumstances around dealing with the management of tourism have intensified. The question now is, what is needed, product development or management? Studies regarding the subject matter, suggest that product development is the answer; that product development will be based on the needs, wants and aspirations of potential tourists and market segments (Bhuiyan, 2013:748; Kozhevnikova, 2016:7; Acha-Anyi, 2016:5; Masip, 2006:3). The importance of product development has been acknowledged. Bhuiyan (2013:748) considers it as an essential process that ensures an increase in the variety of products, enhances tourism experience, multiplies profit, encourages customers' loyalty and creates a competitive advantage for the company. Smith (2001) sees it as a responsibility necessary to meet the needs and wants of customers ever-changing desires as well as a guarantee that ensures a long-term profitability of the organisation. The New Product Developer's Handbook also suggests that product development should be a comprehensive process that is part of the ongoing development activity of the whole company. The process involves a simultaneous idea development, conceptualising and experiences (Osmund & Sunday, 2010).

According to COMCEC (2013:1), tourism product development is "the process by which the resources of a destination are shaped to meet the needs and wants of both international and domestic customers. This covers everything from man-made facilities or attractions to activities requiring varying levels of

physical input and organised events such as festivals and conferences” (COMCEC, 2013:1). According to Balaji and Venkatesan (2015:172), before a product is developed, it must meet certain product development standards. There are six standards expected of a tourism company/destination to meet when developing or taking decision-related to tourism product development. They are summarised as follows:

3.4.2.1. Safety and security

Security, according to Demir *et al.* (2005:1) is seen as one of the essential requirements of the environment, cultural, technical, economic and social system and should be treated as such and part of the system development that may relate to society life and on which the security life of a country, state, community, an organisation, family or a person depends. A tourism product must be safe for use, and must not pose a danger to the life and integrity of the tourists (Balaji & Venkatesan, 2015:173; Eraqi, 2006:477). As reported by UNWTO, due to natural disasters and terrorism, most of the facilities in a tourist’s destinations operate at a loss. So, to preserve and secure the tourism resources Uzun *et al.* (2014:3) advise that tourism providers and managers should develop products and services that will not only meet the needs of tourists but also meet security standards.

3.4.2.2 Hygiene

Jovanovic *et al.* (2015:375) recognised high health and hygiene standards, amongst others, as one of the factors affecting the travel and tourism industry and its competitiveness in any country. The complementary relationship between tourism and health needs the presence of an increased level of sanitation and hygiene, good quality of drinking water and medical care. Tourist health may be at risk if the hygiene standard is not satisfactory (Claver-Cortes *et al.*, 2007:665). An accommodation facility, whether a high or low-class establishment, must be safe and clean. As established by law, the standards for food safety must be met at all times and in all food outlets, eateries, fast food outlets or restaurants (Balaji & Venkatesan, 2015:172).

3.4.2.3 Accessibility

Tourism products must be made accessible to all who wish to engage in tourism activities regardless of their race, colour, natural or acquired differences and also for people living with disabilities. In this regard, every barrier to service delivery must be eliminated (Balaji & Venkatesan, 2015:173; Eraqi, 2006:477).

3.4.2.4 Transparency

Transparency in service delivery is essential in meeting the expectations of customers and for consumer protection. It involves providing services to customers truthfully and with sincerity, especially on the prices of the product. There must be sincerity about the price (i.e. what is part of the product or service offered and what is not included in the product) (Eraqi, 2006:477). Muganda *et al.* (2013:53) opine that participation of the locals in the development of tourism issues will not only enhance accountability and transparency but will also enable them to guide their community assets and help them tackle the issue of embezzlement of public funds.

3.4.2.5 Authenticity

Authenticity is measured by the way that customers' self-image and the services rendered are in agreement (Kristav & Diegel, 2017:52). Since customer's major concerns are on how satisfying, engaging and the level of memories or experiences derived from a product, inconsequential products and services will no longer be enough. Based on this, originality, authenticity and sincerity will be the order of the day (Gilmore & Pine, 2007). Furthermore, Gilmore and Pine, categorised customers' sensibility into four parts: a) Availability: Purchasing according to the reliability of the supply. b). Cost: buying a product with regards to how cheap it is. c). Quality: buying according to the product performance. d). Authenticity: buying with regards to one's perception (Sundbo & Sorensen, 2013:29).

Authenticity distinguishes one product from another and might diminish or lose its link when in a place that is different from its original setting of cultural or natural background (Balaji & Venkatesan, 2015:173). Nevertheless, the destination or product can still be regarded as an attraction and still be assessed from the viewpoint of quality regarding production, delivery, sales or marketing. An example of a quality artificial tourism product that creates an authentic image of its own is a theme park where cultures of faraway lands are represented. Also, the needs and expectations of tourists can be met by simply adapting to the situations on which the product is developed (Balaji & Venkatesan, 2015:173; Eraqi, 2006:477).

3.4.2.6 Harmony

This entails the peaceful co-existence of the biotic and abiotic components of the ecosystem that bring about sustainability. As reported by UNWTO, harmony involves managing the socio-economic and environmental impact and also ensuring that the quality of the tourism product and services are maintained (Balaji & Venkatesan, 2015:173). There can be no sustainability without quality. Development, therefore, should be carried out through a comprehensive system that is in harmony with the components of the ecosystem (Eraqi, 2006:477).

3.4.3 Product development processes

The product development process provides an easy and flexible structure that guides the development of ideas from an abstract concept to a more refined product solution (Reeder, 2002:2). Product development, according to Reeder (2002:2), involves *“the development of new product ideas and product selection broadening but also to small improvements to existing products”*. Product development processes requires taking into consideration how the customer sees the place visited. This is because tourists visit a destination for various reasons and, if their needs are not met, the tourist might not recommend it to others or visit the destination again. All needs and wants of tourists must be met by the destination including the tourism product and the market. A knowledge regarding tourist perception of a destination according to Gupta (2013:43) can assist with product development and improve the decision making and planning processes. During the determination process, tourist perception can be used in developing a destination to attract more tourists or for the sustainability of the destination. Meeting tourist major needs and wants depends on how the destination is designed (Gupta, 2013:43). There are eight stages in product development as demonstrated by Bhuiyan, (2013:749), Kotler, (2000:163) and Kotler and Armstrong, (2010). They are idea generation, idea screening, concept development and testing, market strategy and business analysis, product development and testing, test marketing and commercialisation. The stages are illustrated in Figure 3.9 below.

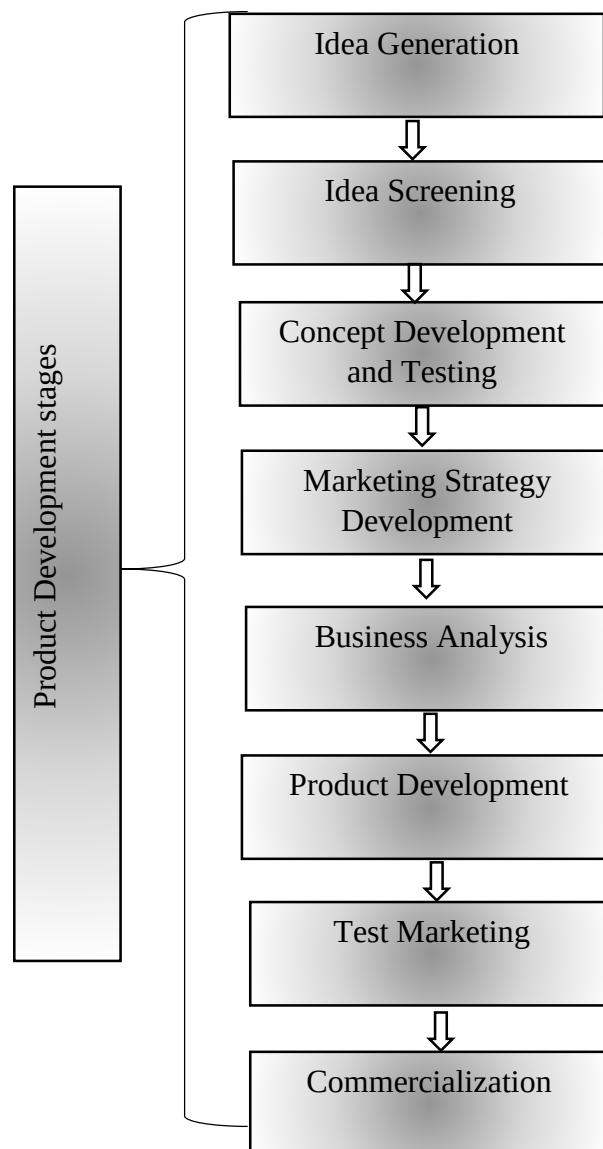


Figure 3.9: Product development stages (sources: Kozhevnikova, 2016:11; Ebarefimia, 2014:28).

3.4.3.1 Idea generation

According to Business Dictionary (2019), idea generation is “*the process of creating, developing, and communicating ideas which are abstract, concrete, or visual*”. It involves creating and developing an idea, concept introduction, process development as well as the actualisation of the concept. The process of product development begins with idea generation. Idea generation (ideation) is essential in product marketing and design and aids in effective creation and product advertisement (Toubia, 2006:411). At this stage, all ideas and opinions are brought together for examination. Both external and internal information and sources are necessary at this stage. For instance, employees, customers, market trends and promotions as the clarity of the product is essential. The characteristics of the idea are achieved through the coming together of different ideas (Toubia, 2006:412). In Hauser’s (2007) opinion and ideas

are created as a result of customers' desires which were not met by the firm's employees. To generate the creative ideas required for innovation, Howard *et al.* (2008:1025) assert that the preferred technique is still traditional brainstorming, which is effective for both idea generation and evaluation.

Smith (1998:111) identifies 172 idea-generating techniques, although only a few of these techniques are used frequently, such as brainstorming. The use of idea generation techniques in product development helps to encourage and fashion new thought, create more ideas and spaces for a solution (Miller, Jones & Bailey 2009:3). In the words of Masip (2006:2), idea development in tourism must take into consideration a guideline for product development; the planning processes must be controlled and determined together with an adequate destination marketing strategy.

3.4.3.2 Idea screening

Idea screening comes after idea generation and can be seen as the first assessment stage in the process of product development. It entails getting rid of poor ideas and the modification of the remaining ideas into product concept. This is done to compress the number of ideas available. This stage also requires identifying and ascertaining the product characteristics and the benefits that a customer stands to receive from the product (Hart *et al.*, 2003:24). The need for idea screening is borne by the fact that there are so many product ideas in most businesses, hence the need to choose which idea to pursue to achieve business value becomes a critical activity in any organisation (Koen *et al.*, 2001:51). Martinsuo and Poskela (2011:896) argued that choosing the correct concept and ideas for a product is a prerequisite in product development. The risk of developing a poor product concept can be avoided at the idea screening level (Martinsuo & Poskela, 2011). There are different dimensions to idea screening, as proposed by Martinsuo and Poskela (2011:899). These can be summarised into the following idea evaluation models: structured scoring models, unstructured question list, anchored scales, mathematical models and computer-based expert systems (Martinsuo & Poskela, 2011:899).

According to a recent study on idea screening, the manner in which ideas are screened plays an essential role in decision making (Magnusson, Netz & Wastlund, 2014:322). Also, as Komppula, (2001:9) indicated, the key strategy for tourism product idea screening is a well-defined product and service concept that will become the end product of the development service.

3.4.3.3 Concept development and testing

Concept development and testing, according to Peng and Finn (2008:650), is "*a variety of marketing research-based approaches employed to ascertain product marketability or service idea before its actual development*". Concept testing can be considered the most important stage in the process of product development. Product concept can be seen as an extended form of the product initial idea, presented in a manner that a consumer understands. It can also be seen as a crucial stage in the

development of a new product. (Peng & Finn, 2008:649). In product testing a concept, as proposed by Hauser (2007), concept development and testing are used to examine potential customers with the new product. The evaluation is based on a technique that assesses how essential a customer's desire may be in order to be addressed by the new product. Buyers' interest, as well as their discontent with the services or product offered, are used to, and dissatisfaction with currently available products are used to prioritise ideas needed for further evaluation, funding and testing (Hauser, 2007). The main motive of concept testing is the recognition of poor concepts for easy elimination, identification of potential improvements to the concept and to develop further the original product (Craw & Di Benedetto, 2000).

There are three types of concept test as identified by Peng and Finn (2008:650). They are concept screening, concept generation and concept examination. Concept testing happens at the early product development stages, especially during decision-making processes and is expected to be cheap and fast (Lees & Wright, 2004:389).

3.4.3.4 Market strategy

Next step in product development is creating a marketing strategy suitable for the introduction of the new product into the market. The primary objective of a market strategy is to create value for the customer and ensure a good relationship between the customer and the service provider (Mahmutllari, 2014:18). To achieve this, a marketing strategy is necessary. Middleton *et al.* (2009:181) defined market strategy as a careful planning examination of an organisation's work place, its internal strength and its rivals to create a convenient plan that will bring about a competitive advantage for the company and the maximisation of the available resources of the organisation. To Bennett, Jooste and Strydom, (2005:216) market strategy is a means through which a company finds attractive opportunities in the market and also develops market strategies to pursue the opportunities that have been identified. The marketing strategy enables a company to define which customers to serve and how well to serve them. The company can define its customers through segmentation and targeting and then differentiate and position for better service (Kotler *et al.*, 2013:51-53). Marketing strategy comprises three basic parts as proposed by Middleton *et al.* (2009). The first part identifies the target market, product aim and its part on the market, the first-year marketing budget is identified in the second part. The last part encompasses the marketing mix and profit goals. Middleton *et al.* (2009:184) proposed seven key stages necessary for developing market strategies (see figure 3.10 below). The stages of a strategic marketing plan as proposed by Isoraite (2009:120) requires proposing a market for your product and segmenting your market for easy identification of the target.

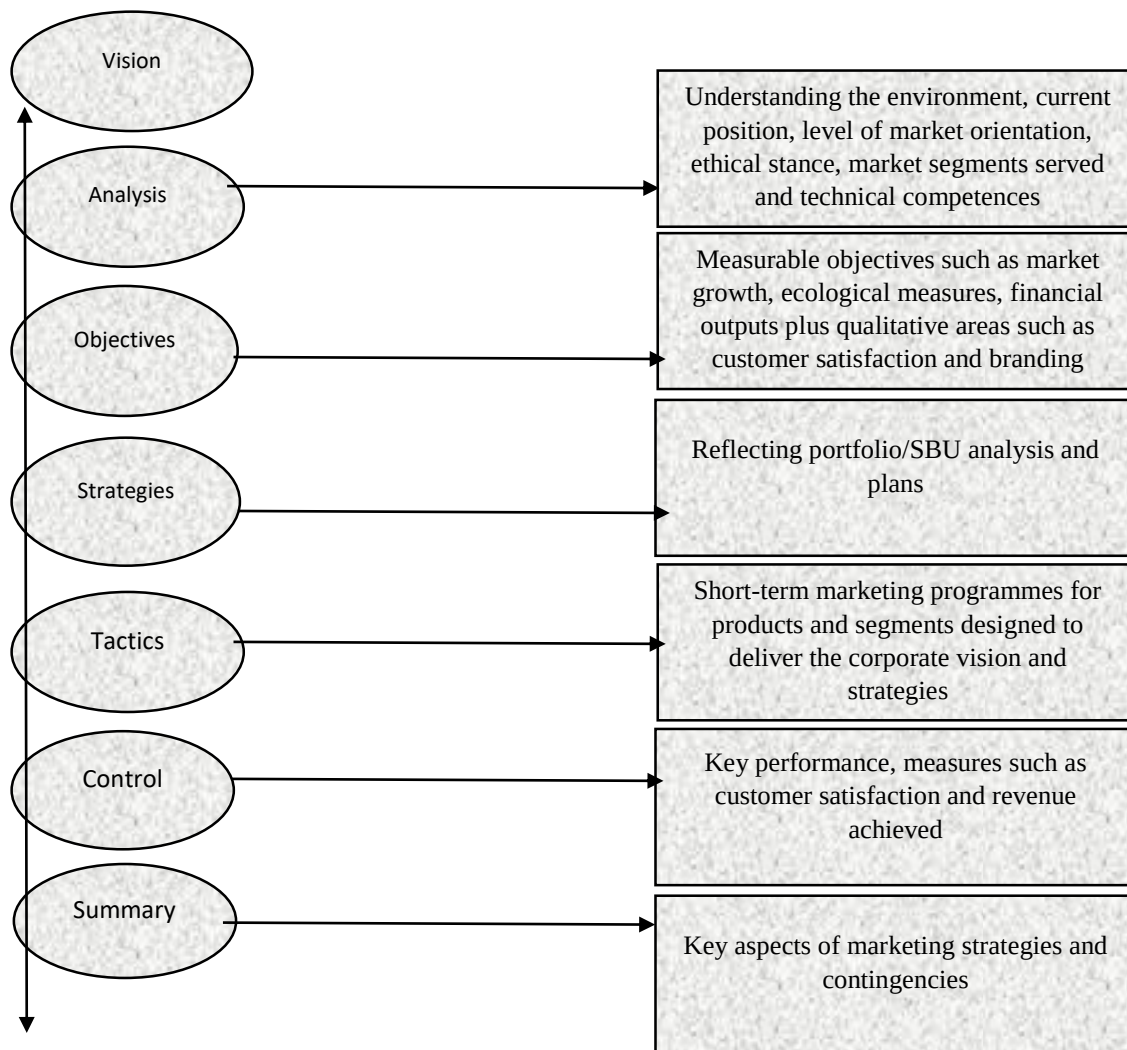


Figure 3.10: Market strategies development stages (sources; Middleton *et al.*, 2009:184; Isoraite, 2009:120).

Every strategic planning event of an organisation is founded on its vision and mission (why the company exists, what the company believes in and the competitive position and distinctive competence). The planning begins with a careful investigation of any factor/s outside the organisation that may negatively affect the business. This is followed by a procedure and objectives that will define the objectives of all the organisation's standards and all the results necessary to move the company to the next level. In marketing strategy, customers' satisfaction is a priority. This is achieved simply by using means or procedures that are aimed at increasing sales, maintaining a competitive product and for the promotion of the organisation's products. The final stage of the plan (control) requires monitoring the proposed plans as they proceed and adjusting where necessary (Middleton, 2009:184-194). When applying strategic marketing in tourism services, Tsiotsou (2012:xxxiv) suggested that tourism firms need to recognise those factors influencing their marketing strategies such as staff competencies and resources available, nature of their competition as well as the life cycle of the industry. The company should also ensure the market strategies' development stages, as described in figure 3.10, are followed accurately.

3.4.3.5 Business analysis

Before a product is developed, there are important aspects of the product that must be taken into consideration. First, a draft sample of the product, which is also known as a prototype is built to test ideas for its layout, its flow in the system as well as its behaviour. However, an examination is made to obtain more information regarding the remaining ideas, product cost, profit as well as product comparison (Durmaz *et al.*, 2017:138). According to Kenntoft and Barrios (2008:17), the decision on whether to develop a business concept into a product is made after an assessment or analysis of the business. The goal of business analysis is centred on making a profit; however, social responsibilities may be included. The selling price will be based on customer's feedback, the volume of sales, profit, breakeven point and competition, must be defined by management. (Jossy, 2019:2).

The stages necessary for business analysis as proposed by Kenntoft and Barrios (2008:18) and presented in Figure 3.11 include prediction of revenue, estimation of cost, projections of profit, assessment of risks and sales cannibalisation.

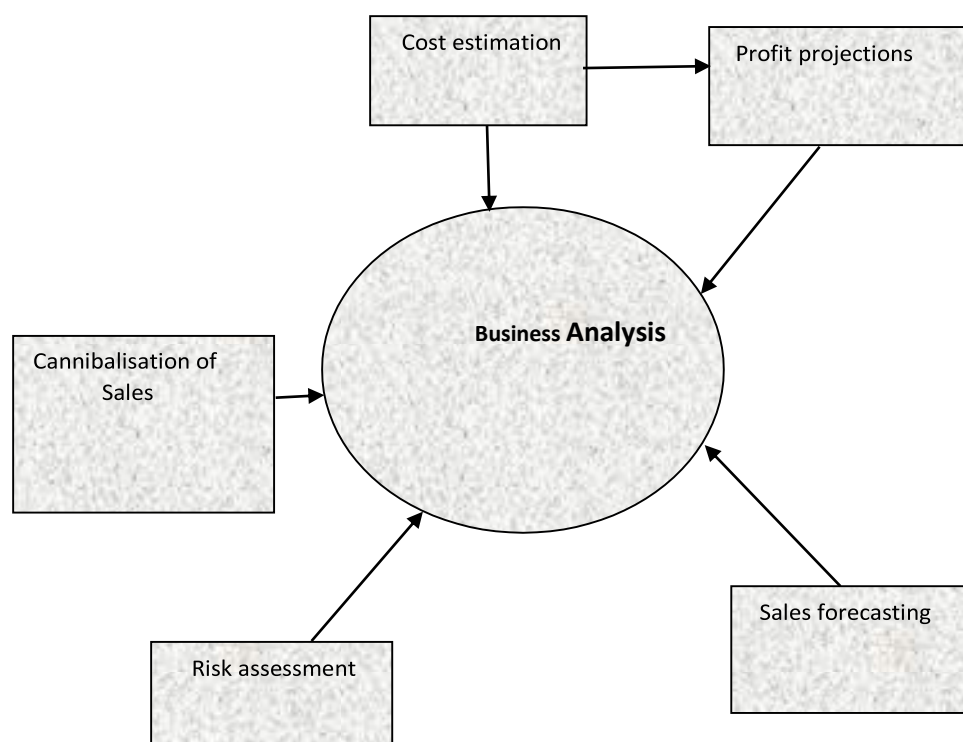


Figure 3.11: Concepts in the business analysis stages (adapted from Kenntoft & Barrios, 2008:18).

Sales forecasting is an essential planning procedure for every business. Business sales are forecast through product demand, estimation of feasible market shares as well as a consideration of forecast among departments. Profit projections enable business managers to communicate information regarding the valuation of the businesses. This can be achieved through a break-even analysis of new products that need to be sold to make a profit. Risk analysis entails investigating the outcome and taking into

account both the magnitude of the effects (high or low risk, future risk and internal risk) and the probability of those outcomes. Product cannibalisation is the extent to which one product's sales are at the expense of other products offered by the same firm. Cost estimation refers to the prediction and determination of quantity within a definite domain of the cost necessary to produce goods or service delivery (Kenntoft & Barrios, 2008:19-23).

The evaluation and analysis of a business, according to Kozhevnikova (2016:12), help to determine the cost of products and also assist in projecting profits.

3.4.3.6 Product development and testing

Tourism is a customer-service industry that relies extensively on local resources for its product. Certain resources can be obtained locally and developed to become a world-class attraction (Pillai *et al.*, 2010:2). A product is considered ready for development into a physical product if it passes the business analysis stage. This involves making sure that all ideas related to the product are transformed into a tangible market offering (Claessens, 2015:2). Product development involves the creation, testing and refining of one or more physical products to attract new customers and retain existing customers (Filieri, 2013).

Product development in the tourism industry, according to Komppula (2001:8) should follow a structured planning framework. Product development, according to Kuka (2018:1), requires extended testing to determine customer acceptance or otherwise. Products are developed based on a company's resources as a limiting factor. This is achieved by developing a plan and then the process is tested by employees and relatives of the company (Komppula, 2001:13). The testing of a tourism product is usually done by employees of the tourism organisation, working as agents or mediators of the tourism product who are called to test the product after the customer's formal tourist product have been tested and created (Komppula, 2001:13).

3.4.3.7 Test marketing

This is another important aspect of the product development process. Market testing is very important as it allows for promotion, product packaging, product positioning and pricing and distribution and the effectiveness of sales procedures in actual market circumstances (Durmaz, Erol & Dogan, 2017:136). Product testing requires considerable cost. However, it can assist in projecting the market and any likelihood of future problems and how the product can be enhanced before launching the final version into the market. This stage eliminates any expenses that may arise in the future. Next is the introduction of the product into a genuine space in order to know the nature of the market as well as understand how consumers perceive the product as well as how they purchase the product (Kotler, 2000:167). Also, by randomly offering a sample of the product to your target market, test marketing is performed which

now allows the company to critically evaluate the reception of the product before the introduction of the product into the market (Rouse, 2019:1). It also displays essential ideas associated with the development of a new product. Due to the intangible nature of tourism products, George (2011:34) proposes that marketers of tourism products should make it saleable through visible physical aspects, i.e. creating an image in the minds of tourists of what to expect at the destination. Also, during this stage, the major elements of the encounter are tested and the key information regarding the product revealed for the commercialisation of an appealing tourism product (Komppula, 2001:18).

3.4.3.8 Commercialisation

Commercialisation is the last stage of the product development processes. It is simply the introduction of the new product into the market. Before the product is introduced to the market, the following four decisions must be taken into consideration: When is the most suitable time to launch the product? Where can they be introduced? Which part of the market to approach and how best to present the product to consumers (Kuka, 2018:1). The commercialisation phase starts after the market has been tested. It involves the final product development, modification, preparation, and ends with the introduction of the product to the market (Brettel *et al.*, 2011:253). As argued by Sun *et al.* (2017:124), tourism product commercialisation is the key to business function transformation and assessment of the satisfaction and behavioural intentions of the tourist product.

Product development generally involves first generating ideas that are subject to screening. The idea then progresses to the various stages as illustrated, until the product is developed, tested and then launched into the market. When tourism products are developed sustainably, it can assist a destination in realising a worldwide recognition as a tourist destination, which will, in turn, lead to the economic, social and environmental development of the destination as a result of an increase growth and development.

3.5 CRNP TOURISM RESOURCES

Natural resources as well as other community assets as reported by United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) are the major components that make up the essential resource base for Local Economic Development (LED) and job creation, particularly with respect to tourism development (Acha-Anyi, 2016:1). For a comprehensive understanding of tourism resources and for the possibility of investigating CRNP tourism resources, there is need for background knowledge of the term ‘tourism resource’. According to Cooper and Hall (2008:117), tourism resource is “*the component of the environment (physical or social) which either attracts the tourist or provides the infrastructure necessary for the tourist experience*”. In addition, Cooper and Hall (2008:117), identified the following four types of resources necessary to enhance and draw tourists to a place:

- Resources in the shape of physical and social attractions to motivate people to visit.
- Resources in the shape of infrastructures and services, such as human assets, that enable them to remain at the destination.
- Resources in the shape of facilities and administration that makes the destination accessible as well as the accessibility of the different attractions, facilities and services inside the destinations.
- Information availability, so the customer knows about the location and its assets (Cooper & Hall, 2008:117).

According to Hall and Lew, (2009:35) what constitutes tourism resources based on market perspective is based on consumers' desires, motives and interests as well as the technological, economic, social and cultural circumstances from which they originate. A destination's potentials are said to be tourism resources when the experiences sought by tourists are met either directly or indirectly (Hall & Lew, 2009:35).

The Oban division of the CRNP, lying in the south and east loop of Cross River State and extending along the Cameroon border is a wildlife park suitable for ecotourism and wildlife conservation and also one of the oldest rainforests on the continent having a great interrelationship with the environment and organisms (Adetola, 2017:213). The park is rich in natural resources that nature lovers will find appealing. The waterfalls in the CRNP lie in a small, sloppy channel close to the headwaters of the Kwa River. The foot of the waterfall with a deep plunge, found beneath the rainforest's thick canopy serves as a natural swimming pool for swimming, diving and canoeing (Cross River State National Park, 2016:1). There is an abundance of fauna resources in the park which include 18 primate species out of 23 that are known to occur in the country and also representing 78% of the entire primates ever recorded in the country as well as the Cross River State gorilla, once thought to be extinct (Olory, 2018:309). Other species of endemic concern include the native Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee, forest elephants, the putty-nosed monkey, forest buffalo, Nile monitor lizard, royal python and a host of others including about 165 species of aquatic resources found in the fresh waters of the park (Olory, 2018:309). Also existing in the park are floral resources. Olory (2018:312) recorded a total of 1 568 plant species in the Oban division alone of which 77 are native to the country and one probably new to science. Several vulnerable and medicinal plants abound in the park. The *Anceistocladus korupensis* and *Prunus Africana* are important plant species with medicinal value existing in the park. While the former is suspected of having a potent ingredient for the cure of the fearful HIV/AIDS, the latter is believed to have potency for the cure of cancer (Ofem *et al.*, 2012:551; Olory, 2018:312).

Aside from the natural resources of the park, man-made attractions have been built to meet the pleasure desires of tourists visiting the reserve. The park is furnished with an arboretum (a botanical garden devoted to trees), picnic garden, lodges and a network of nature trails. There is also a moderately built

guest house (4-bedroom) complete with water supply, TV facilities as well as electricity. A 20-bed space hostel has also been developed for low budget travellers and for students (Africa Travel Information, 2019:1). The CRNP also offers other packages such as tour guide, armed ranger escorts and interpretation services available on request for tourists touring the reserve. Other activities like mountaineering or hiking, touring the botanical garden and herbarium, tropical rainforest experience, game viewing, bird watching, gorilla tracking etc. abound in the park in an unspoiled environment that ecotourists and nature lovers will find appealing (Ngoka, 2013:4; Williams, 2008:223).

Based on the analysis of this literature, CRNP and its pristine natural and man-made resources can inarguably be termed ‘the pride of the state and the country in general’. This resource has the potential of contributing to national development and improving the well-being of the locals if given national attention. As suggested by Ofem *et al.* (2012:554), when these resources are efficiently utilised, it can assist with the conservation and preservation of biodiversity which has considerable ecological, socio-cultural, political, and economic importance.

3.6 BARRIERS TO TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA AS WELL AS CRNP

Nigeria, as the giant of Africa, is endowed with both natural and human potentials that, when harnessed, can transform the country’s economy and contribute immensely to foreign exchange earnings, and can reduce the over-dependence on the country’s oil resources (Ojo *et al.*, 2014). The potential of Nigeria’s ecosystem such as land reforms, caves, hills, waterfalls, water tributaries, fauna and flora species, artefacts, culture and other natural and man-made features, are the basic requirements for tourism development (Bankola, 2002:71). Hall, (2008:616) emphasised that the extent to which these potentials are explored for the benefit of the people depends on the involvement of the community and the tourists and also how sustainably these resources are produced and utilised. As reviewed by Bankole (2002:77), due to government negligence and the inability to make available the requirements needed for the development of these resources, coupled with other challenges seeking immediate attention, Nigeria has not been able to fully explore her tourism potentials. Nigeria faces some major constraints to tourism development such as religious beliefs, security concerns, political instability, poor maintenance of tourist sites, and poor implementation of policies amongst others.

Ezenagu, (2018:5) in his study, ‘Challenges of Tourism Promotion in Nigeria: The case of Religion’ identified political upheaval and religion as some of the factors posing a serious threat to tourism development in Nigeria. As a motivating factor for tourism, one would wonder how religion stands to threaten the development of tourism. Ezenagu (2018:5) argued that religion’s threat to tourism comes from its ability to stimulate certain negative actions in people, instigate violence either within a particular faith or pitting one faith against another. Security is another factor of serious concern.

Criminal activities in Nigeria can potentially impact on tourism development. For instance, the dreaded Islamic group activities in the northern part of the country known as the 'Boko Haram Sect' tend to discourage tourists from participating in tourism activities, especially eco-related tours. Tourists are attracted to what is interesting, and security problems put them off. International tourists are discouraged when their countries issue travel warnings on appealing events that are happening in Nigeria (Orekoya, 2018:16). The poor maintenance culture of tourists' destinations can also be said to hinder tourism development in the country. Orekoya (2018:16) opines that destinations' attractions, if well maintained, can generate huge revenue for the country but, due to lack of quality maintenance, these attractions are in a dilapidated state. Other problems as identified by (Yusuf, 2014:15-16) affecting tourism development in Nigerian national parks include; poor planning, corruption, poor means of transport, poor government policies on tourism, technology, information dissemination and poor globalisation of the Nigerian tourism industry. Also, issues such as inadequate funding, lack of equipment and poor salaries for staff, amongst others as identified by Meduna *et al.* (2009:66) are challenges affecting biodiversity conservation and tourism development in the Kainji Lake National Park.

The CRNP is not left out as the park also faces development challenges despite being considered and acclaimed by the UN as a biodiversity hotspot and also seen as the wealthiest tropical rainforest in West Africa and as the last surviving rain forest is found in Nigeria. Some of the problems identified as the main challenges hindering the development of the park for tourism and assuming international standards include inadequate funding from corporate organisations and government, lack of community participation in decision making and management (Ofem *et al.*, 2012:553). They further argued that the poor funding of the CRNP makes it more vulnerable to disintegration as the government has not considered its development or inclusion as part of its revenue drive.

Notwithstanding the challenges posed by these factors, destination attractions and facility development should be the major concern as they are the central key igniting all other economic activities to bring about the desired growth in any particular area (Fayissa, Nsiah, & Tadaese, 2008). To maximise these stimulated economic benefits, Felix and Usman (2008:217-218) advise that all leakages and wastages should be minimised and also ensure that the issues of safety and security are addressed. Eja *et al.* (2011:330) argued that tourism in Nigeria could only be sustainably developed when the government, corporate bodies and NGOs get fully involved with tourism by building roads, airports, internet facilities, electricity, adequate security, communication facilities and other amenities connecting the destination to other cities. They must also ensure a broad database for both local and international visitors' movement and support hotel accommodation, tour guide activities and active participation in transport. It is also necessary to make tourist satisfaction a priority in product development. This is because customers' satisfaction gives a firm an advantage over its competitors. As the customers

become highly satisfied, they are less sensitive to price and they buy additional products over and over again as new products are introduced or improved, talk favourably about the product to others and eventually become loyal and pay little or no attention to competition (Paul & Joy, 2017:105). The research by Ofem *et al.* (2012:554) also suggests that the development of the CRNP and the capital investment of government and private individuals will not only improve the economic and social life of the locals but will also promote the state but the government must be at the forefront while private sectors follow. This makes it very important for CRS government to take a bold step towards the possible tapping of the potential inherent in this great state.

3.7 CONCLUSION

From these discussions, it is clear that different authors have provided methods for understanding the term ‘tourism product’. The literature has also examined the various elements that make up a tourism product, its characteristics, components of a successful tourism destination and tourism product development processes. The analysis of the literature has also showed that an understanding of tourist needs and wants as well as community participation in the process of product development is more important in the overall development process. Also, there is a need to take into consideration tourist perceptions of tourism products as this has a way of influencing tourist destination choice or the type of tourism product to purchase. In this regard, the ‘augmented tourist product’ as revealed by Middleton and Clark (2001:129) can be seen as the destination itself, its prestigious reputation and status/image. Having been recognised as a reputable destination, it becomes necessary for tourism providers to provide the best possible prerequisite (tourism products) for the experience that is being sought by the tourist, i.e. the provision of interesting and appealing attractions and accommodations as well as amenities that can easily be accessed by tourists together with other ancillary services to motivate tourists to visit and engage in activities at the location.

Based on the report of Seba (2012:155), a successful ecotourism product development in CRS, as well as the CRNP, will rely on the assistance of the local community, natural resources conservation and protection and the preservation of other community cultural, social and ecological diversity. Also, as Seba (2012:161) suggested, while ensuring that the communities’ value and well-being are protected, there is a need to create a balance between the tourism business model and the community ecotourism model. Hence, the principle of ecotourism can be applied particularly when sustainable development is the primary focus. In the long run, tourism product development entails practically matching all the product development action feasibly and sustainably for a sustainable and successful augmentation and development of a tourist destination.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the research methodologies followed in this study. Since the methodologies used are crucial to the reliability and trustworthiness of the results that will be presented, the reason for choosing one particular method over another will also be discussed. This chapter examines the research design, research methods and methodology adopted to achieve the objectives of this research. Sampling methods, target population/sample sizes, the development of the measuring instruments, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility of the study are discussed.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to MacMillan and Schumacher (2001:166) research design is a technique of choosing a location for the research as well as a method for collecting data to address the research questions. Kobus (2007:70), Singh and Chibuye (2016:45) define research design as a plan that a researcher selects to form the various elements of a research in such a way that all the research questions are answered and this constitutes the road map for data collection, data analysis and interpretation of the results. There are six types of research design as proposed by Creswell (2011:572); the convergent parallel mixed-method design, the explanatory sequential design, the exploratory sequential design, the embedded design, the transformative design and the multiphase design. A convergent parallel mixed-method design was used in this research. Creswell (2011:572) states that the convergent parallel design gathers both quantitative and qualitative data, analyses both datasets separately, compares the results from the analysis of both datasets and makes interpretations. The direct comparison of the two datasets by the researcher provides a convergence of data sources. It also means that a researcher concurrently conducts the quantitative and qualitative research in the same phase of the study, weighs the methods equally, analyses the two datasets separately, and interprets the result together. The research design followed in this study is illustrated in Figure 4.1.

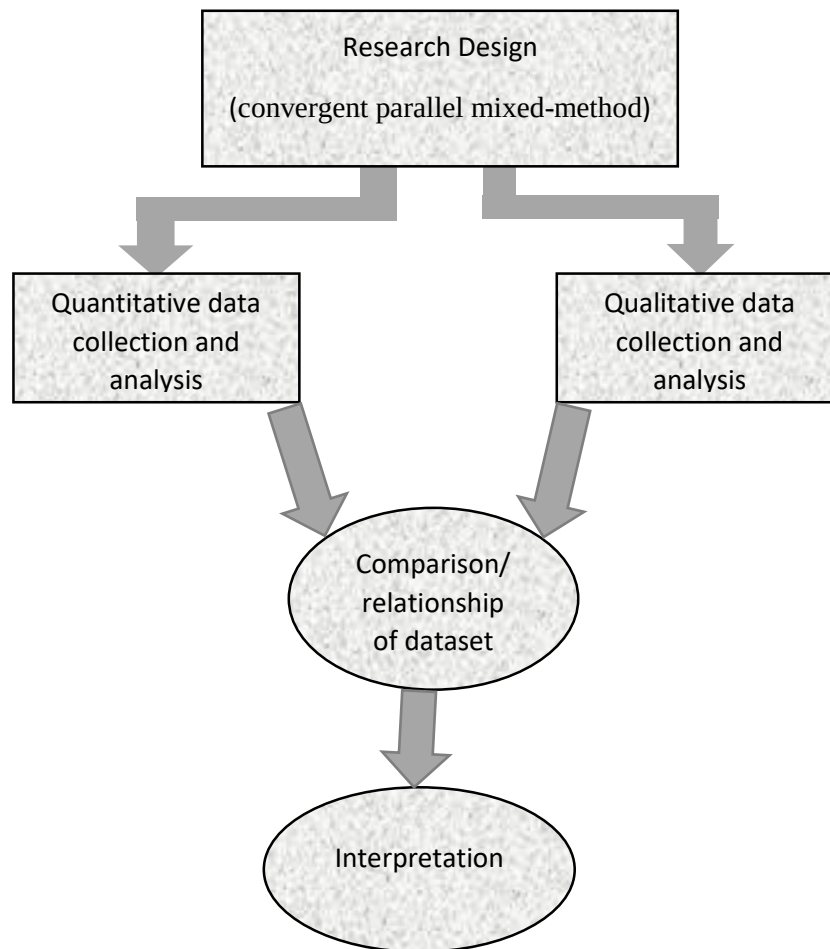


Figure 4.1 Convergent parallel mixed-method research design used in this study (modified from Creswell, 2011:572)

By triangulating two datasets in a single study as illustrated in Figure 4.1 the researcher aims to corroborate and validate the methods used by simply comparing the results obtained from the quantitative findings with the qualitative results.

4.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

There are basically three methods of research, the qualitative method, the quantitative method and the mixed method. This study employed a mixed method research approach of the element relating to ecotourism product development so as to determine the ecotourism product development needs of ecotourists. On this note, literature reviews, interviews and questionnaires were used for data collection. These methods are discussed in details in the sections that follow.

4.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:21) define research methodology as procedures employed by researchers in carrying out their research. Schwardt (2007:195) defines research methodology as a conception of how an investigation ought to continue. It involves an examination of the standards, methods and presumptions specific to the investigation. It characterises the kind of issues that are worth examining, what makes up an investigative problem, testable theories, how to outline an issue in such a manner that it can be explored using specific plans and methods; and how to choose and create a suitable way of gathering data (Schwardt, 2007; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). According to Creswell (2014), Bryman and Bell (2015), Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:4), there are three methods of research; qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach. As earlier indicated, a mixed methods research approach was adopted for this research and they are discussed below together with the reason for adoption.

4.4.1 Mixed method research

Mixed method research, according to Tashakkori and Creswell (2007:4), is a “research that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate a situation by using two data, carrying out two data analysis, combines the findings and draws two types of conclusion all in a single study”. Similarly, Burke and Onwuegbuzie (2004) see it as a form where the quantitative and qualitative methods are incorporated into a single study. The combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods results from the broad nature of the problem of investigation of the complex nature of research problems that call for answers beyond basic numbers in a qualitative sense or quantitative context (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:4). The reasons are as follows:

- ❖ When qualitative and quantitative data are combined, it gives a total investigation of issues (Clark & Creswell, 2011:21).
- ❖ The bigger the sample, the more solid and substantial the result of the investigation will be (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2006). For this study, a sample size of 293 was designed for tourists to Obudu Mountain Resort.
- ❖ To neutralise the weaknesses related with either quantitative or qualitative investigation.

As Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova (2004:7) indicated, the fundamental logic of combining neither the quantitative nor the qualitative methods are adequate in themselves to better explain the situation in detail. Based on the analysis of these authors and having studied both research methods (qualitative and quantitative), which can be termed ‘a mixed-method approach’ (see Figure 4.2), the researcher came to accept them as the most appropriate methods of investigation for this study as they complement one

another. This is in line with the assertion of Burke and Onwuegbuzie (2004) that the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods can result in a more profound understanding of the phenomenon being examined.

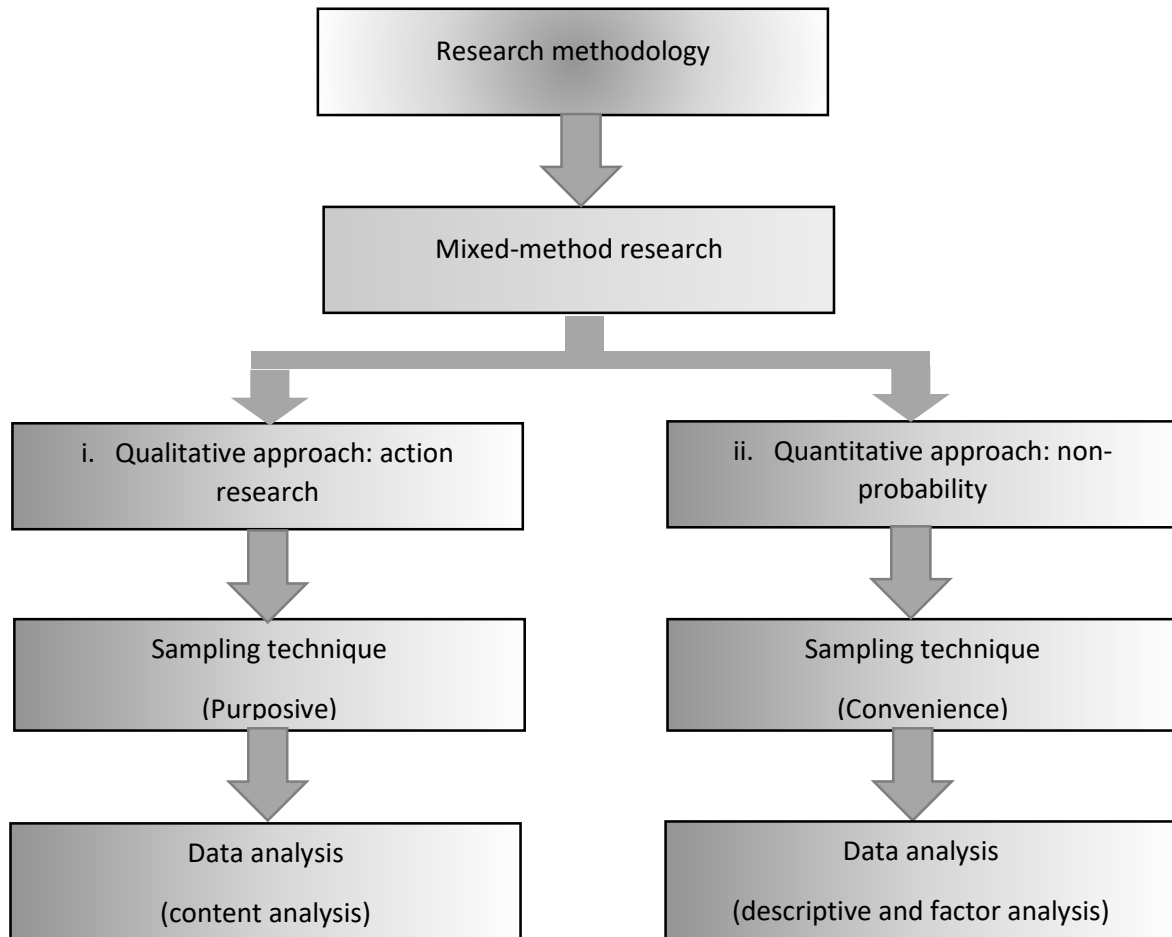


Figure 4.2: Research methodology – mixed method (source: researcher’s own compilation).

By applying the mixed-method research approach, the study followed a convergent parallel design, which gathers both quantitative and qualitative data, analyses both datasets separately, compares the results from the analysis of both datasets, and makes an interpretation (Creswell, 2011). This was deemed appropriate for the study because, as Creswell (2006:72) rightly wrote, when selecting a type of mixed method design, consideration must be given to the available resources, length of time available to complete the study as well as funding. This and more were taken into account, especially with regards to when respondents would be available to complete the questionnaire. Also, by combining data collection methods, the researcher was able to explore respondents’ perceptions. In this case, the interviews with the government officials and the management of CRNP. The qualitative and quantitative investigation strategies that were used in this research are now discussed in detail.

4.4.1.1 Qualitative research

Verzani (2005:86), sees qualitative research as a research technique that aims to investigate and gain an understanding of human behaviour and why humans behave the way they do. It is the application of quality techniques within a qualitative pattern and is quite different from the quantitative pattern. According to Creswell (2014:190), there are basically five types of qualitative research, and these are: conceptual research, historical research, action research, case study, ethnography study and grounded theory study. A qualitative researcher employs these methods as indicated by Verzani (2005:86) to gain a better understanding on how different people relate or assign meaning to social phenomena and the reasons behind such behaviour. The purpose of a historical research design is to collect, verify and synthesize evidence from the past to establish facts that defend or refute a hypothesis. Conceptual research can be seen as a research method whereby research is conducted by observing and analysing already present information on a given topic. This form of research doesn't entail conducting any practical experiment. In an ethnography study, the researcher studies an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time by collecting, primarily, observational data. In a grounded theory study, the researcher attempts to derive a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction in the views of participants in a study. This is a form of research that begins with data that develops into a theory. Action research can be seen as a process that provides the means by which a researcher explores his/her experience, gains greater clarity and understanding of events and activities, and then uses those extended understandings to construct effective solutions to the problems on which the study was focused (Creswell, 2014; Stringer, 2007:20; Williams, 2007:69). The qualitative research design followed in this study was action research. For this research, semi-structured telephonic interviews were used involving some interest groups, park management and some government officials in tourism.

As indicated above, the study made use of semi-structured in-depth telephone interviews. The technique of personal interviewing is a very competent and fertile technique of transmission that enables spontaneity, and also allows "the skill of guiding the discussion back to the topic outlined when discussions are unfruitful" (Kee & Schrock, 2020:1). Kee and Schrock (2020:1) indicate that the importance of using telephone interviews for data collection is that it makes it possible for interviewees to schedule interviews and therefore potential interviewees are more willing to agree to participate in the research. Interviewees are more comfortable creating privacy for interview calls and more open to providing personal information and life experiences over the telephone. Telephone interviews allow note-taking without distractions and require less space and time while reducing costs. It was based on this premise that this approach was considered. As earlier indicated, the aim of the qualitative research design is to understand the roles played by the government and its agencies in ecotourism product development of the state as well as in CRNP. To achieve this aim, the following interest groups were

selected to participate as respondents in the study: the Commissioner, CRSMCTD, the Operating Officer, CRSTB and the Research Officer, CRNP.

4.4.1.2 Quantitative research

Quantitative research is a research method for examining objective hypotheses, investigating facts, and the connections among items as well as predicting results (Creswell, 2014). As agreed by some scholars, quantitative research results, sometimes referred to statistics, can be summarised in numerical categories (Marvasti, 2004:7; Have, 2004:4). Research methods in a qualitative study are drawn from physical sciences for the generalisation of dependability and unbiased conclusions (Weinreich, 2009). Two types of quantitative research have been identified by Creswell (2014). These are the experimental and non-experimental designs. Experiment designs, examine the influence of an event on the result by treating one group differently from the other to determine their scores (Creswell, 2014:156). The non-experimental design, on the other hand, is a research design that embodies a group of techniques used to conduct quantitative research where there is no manipulation of any variable in the study (Mertler, 2014). In other words, variables are measured as they occur naturally, without the interference of any kind by the researcher. This study used a non-experimental survey design. Creswell (2014:156) adds that these design methods illustrate post-positivist philosophical presumptions and have proven to be effective, cheap and easy to conduct.

4.4.2 Literature review

According to Neuman (1997:89), a literature review is a form of accumulated knowledge that is based on an assumption on which we can build and learn from the work of others. The aim of the literature review is to show that the researcher is acquainted with previous studies regarding the subject of investigation and the reputation of such studies by displaying the path of previous studies and how the present study is associated with already completed studies, learning from others and encouraging new ideas (Neuman, 1997:89). In line with the objectives of Neuman (1997), this study used existing literature to examine the ecotourism product development needs of ecotourists by investigating and exploring the widely used and accepted definitions, opinions and ideas of product development. There are two literature chapters in this study, chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 examined nature-based tourism, wildlife tourism, ecotourism, and trends in ecotourism product development as well as the future of ecotourism. Chapter 3 investigated tourism product development, components of a thriving tourism destination, tourism products in the study destination (the CRNP) and the barriers to tourism product development.

Different sources were consulted such as; books, journals, websites, the Internet, published and unpublished articles that are relevant to the study. Keywords such as ecotourism, tourism, national park, tourism products, tourism product development, nature-based tourism, eco-destination, and aspects were employed.

4.5 SAMPLING METHODS

Sampling, according to Hair *et al.* (2008:48) is an act or technique of choosing an appropriate sample to represent a part of a population in order to examine the variables or element of the entire population. Sampling is conducted whether the study is quantitative or qualitative in nature (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:77). There are two methods to sampling including probability sampling, also known as random sampling, and non-probability sampling, which is also known as non-random sampling. According to Clark-Carter (2004:154), probability or random samples are samples in which each population component has an equal probability of being selected. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:78) and the Copernicus Consulting Group (2008) assert that probability sampling is the best method when doing quantitative research. Also, as indicated by Clark-Carter (2004:154), probability or random samples are samples that represent the elements of a population with a quantifiable probability of being chosen. The probability sampling method consists of simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. Simple random sampling is a sampling technique where every item in the population has an even chance and likelihood of being selected in the sample. In the systematic sampling method, the researcher selects members of the population by selecting a random starting point and selects sample members after a fixed sample interval. Stratified sampling is generally used to obtain a representative sample, especially when the sample to be drawn does not come from a homogeneous group. Cluster sampling involves selecting randomly from a smaller unit of a divided area since the total area of the research is too large (Clark-Carter, 2004:154).

In non-probability sampling, non-randomised methods are used to draw samples, instead of randomising, where participants are selected because they are easy to access and can be used to study particular phenomena with the potential to generate valuable insight (Showkat & Parveen, 2017:7). This sampling method can be seen as the most useful and convenient method of selecting a sample. Similarly, Koerber and McMichael (2008:459) and Clark-Carter (2004:153), identified the following non-probability sampling techniques, convenience, snowball, quota and purposeful. Snowball sampling is a form of sampling method that links the researcher to the principal participant or other groups of respondents who could take part in the study. Convenience sampling is a form of sampling that is accidental and haphazard in nature, as it does not have a systematic selection process. Quota sampling is a sampling technique where participants are selected on the basis of the characteristics they possess in the study population in totality (Etikan & Bala, 2017:215-216). Clark-Carter (2004:153) notes that

the aim of the research will help to choose the sampling method that will be suitable for the research. A purposeful sampling technique was employed for the qualitative aspect of this study because, as Tracy (2013:136) defined, purposive sampling is the process where the researcher chooses a sample based on the study purpose, the knowledge of the population and the study itself as well as individuals that are considered relevant to the research design. This is the same situation with the research at hand, especially when it comes to the interest groups (i.e. park management and government officials in tourism who participated as respondents). The selected purposive samples/participants, as explained by Showkat and Parveen (2017:7), qualify to be part of the study as they can more reasonably be expected to represent the opinion, ideas and correct attitude than other classes of participants. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:78) and Copernicus Consulting (2008) once again agree that non-probability sampling is the best approach for qualitative research.

The researcher also made use of convenience sampling for the quantitative study, which is a type of sampling that is accidental and haphazard in nature, as it does not have a systematic selection process. (Etikan & Bala, 2017:215-216). The sample population, which was derived from tourists to Obudu Mountain Resort, is a typical example of this type of sampling method as the samples were selected accidentally. The non-probability sampling method selected for this study is considered appropriate because it creates an avenue for the researcher to select the study population and also be able to conduct an in-depth study, thereby obtaining relevant information for the study. The next sections of the chapter discuss the target population as well as sample sizes.

4.6 TARGET POPULATION/SAMPLE SIZES

This section of the chapter is concerned with the study population and the sample sizes for both studies.

4.6.1 Target population

The population is defined as a group or a complete set of persons or objects that possess some common characteristics that are of interest to the researcher (Brink, van der Walt & Van Rensburg, 2012:131; de Vos *et al.*, 2011:223; Burns & Grove, 2009:42; LoBiondo & Haber 2010:221). Polit and Beck (2012:738) add that the population is the whole conglomeration of cases that meet a specified set of criteria for a research study, and can be seen as that which sets boundaries for a study. The target population is described by Polit and Beck (2012:744) as the total number of cases about which the researcher would like to generalize. The accessible population is defined as the population of people, who conform to designated criteria available for a particular study (LoBiondo & Haber, 2010:221; Polit & Beck, 2012:744; Grove, Burns & Gray, 2013:352). Product developers, managers, tourism planners, marketers are the main target for the qualitative aspect of this study. The following interest groups that

comprise of experts in the field were purposely selected: 1) the Commissioner, CRSMCTD, 2) Operating Officer, CRSTB and 3) the Research Officer, CRNP. The purpose of choosing this type of informant was to reveal common understandings related to product development, management, product development plans and marketing as a phenomenon under investigation. The respondents were also chosen based on the study purpose and their (respondents') knowledge and experience about the population and the study itself as they occupy important positions.

The target population for the quantitative study is derived from tourist to Obudu Mountain Resort (survey site). Since the CRNP only receives a few tourists in a year (Ngoka & Lameed, 2013:12), there was a need to survey a tourist destination with similar ecotourism features. Obudu Mountain Resort was therefore selected for the survey because, firstly, is one of the significant ecotourism sites in the state and the country at large with natural and unique features and mostly visited by Nigerians. Secondly, it is situated close to the CRNP (Amalu *et al.*, 2017:36-37). Thirdly, it receives a large volume of tourists in a year, especially during the festive season. The aim is to use the data obtained from the resort to add for the determination of key aspects of ecotourism product development for the study destination.

4.6.2 Sample sizes

Burns and Grove (2011:51) define a sample as the subset of the population that is selected by the researcher for a study. In view of Polit and Beck (2012:275), a representative sample is needed to ensure that the collected data precisely reflects reality and can be generalized to the population. The sample should be representative of the sampling frame, which ideally is the same as the population, but which often differs due to practical problems relating to the availability of information (Welman *et al.*, 2012:55). Two strategies are often used to determine sample size in qualitative research. One approach is based on the range or sufficiency, namely, the number of interviews, richness and observations, that is required to capture a representative view of the phenomenon under study. The second approach depends on data saturation or redundancy, namely, the number of people to be interviewed or observed before no new data emerges (de Vos *et al.*, 2011:391). The strategy used to determine the sample size for the qualitative study was informed by the richness of the information as demonstrated by de Vos *et al.* (2011:391), and also because the present study is case-specific, there was no need for saturation since the study is only interested in the knowledge and experience of experts in the field. Again, there were only three participants deemed experts for the purpose of this study, it is for this reason that all three participants were selected to participate.

When an entire population of a study is inaccessible or cannot be reached, only the most convenient sampling units are employed (Ngoka, 2013:7). While it is easy to access the population of community members who are residents of the community, tourists usually left the place visited after their tours and

accessing the entire study population of tourists to the resort who visited and left at different times was therefore not possible. Hence, their (tourists') presence and willingness to take part in the study were used as a virtue for sample size determination. For the quantitative aspect of this research and for the purpose of this study, to be representative, a sample of 350 respondents were estimated to make sure that a sufficient number of questionnaires would be obtained to make up for spoilt or lost ones. However, the researcher was able to gather 293 returned copies of the questionnaires, which was deemed sufficient for a credible result. The next sections of the chapter discuss how the measuring instruments were developed as well as how the interviews were conducted.

4.7 DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

As stated, the instruments for the collection of the qualitative data was an in-depth, semi-structured telephone interview, and a questionnaire was used to obtain the quantitative data. The development of these instruments is discussed next.

4.7.1 Development of the interview guide (qualitative)

This subsection of the study is concerned with the development of the interview guide and how the interviews were conducted for the government officials in tourism and the management of CRNP. An interview guide is a list of questions you proposed to ask in an interview (Sharan & Elizabeth, 2016:124). Working from an interview guide enables the researcher to gain the self-assurance and experience required to carry out a more open-ended interview.

The questions included in the interview guide are reflective of the concepts derived from the literature study or the previous research, as indicated in Chapter 1, which were then altered to fit the objectives of the study. In addition, the research questions assisted in the development of the interview guide thereby filling the gaps identified in the literature for the government officials and the park management.

4.7.2 Structuring the interview guide

The sample population for the interview (qualitative study) was chosen based on the study purpose and the knowledge of the selected interviewees about the population and the study itself as they occupy important positions. They were also selected based on their experiences about product development and planning in the study destination and the state at large. For instance, the respondent from CRSMCTD who is not only an expert on tourism and culture but his office exists as an umbrella body for all tourism activities in the state. The second participant from CRSTB, is in charge of tourism product development in the state and also directly responsible for product developments in CRNP. The respondent from the

CRNP is not only the head of the research unit of the park but is also responsible for all research-related activities of the park with over 15 years' experience in tourism development/management. As earlier indicated, the study made use of semi-structured in-depth telephone interview for the collection of the qualitative data.

The questions were developed from the following literature studies, Makuzva (2018), Acha-Anyi (2016), Gupta (2013), Saayman and Saayman (2006), Van der Merwe, and Saayman, (2008), Geldenhuys, Van der Merwe and Saayman (2016), Saayman and Slabbert (2007), Oberholzer, Saayman, Saayman and Slabbert (2010) and Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001). The researcher referred to the interview guide (see appendices C & D) and the interview guide is structured thus:

The questions designed for CRSMCTD and for the CRSTB are the same. This was to establish whether there is synergy between the visions, plans and policies amongst the government establishments and to compare opinions. The questions for the park management are similar. Both questionnaires (for government officials and the park management) were divided into four parts. Part 1 addresses tourism planning/development issues within the state and information such as the planning and development of ecotourism in the CRS as well as the CRNP, mode of product marketing, community/government involvement and safety issues within the state were asked. Part 2 looked at the product marketing of the state and actions taken to market these products. Part 3 contained community involvement in product marketing of the park and the roles expected of the locals in tourism development of the park. Part 4 seeks respondent's personal opinions on anticipated products that will work for the park and how to get these products developed.

Similarly, the questions designed for the park management were also divided into four parts while Parts 1 and 2 contained the history, markets as well as the tourism products within the park, Parts 3 and 4 focused on government involvement as well as the community's involvement in product development of the park. Parts 3 and 4 also present the challenges to product development and some of the mechanisms used by the park to address these issues.

4.7.3 Conducting the interviews

After applications were sent to the interviewees (CRSMCTD, CRSTB and the CRNP) requesting permission for an interview via an email and consent received, the interviewees were contacted telephonically to set up an appointment and to further elaborate the aim of the study and the intention of the interview. Appointments for the interviews were set up although difficult to secure, especially with the interviewee from CRSMCTD and the interviewee from the CRNP, as a result of their busy and

demanding work schedules. However, they eventually set aside time for the interview although the Controller of Parks was being represented by the Research Officer.

The participant from the CRSMCTD was interviewed on the 5 February, 2020, and it lasted for 50 minutes. The participant from CRSTB was interviewed on 10 February, 2020, and the duration of the interview was forty-five minutes. The interview with the respondent from CRNP was on 16 March 2020, and it lasted for thirty minutes. At the initial stage of the interview, the aim of the interview was explained to the interviewees, and the researcher also undertook to send the interviewees an abstract copy of the findings. They all showed great interest in the study and the questions in the interview schedules were all answered, and they never showed any form of disinterest during the interview. All interviews were audio-recorded as well as a backup voice recorder and handwritten notes on important points during the interviews. According to Cropley (2019:77), the size of a sample population depends on the subject of investigation. The sample population for the qualitative data of this study was selected according to the study purpose and their (respondents) knowledge and experience about the population and the study itself.

According to Cropley (2019:77), qualitative analysis requires a smaller sample size that is able to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest and address the research questions, as well as uncover a variety of opinions. Using the breadth of an issue as a criterion for deciding a sample size, Cropley (2019:77) asserts that a single case is adequate to build a persuasive idea of a very wide issue. Also, citing Newton's Law of Gravity as a case study, Cropley concludes that Newton did not have to wait for many apples to drop on his head before creating the idea of gravity. On the other hand, a broadly appropriate clarification may require few cases, while a narrow clarification may require more. It was based on this that the three participants selected for this study were considered more than sufficient for correct and credible results.

4.7.4 Development of the questionnaire (Quantitative)

A questionnaire was developed to collect quantitative data. The questions were developed based on the following studies: Saayman and Saayman (2006), Van der Merwe, and Saayman, (2008), Geldenhuys, Van der Merwe and Saayman (2016), Saayman and Slabbert (2007), Oberholzer, Saayman, Saayman and Slabbert (2010) and Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001) and then altered to meet the objectives of the study. The questions were in four sections. Section A contained the demographic information of respondents and general questions, section B highlights tourist's accommodation preferences, section C made use of a 5-point Likert scale to obtain tourists' travel motives and elements of tourism products for consideration when choosing tourism destinations. This section also contained a yes or no answer and an open-ended question where a respondent is requested to give reason/s for either visiting a

protected area in the past or for not visiting. Section D also used a five-point Likert scale to determine ecotourists' product preferences and tourists' potential ecotourism products. The last section (section D) also provided the respondents with the opportunity to make recommendations on how to improve ecotourism products in the study site. The questionnaire contained twenty-three questions and can be found in appendix F.

4.7.5 Administering the questionnaire

The process of questionnaire administration was completed between December 2019 and February 2020. A research assistant helped with the administration of the questionnaires at Obudu Mountain Resort (survey site). The research assistant was briefed on the aim and objectives of the study. The research assistant was also trained on the various sections of the questionnaire and how to explain them to the respondents to ensure quick and efficient data collection processes. Both verbal and written permission were obtained from each respondent before handing them the questionnaire. The written consent is contained in the introductory letter of the questionnaire while the verbal consent was read out to the respondents about the aim and objectives of the study. While some respondents (educated) responded to the questions by filling in the questionnaires on their own, others' (less educated) responses were written down by the interviewer who posed the questions to them orally. In the end, a total of 293 questionnaires were completed and used. The researcher also made use of field observation during the process of data collection. The field observation serves as a complement to both the qualitative and quantitative data. It entails paying attention to the interviewees and observing their reactions regarding the issue of discussion.

4.8. DATA ANALYSIS

This section of the study presents the analysis of the data. The results from the analysis will form the foundation for the determination of ecotourism product development aspects that will help grow CRNP for tourism. The ecotourism product aspects that will be determined will also be beneficial to the Nigerian tourism industry, especially in the area of developing an ecotourism product that will be suitable for the industry. It could potentially benefit policymakers, neighbouring communities, the environment and tourism product providers/owners. The analysis will focus on ecotourists' needs and wants, the relationship between the park, the government, NGOs and other stakeholders in the state. Attention will be given to the way that the state's tourism products and those of the park are marketed as well as how the state is able to mitigate its challenges.

As mentioned, a mixed-method research approach was employed for this study and mixed-method research analysis according to Creswell and Clark (2011:203) entails a separate analysis of both study

data using each of the data analysis techniques. Based on this, Chapter 5 is made up of two parts. Part one presents the analysis and results of the qualitative (interviews) and Part two presents the results of the quantitative (questionnaire) analysis. The ecotourism product development aspects will be achieved through the results of the interviews and the results of the survey (questionnaire). The processes of the qualitative data analysis are now considered as well as the quantitative data analysis processes.

4.8.1 Qualitative data analysis processes

Data analysis, according to Creswell (2009:183) entails creating meaning or making sense of the data obtained from the field, which could be in the form of a text or image. Qualitative data analysis is the process of transforming data into results. It entails compressing the size of raw data, straining important from unimportant, establishing the significant shape and developing a plan for transmitting the inherent nature of the information portraits (Patton, 2002:432). There are several approaches to qualitative data analysis. While some authors believe there are few or no standards to qualitative data analysis, others assume that there is no method to qualitative data analysis that is widely accepted because the description and number employed by researchers differs in the same data analysis process (Neuman, 2011:518; Patton, 2002:432; Creswell, 2009:183).

Using content analysis, this study followed Creswell's six steps for qualitative data analysis which include preparing the data for analysis, exploring the data, analysing the data, representing the analysis, interpreting the analysis, and validating the data and interpretation (Creswell, 2009:185). These steps are explained in detail in Figure 4.3 below.

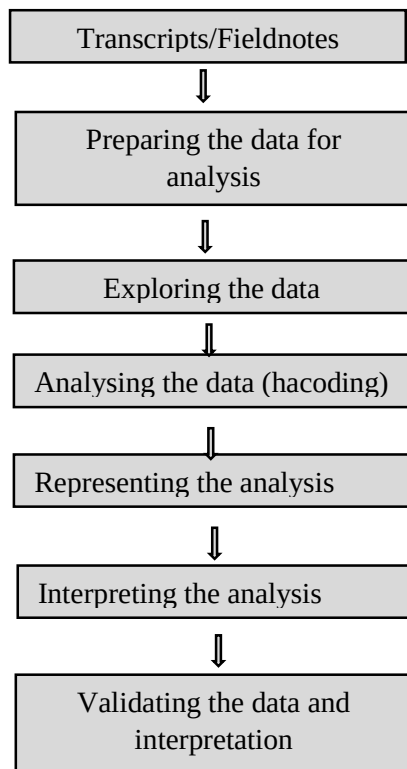


Figure 4.3: Qualitative data analysis process

- **Preparing the data for analysis**

This involves creating a written version of the interviews, designing a visual aspect of the data, typing, arranging and sorting field notes and data into various types depending on the sources of information. As indicated, a digital voice recorder was used for the recording of the qualitative data. There was also a backup voice recorder used during the interview to ensure all information was captured and to prevent any form of electronic faults that may result in the loss of information.

- **Exploring the data**

At this stage of the analysis, the researcher tries to gain a general sense of the information by studying and reflecting on its meaning, such as participants' ideas, the tone of the idea, the overall depth of the impression and its credibility. To better understand the general idea/meaning behind each response and become familiar with the data, the interviews were listened to again, and notes were taken and compared with the verbatim transcripts.

- **Analysing the data**

Data analysis in qualitative study entails data coding, creating small units of the text (i.e. sentences, phrases or paragraphs), labelling each unit and finally grouping the codes into themes (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2006:208). A detailed analysis of the data was carried out at this stage by assigning

codes to segments of identified text in the transcripts and field notes to bring meaning to the information. Themes and sub-themes were assigned to the verbatim transcripts to identify and establish connections amongst text as well as trends and consistency. The identified codes were further scanned through and marked to ensure there are connections between the identified themes and the research topic.

- **Representing the analysis**

To better represent the analysis, codes are used to describe and categorise themes (e.g. people or setting) in the analysis. To ensure the assigned codes are relevant to the research purpose, the codes were examined by analysing the theme in each response.

- **Interpret the analysis**

By using qualitative narratives, the researcher advances to represent the themes and description. For a case study like the current study, a narrative passage in line with the arrangement of events and figures, the result of the analysis is represented.

- **Validate the data and interpretation**

The final step in qualitative data analysis entails making sense of the data. This can be achieved by inquiring about the lessons learned from the whole analysis and the significance of the idea. By comparing the results of the findings, and the interpretation of their meaning, the data is presented (Creswell, 2009:185-189).

The purpose of examining the steps in the qualitative data analysis is to establish that the analysis of the semi-structured in-depth telephone interviews for the qualitative data followed a structured and systematic qualitative content analysis that involved the use of codes, themes and sub-themes to identify and impart meaning to a text.

4.8.2 Quantitative data analysis processes

To analyse the quantitative data for this study so as to determine the perspective and ecotourism product needs of tourists, there is a need to put the data collected in a form that will be easy to analyse. This form is known as data coding. This is a way of rearranging raw information into a pattern that can be easily analysed using statistical software (Neuman, 2014:393). There are four methods of capturing raw data into a computer, the direct entry method, the code sheet, an optical scan and a barcode. Using Microsoft® Office Excel 2016, the raw data for this study was captured via the direct entry method. It

entails the researcher entering the information. The data was then cleaned to correct any error/s input during data entry (Neuman, 2014:396).

The next step after the data was captured and cleaned was the analysis of the quantitative data which was done in two stages. The sections that follow explain the methods used.

- **Descriptive Analysis**

An introductory analysis of the data was performed using descriptive analysis. This involves a descriptive analysis of variables contained in the questionnaire, demographic information of the respondent, variability of scores as well as a summary of the trends of data, means and measures used (Creswell, 2012 183). The descriptive analysis of respondents was performed using frequency analysis and percentages and the results were presented in graphs, charts and tables aided by the Microsoft® Office Excel 2016 tools.

- **Factor Analysis**

This is a method for identifying the critical factors among a set of variables and can also assist in reducing a large number of variables into a smaller number of factors (Tustin *et al.*, 2005:341; Tredoux, Pretorius & Steele, 2006:248). Factor analysis was carried out to evaluate the stability and consistency of the measured items. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software which develops predictions, identifies trends, automatically sets up and imports designated variable types, names, titles as well as label values. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA), principal component analysis (PCA) and a pattern matrix (PM) were applied for the investigation. The exploratory principal component analysis involved; preparing the pattern matrix, an initial extraction of the factors for factor reduction, factor retention and a factor rotation to confirm the validity of the construct thereby making it easily interpretable. For each of the factors, the following were examined:

- A Cronbach Alpha to determine the measure of internal consistency among items as well as data reliability.
- An inter-item correlation to ascertain the degree to which scores on one variable are related to scores on all other items in a scale.
- The mean value to ascertain the importance of a factor with respect to other factors (Lou, 2014:45; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011:1; Miller & Salkind, 2002:406; Yong & Pearce, 2013).

Two factor analyses using pattern matrix were carried out; one for respondents' travel motives and the second for the potential ecotourism product needs of ecotourists (both for activities and facilities). This was necessary to reduce the large number of variables contained in the activities and facilities factors

into a fewer numbers of constructs and to further investigate and enhance the value of the ecotourism products for easy interpretation and both analysed factors produced acceptable factor loadings.

4.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

According to Adams (2012:342) and Khunou (2016:114), researchers are ethically required to seek consent from relevant authorities to review their research aims and objectives and to ensure researchers follow ethical guidelines in the conduct of the research. Some organisations such as the American Psychological Association (APA), German Society for Psychology (BDP), Australian Psychological Society (APS), Professional Association of German Psychologists, has put forward procedures to ensure ethical research. They are as follows:

- Equitable selection of participants
- Minimising participant risk in relation to anticipated benefits
- Obtain informed consent.
- Adequate provisions to protect the privacy of participants
- Provision for withdrawal from the study by participants
- Rights of participants to access the research findings (Cropley, 2019:77-80).

The researcher ensured that these rules were not violated. Since enormous importance is placed on obtaining respondents' consent in a study and such consent is regarded meaningless if the consent is not informed, the researcher, therefore, ensured that both verbal and written consent were obtained from each respondent before handing them the questionnaire. The written consent is contained in the introductory letter of the questionnaire (see appendix E), while the verbal consent was read out to the respondents about the aim and objectives of the study. Also, since participant's right with respect to whether or not the data will be published or possibly reveal their identity cannot be violated, hence the written consent which highlighted the protection of privacy of participants (anonymity and confidentiality was guaranteed in this respect), as well as the withdrawal, in case they wish to halt participation in the study anytime without judgement (a number of withdrawals were recorded during data collection as participants cited tiredness or the questionnaire being lengthy as their reasons for withdrawal).

Prior to the application to the NWU Ethics Committee for research approval, consent was sought from the various study destinations. First, application letters were sent to the National Park Service (CRNP's Headquarters), CRNP (study site) and Obudu Mountain Resort (Survey site). Upon receiving the consent from the various study sites and authorities (see appendices G & H), the application for Scientific Committee approval was submitted. This is to ensure that the researcher adheres to research

regulations and the protection of the reputation of the Science Community, protection of the right of persons and to ensure that the outcome of the research is ethical (Khunou, 2016:115). After approval was granted by the Scientific Committee, the application for ethical consideration was submitted. After a careful review by the committee and all questions answered, it was considered and approved as a minimal risk study and an ethics number (NWU -01439-19-A4) was assigned to the researcher (see appendix A). Upon receiving the approval, the researcher proceeded to data collection.

4.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The objective of any study is to convey substantial dependable information (Merriam, 2009:209). Validity in qualitative research is trustworthiness or reliability, utility and constancy that is set into research (Zohrabi, 2013:258). Consequently, validity assesses the acceptability and quality of the research (Zohrabi, 2013:258). The validity, according to Finn *et al.* (2000:28) can be classified into internal and external validity. Internal validity depends on whether the theory produces the expected result in the piece of research. This, therefore, depends on the meaning of reality (Merriam, 2009:213). External validity relates to the extent to which the findings of the study can be concluded. Since different strategies can be applied to enhance the validity of research as proposed by Alan and McEvoy (2014:7), the research applied different methods/techniques such as direct observations, in-depth-interviews as well as informal discussions with participants. To further enhance the validity of the result, the drafts of the questionnaire were given to experts in the field for face validation, measurement and testing. The corrected draft at that point was then used to create the final questionnaire that was used for the research. Also, validity in qualitative research can be ensured by following the ethical principles as expected of all research. Hence, by ensuring that all recorded interviews were honestly and accurately reported as well as following all laid down rules while in the field, the ethical principles of the research were not violated.

According to Veal (2006:117), reliability is the degree to which research results would be the same if the research were to be repeated at a later date, or with a different sample of subjects. Finn *et al.* (2000, 28) see reliability as consistency of the results obtained from a measuring instrument in a piece of research. Brace (2008, 174) emphasised the reliability of questionnaires and concluded that reliability is accomplished if the questionnaire gives a consistent distribution of responses from the same survey. Two forms of reliability have been identified, internal and external reliability. Whereas the former entails the consistency in data collection, analysis and interpretation, the latter is concerned with the reproduction of the study (Zohrabi, 2013:260). To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the researcher subjected the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview questions to a pilot test before administration. Pilot testing can be described as the process of conducting a simulated administration of a design questionnaire to a small representative group of respondents (Hair *et al.*, 2008:660). This

was necessary to test whether the questions can be understood by participants and to check clarity which will assist the researcher in making adjustments to the questions if the need arises. To further test the reliability of the data, Cronbach's Alpha statistics was used to perform a reliability test. Also, to test the second measure of reliability, the inter-item correlation was performed to ascertain the level to which results on one item are linked to results on the entire items in a scale. This was particularly important to measure the consistency and reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach's Alpha test produced a reliable result for the study (see chapter 5).

4.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

Trustworthiness is a fundamental aspect of research that entails clarifying the idea of objectivity in a qualitative study (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010:302). It can be seen as the level of certainty a researcher has in their collected data (Polit & Beck, 2012:745). To ensure the trustworthiness of research with respect to data quality, Brink *et al.* (2012:172) proposed guaranteeing data utilisation is proactive throughout the course of the investigation to better manage the study. Credibility, on the other hand, entails trust in reality estimation of the data and results (Polit & Beck, 2012:585). When a participant recognises the meaning they provide to a specific situation and the truth of the results in their own words or understanding, it is 'credibility' (Holloway & Wheeler 2010:303). The credibility of the study was ensured through an accurate representation of respondents' opinions and views. For the purpose of this study and to ensure that the results are credible, the following plans of actions or strategies were employed:

- Direct observation

By visiting the study site (CRNP) and personally administering the questionnaire to the respondents, the researcher was able to make direct observations which serve as a complement to both the qualitative and quantitative data. It entails paying attention to the interviewees, taking notes and observing their reactions regarding the issue of discussion.

- Prolonged engagement

This entails a researcher building trust with respondents (Cresswell, 2009:207). Prior to the interviews, the researcher contacted the respondents to establish rapport with them. By having a prolonged engagement with the participants with respect to the aim and objectives of the study, the researcher is able to gain an in-depth understanding of how the study relates to the respondents. Distractedness or distrust that might arise during the course of the interview were eliminated through the provision of sufficient time with a participant to create a trusting relationship.

- Triangulation of data.

By using a mixed-method research approach that allows for the collection of data through different sources, it ensures that the study contains rigour, richness, complexity and depth. Data triangulation in this regard was achieved through the combination of the field note, researcher's field observations and the use of an audio recorder during the in-depth telephone interviews. The in-depth semi-structured telephonic interview allows for openness and flexibility for respondents to give rich information. For justification of the result, the findings were compared with the previous study to obtain rich information with regards to its validity.

4.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the methods applied in this study. Also discussed are the reasons for choosing a particular research method (mixed-method research approach), and sampling method (non-probability sampling) over another. In-depth telephone interviews were employed for the collection of data from government officials as well as the management of the CRNP. Questionnaires were used to obtain data for the quantitative part of this study. This was followed by ethical considerations, which is a prerequisite for protecting the integrity of the research from start to finish. And finally, the validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility of the study was considered. The next chapter (Chapter 5) presents the analysis and results of this study in detail.

CHAPTER 5

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Barry and Zikmund (2015:70), data analysis and presentation is the process of computing, summarising and reasoning to gain a deeper understanding of the information obtained. This chapter presents the data obtained from the in-depth telephone interviews (Qualitative) with the Commissioner, CRSMCTD, Operating Officer, CRSTB and the Research Officer, CRNP as well as the data obtained from 293 questionnaires (Quantitative) gathered from tourists in Obudu Mountain Resort (tourist survey site). To compare trends and relationships concerning the study objectives, relevant literature was consulted so as to highlight the similarities or differences between the results of previous research and those of the current study.

The chapter is divided into two parts, the first part addresses the qualitative results, and the second part presents the result of the quantitative study.

5.2 PART ONE: QUALITATIVE RESULT ANALYSIS

The aim of this study is to examine the ecotourism products in the study destination to determine the key aspects for ecotourism product development for the destination based on ecotourists' needs. The literature (Ijeomah, & Eniang, 2018:2; Eugene *et al.*, 2010:52; Ijeomah *et al.*, 2011:154; Bankole & Odularu, 2006; Akpabio *et al.*, 2006; Gbede, 2008) reported a gap in examining the potentials of developing ecotourism products in Nigeria. Ijeomah *et al.* (2011:154) have examined the potentials inherent in the development of the CRNP. As agreed by Weaver (2001:53), the most critical success factor for tourism demand is unique tourism products and services that can be developed, promoted and maintained qualitatively over time.

The purpose of carrying out the qualitative interviews was to obtain information about the roles played by the state (government) as well as the government agencies in tourism development of the State as well as in CRNP. To ensure all data relevant to the study is captured, a voice recorder was used to record the telephone interviews (with permission from interviewee) as well as note-taking. Thereafter, the interviews were transcribed. Content analysis was used to analyse the transcripts to identify the themes in each question.

Using semi-structured, in-depth telephone interviews, two government officials were interviewed, one from CRSMCTD and the second from CRSTB. The reason was to obtain more information and to compare opinions regarding possible ecotourism development in the park. A third interview was conducted with the research officer of the CRNP. The response and results of each interviewee are presented using these subheadings.

5.2.1 Results and discussion of the semi-structured, in-depth telephone interviews with government officials (CRSMCTD and CRSTB)

The section presents and discusses the result from interviews with the two participants from the government establishments, i.e. CRSMCTD and CRSTB. This section also provides background information regarding the participants' status, position held as well as expertise with respect to the context of the discussion.

5.2.1.1 Demographic information of participants

As indicated, there were two participants from the government establishments and both participants were male. The participant from CRSMCTD is the head of the tourism sector of the State and has been in the position for almost a decade with a strong background in tourism development and management. The participant from the CRSTB is the operating officer in terms of product development in the State and has been in the position for more than ten years, and is an expert in tourism planning, development and marketing and has worked in various sectors of the tourism industry.

5.2.1.2 Responsibilities regarding tourism development

The responsibilities of participants regarding tourism development of the State range from planning, development and management to marketing. The two government officials had this to say regarding their responsibilities towards tourism development of the State;

Participant 1 stated:

“My responsibilities are supervision of the different classes of the state’s tourism sector such as the CRSTB, whose sole responsibility is to develop and market the state’s tourism products and licencing; the Event Department, responsible for the execution of events in the state e.g. the Calabar carnival and other events of the state; the Carnival Commission, responsible for regulating the Calabar carnival and other state carnivals and supervision of the culture and Heritage Department, which is responsible for the promotion of culture and other cultural related activities in the state and outside the state”.

According to Participant 1, his office exists as an umbrella body for every culture and tourism development as well as promotion in the State.

Participant 2 noted:

“I am directly responsible for product development activities and execution of projects in CRNP with over 15 years’ experience in tourism planning development and marketing”.

The result from the analysis of the two participants’ responsibilities demonstrates that the government of CRS is directly responsible for the development of tourism and culture in the State. These responsibilities are obtained from the two-case study, although more committed to culture and heritage than ecotourism. This can be seen as a result of the fact that culture and heritage are the biggest revenue generators of the State, especially the street carnival. This finding is in agreement with the previous study by Ijeomah *et al.* (2011:154) that emphasised continuous government commitment to economic and cultural tourism while the ecotourism sector is given less attention. In addition to the realisation of the benefits that accrue to ecotourism in the State, there is need to identify the gaps in each sector of the industry and ensure that ecotourism is prioritised and promoted to the same extent as culture and heritage are promoted in the State.

5.2.1.3 The current tourism situation in CRS

Participant 1 was not only positive about the current tourism situation of the State but was also optimistic about the future trends of the State’s tourism industry. The participant specifically highlighted some of the achievements recorded by the state tourism industry in the past with more emphasis on sustainability. Participant 1 answered this as follows:

“We have been able to sustain tourism in the state and some of the sustained tourism products include; The Calabar Carnival which is the biggest street party in Africa and rated the 4th in the world after Brazil with about 30 countries in attendance; The Obudu Mountain Race; Biker Carnival; The national park helping in promoting environmental sustainability and wildlife conservation; The Lebakun Cultural Festival which has been running for over 15 years now; The Northern Festival, parade of the paramount ruler, clan head, district head, maiden parade; Lebokun New Year Festival; the Otomobong Festival, paying of homage to the king; the Akatcha Festival of the Oban people and the Tinapa Resort Centre has also been sustained”.

Participant 1 also boasted of having promoted the State’s tourism sector in other states of the nation and outside the shores of the continent as the State has participated in international festivals such as:

“Ogun International Drum Festival in Ogun State in 2019, Nigeria at 59” at the State House in Abuja in 2019, Egypt-China Force Luo Festival in 2016 and many more”.

Contrary to the views of Participant 1, Participant 2 considered the current tourism situation of CRS to be in a static position. In his words;

“The current tourism situation of CRS is neither high nor low but in a static position”. He further reviewed; “the static nature of the state tourism sector is as a result of the financial constraints and the policies of the current political administration as the present government is more involved with industrialisation and is paying less attention to the tourism sector”.

All the views of the respondents are not in agreement with regards to the current tourism situation in CRS. While Participant 1 believed that the State had done better in terms of sustainable tourism industry in the State by highlighting some of its achievements and also being optimistic about the future trend of the industry, Participant 2 assumed the industry is in a static position where it's neither growing nor decreasing. Although not in agreement, worthy of note is the fact that no worse tourism situation was mentioned. It is therefore evident from the interviews that the current tourism situation of the State, which were highlighted, outweighs the assumed fixed tourism situation which was not mentioned.

5.2.1.4 The tourism development plan of the State

Both participants indicated there was a tourism development plan in the State. According to Participant 1, the existing tourism product development plan, although a short-term plan, is focused on service delivery in all the tourism allocations of the State. He comments as follows:

“The tourism development plan of the State allows for the evaluation of the tourism assets of the State so as to plan on how to make them better. In addition, the plan is to have and arrange a calendar of events that will bring about decentralisation of the State’s tourism products, that is, promoting one destination or tourism product either monthly or twice in a month and which will continue in that order until the end of the year and beyond”.

Participant 2, on the other hand, considered the tourism development plan of the State to be fixed at the moment although existing in phases. The phases, as highlighted by Participant 2 are as follows:

“Development phase, business phase, sub-station plan, maintenance plan and marketing plan”.

He further laid great emphasis on the development and marketing phases of the plan because he believes lots of developmental activities have been achieved in the State in recent times. The marketing plan of the state, which was contracted to a marketing firm in South Africa named Gendel Strategic Marketing Group (Participant 2 personal communication) was responsible for marketing of CRS tourism products. But currently he said:

“The tourism products of the state are now being marketed locally”.

Although the responses are not in agreement, it can be gathered from the responses that only two phases of the plan are in full force, i.e. the development and marketing phases which are often used and mainly concentrated on cultural tourism. In addition to actualising the purpose of the development plan, there is a need for the government to decentralise its focus in the development of the State tourism products. Therefore, there is a need for the State to identify the gaps in its tourism assets, especially the ecotourism sector which has gained less attention whilst also ensuring that each phase of the tourism plan is executed.

5.2.1.5 The current tourism offering in the CRNP

To propose an ecotourism product for the park, there is a need to evaluate the current tourism offerings of the park. Both participants admit being aware of the tourism offerings of the national park. According to Participant 1, the CRNP is endowed with a wealth of tourism products which include:

“...both natural and man-made resources such as waterfalls, wildlife, flora and fauna, nature trails and a host of other products existing to meet the needs of tourists to the park especially nature lovers but, regrettably, the government has not paid much attention to the national park”. However, he further explained that “the state, in a bid to promote the ecotourism products of the park, has held the green carnival and the state was able to plant and replant trees and also sensitise people on the importance of environmental sustainability”.

Participant 2 indicated that the Park offers enormous tourism products to its visitors, which include:

“...both natural and man-made tourism products. In addition, some of the fauna species within the park are elephants, leopards, chimpanzees and gorillas amongst others as well as man-made products of the park such as infrastructures like a guest house, student hostel and a restaurant. Nature activities like hiking, observing the waterfalls, birdwatching etc. also exist in the park. Also, worthy of note, is the fact that the CRNP harbours a large portion of the remaining rainforest in Nigeria and the park is a UN acclaimed biodiversity hotspot”.

The highlighted tourism offerings of the park are in agreement with the report by Olory (2018:309), who reported an abundance of nature activities in the CRNP. It is clear from what could be gathered from the respondents that CRNP is endowed with a wealth of tourism products to attract and offer to visitors to the park of which the most mentioned with great emphasis were the natural tourism products. Although Participant 1 believed that the products exist to meet the needs of tourists, it can be concluded that CRNP is enriched with tourism products to be considered as a tourist destination that is limited to offering a limited type of man-made products. However, this can be addressed by identifying the needed products (man-made products) that will supplement the existing natural wealth of the park and create a memorable experience to tourists.

5.2.1.6 Government involvement in ecotourism development in the CRNP

The interview sought to discover the responsibilities of the government towards ecotourism development of the park to which both participants admit that the government is fully involved with the park. It is therefore pertinent to know how the government is involved with the park. Participant 1 indicated that the government is involved with the park as the park remains one of its primary responsibilities and to ensure that sustainability is maintained. According to him;

“The state government is involved with the park through one of its agencies, known as the CRSTB, whose sole responsibility is to promote and market as well as execute all developmental activities in the park”.

Participant 2 believes that the government is fully involved with the park through its continued engagement with the park and the locals. He had this to say:

“There is a synergy between the CRS government and the CRNP which is mid-waved through the National Park Service, and the memorandum of understanding entered by the state government with the CRNP to develop a canopy walkway in the park was achieved through one of its agencies, known as CRSTB”.

Other roles played by the government as indicated by Participant 2 are:

“...the development and maintenance of tourism attractions, the provision of more tourism products, to communicate with locals in respect of product development biodiversity conservation, management, protection and promotion of sustainable use of biodiversity”.

Both participants, however, indicated that the government needs to pay more attention to product development in the park. A summary of government involvement with the park shows that the government is involved with the park through the formulation of policies and planning but is less committed to the actualisation of the plan as well as the development of ecotourism and therefore can be perceived as not serious and hence rated as average.

5.2.1.7 The plans for the development and promotion of the CRNP as a tourism destination

With respect to the State's plans regarding the development and promotion of the CRNP as an ecotourism destination, Participant 1 indicated that the CRNP is incorporated in the State's tourism development plan which is focused on service delivery. In addition, the plan is:

“...to promote and market the park's tourism assets as well as the construction of a canopy walkway within the park for easy access to the park's resources”.

Participant 2 agreed there are plans by the State to promote and market the CRNP, and it's focused on ensuring that the ecotourism products of the park are developed and marketed. Participant 2 said:

“The memorandum of understanding entered by the state government with the CRNP through the National Park Service shows government plans towards the development and promotion of the CRNP as a tourism destination and one of these plans was to construct a canopy walkway within the park as well as a nature trail which is still in the process of review. In addition, the MOU enables both parties to have an understanding on what needs to be done and how best to get it done”.

Both respondents generally agreed there's an ecotourism product development plan for the park; nonetheless, only small things are planned. The memorandum of understanding between the government and the park through the National Park Service to construct a canopy walkway and other needed tourism products within the park shows government efforts towards ecotourism product development and promotion of the park.

5.2.1.8 Mechanism for collaboration between the government and other key stakeholders in the development of ecotourism in the CRNP

While there is need for collaboration between players both within and outside the industry for a coherent development of ecotourism development in a destination, it is, therefore, pertinent to identify these role-players as well as their roles. Participant 1 indicated that the government is strongly collaborating with other key stakeholders within the State and outside the State. According to him,

“The CRSTB stands as an agency representing the State government in this regard”. In addition, “the State works with various ministries like the Ministry of Works, Ministry of Information, and other ministries of the state as well as NGOs such as CECOPAN and Drill Ranch and other wildlife rehabilitation centres of the State”.

Participant 2 identified some key stakeholders of the State in collaboration with the State government for the development of the CRNP. The participant highlights the following key stakeholders and their roles:

“ministry of works necessary for the construction of access roads, ministry of information for dissemination of information to the general public, secretary of state to the state government and house of assembly through the house committee on tourism”.

Participant 2 further reviewed that the private sector has not done much with regards to the product development of the park. He had this to say:

“There is a huge gap between the private sector, the government and the park. Hence, I wish to use this medium to call on sponsors and external investors to also play their part, the private sectors are encouraged to be part and parcel of the processes that brings about the development of the CRNP”.

The mechanisms for collaboration between the government and other stakeholders of the State as highlighted by Participants 1 and 2 is quite commendable. However, Participant 2 admits there’s a gap between the government and private sectors as more could be achieved towards the development of ecotourism in the park if government works together with private sectors while also calling on sponsors and external investors to play their part in ecotourism development of the park.

5.2.1.9 Ideal tourism product/s for the park

Ecotourism product development is the key to ensuring a destination realises its full potential. According to Participant 1, there are lots of tourism products that, when introduced to the park, will not only enhance the aesthetic nature of the park but will also create a memorable experience to the tourist. In his words:

“There’s need for a standard access road both within and outside the park as it has a huge impact on tourism development of the park, a canopy walkway for a proper view of the park assets, a treehouse, and nature trail”.

Participant 2 emphasised the need for additional ecotourism products so as to supplement the existing ones. Participant 2 suggested the following ecotourism products:

“...an eco-lodge where a tourist could lodge and relax after a day’s tour, a treehouse for a proper view of the park’s bird species, a canopy walkway and nature trail for easy access through the rainforest and for the possibilities of sighting animals since the park is characterised with rugged and dense rainforest vegetation”.

These products, he believes, will go a long way in enhancing the state of the park and create a memorable experience for the tourists.

With respect to the ideal ecotourism product for the park, the following tourism products were highlighted by the participants; access road, a canopy walkway, eco-lodge, nature trail and a treehouse. The first three products, they both considered very important because according to them, the park is in dire need of an access road both within and outside the park, a canopy walkway for easy access through the rainforest and for easy sighting of animals and an eco-lodge to encourage the extension of tours. These products they both agreed when developed, will go a long way in enhancing the aesthetic state of the park, result in an influx of tourists, and create a memorable tourism experience. This assertion is in agreement with the report by Van der Merwe and Saayman (2014:1).

5.2.1.10 Challenges to tourism development in the CRS as well as the CRNP

Some of the identified challenges confronting tourism development in the CRS as well as the CRNP as demonstrated by the participants are closely linked. Participant 1 lamented that one of the major noted challenges of CRS and CRNP is the road network. According to him;

“The poor State of most of the roads in the State has greatly affected the park because most of the access roads leading to the park both the Oban and the Okwangwo divisions are in a poor state. This problem is considered a primary challenge because accessibility determines tourists’ destination choice. There is a lack of funds to execute most of the State’s projects and remedy poor infrastructure at the park”.

However, Participant 1 mentioned some of the ways these challenges could be addressed. They are:

“...provision of funds for tourism products development, and for government to be more committed to the sector, especially in ensuring that all developmental projects of the State and the park are brought to completion”.

Participant 2 had this to say regarding the challenges undermining the development of tourism in CRS as well as the CRNP;

“there are numbers of issues hindering the smooth development of ecotourism in the State which have a repelling effect on the national park and some of these challenges are the issue of visas to Nigeria because a tourist coming to CRS will need a visa to Nigeria before proceeding to CRS or the national park as well as the issue of finance and lack of maintenance and development of tourism infrastructures”.

With regards to the challenges of the national park, the participant commented that;

“...the park is faced with the challenges of poor access roads and infrastructure, insufficient rangers and unequipped rangers. In addition, the identified challenges can be addressed through the provision of funds for the development and maintenance of destination infrastructures, especially for the construction of access roads, making visas available to tourists coming to Nigeria, employment of more rangers, and by ensuring that the rangers are well equipped”.

This result is in agreement with the findings of Anuar *et al.* (2012:63) and Ngoka (2007) regarding factors affecting trends of visitation to a destination and product development. The suggested ways of addressing these challenges are the provision of funds for the development and maintenance of destination infrastructures especially for the construction of access roads, putting safety measures in place, making visas available to tourists coming to Nigeria, the employment of more rangers, and ensuring that the rangers are well equipped.

5.2.1.11 Safety in the CRNP

The safety of a tourist's destination is considered paramount, especially to visitors, and therefore cannot be ignored. According to Balaji and Venkatesan (2015:173) and Eraqi (2006:477) as highlighted in the literature (refer to Chapter 3 section 3.4.2.1), a tourism product must be safe for use, and must not pose a danger to the life and integrity of the tourists. Safety, as a major concern in the park, is understood from the perspective of the participants to result from lack of necessary safety facilities, personnel and measures. Participant 1 considered safety as a challenge not only to the park but to every society and must not be taken for granted, be it society wise or for the safety of the tourists to the park. However, to overcome this challenge, he had this to say:

“The park must be well protected and safety measures must be applied especially when using tourism product and while on tour in the park and by ensuring that the rangers are well equipped so as to protect themselves and tourists”.

Participant 2 identified two major safety concerns of the park. These include;

“...the safety of tourists visiting the park and the safety of park’s tourism assets especially from poachers”.

To mitigate these challenges, the participant said;

“There is need for the employment of more rangers and personnel training and ensuring they are well equipped, by mounting a watchtower at a strategic position for the protection of park’s resources and the employment of the locals, especially the youths, as tour guards which will not only secure the park but will also create employment opportunities for the locals”.

The recommended ways of addressing safety issues in the park is in agreement with the report by Uzun *et al.*, 2014:3) who assert that, to preserve and secure the tourism resources of a destination, tourism operators worldwide should think about ways of addressing its individual safety issues and seek a unified quality tourism product which would meet the security guideline.

5.2.1.12 Product marketing plan for CRS

Marketing, according to Van der Merwe and Slabbert (2018:23), is the key to the success or failure of every business. Product marketing has been identified as a means of conveying a product to the market, and the development of a marketing plan for a product allows for the identification of an ideal market for a product. It is no wonder that one of the participants (participant 2) considered using an international body as the best option for the State.

Participant 1 admits that there is a product marketing plan for CRS. According to him;

“The State’s marketing plan incorporates all the tourism assets of the State but more emphasis is laid on cultural tourism because cultural tourism (street carnival) is the State’s biggest export and revenue generator”.

Nevertheless, he indicated that the marketing team in the various departments of the sector tries as much as they can to decentralise all of the State products and ensures one tourism product or the other is being marketed. According to Participant 2;

“The marketing plan of CRS, which was contracted to a South African based marketing firm known as Gendel Strategic Marketing Group was to ensure that the tourism products of the State are showcased to both international and local communities but, specifically, the marketing plan is to ensure the tourism assets of the State is made known to the rest of the world for optimum tourism use by both national and international communities”.

As reviewed by participants, there is a product marketing plan in the State which incorporates all the State’s tourism assets, and that includes the CRNP which is focused on service delivery, and they both considered the international market as the ideal market for the State’s tourism products. But, due to the over-concentration of marketing efforts on cultural tourism as indicated by participant 1, less attention was given to the park in ensuring that the ecotourism products of the park are marketed. Hence, the need for a product marketing strategy was emphasised by the participant (these strategies are considered in the next discussion).

As Madafuri (2018:234) suggested, the success of tourism product marketing depends on the marketing strategies employed. Therefore, there is a need to review the State’s current marketing strategies aimed at identifying the target market and using the right marketing tools. The study by Zamfir and Corbos (2015) shows that the Internet is the most influential medium of information regarding tourism destinations. Therefore, the issue of product marketing needs to be perceptibly reflected on and considered as the interviewees have pointed out. This is because the effectiveness in accessing tourism products within a destination depends on the strategies employed in communicating the products to the market. Also, just like the functions of the National Park Service, as highlighted in the National Park Service Act 1999 No. 46 (National Park Service Act, 2006) which involves the promotion of wildlife products in Nigerian national parks with the purpose of encouraging efficient use and conservation of wildlife as well as encouraging the general public to visit the national parks and the study of nature afforded in the national parks thereby promoting them as tourist attractions. There should also be a product marketing plan and strategies that will be focused on ensuring that destination’s products are being marketed and promoted as this may have the potential to enhance destination image.

5.2.1.13 Marketing of CRS tourism products and the target market

To ensure that the tourism assets of the State are marketed and using a marketing strategy, Participant 1 indicated that the various marketing teams in the departments market the products to not only the State or the country but to the rest of the world. Some of the marketing strategies, according to Participant 1, are:

“Paradise in the Cloud, Meet Me in Cross River State (Meeting Incentives - MICE), the media houses (e.g. Cross River State Broadcasting Corporation) and other media houses of the State”.

With regards to the target market, he considered the international market as the ideal market for the State’s tourism products as the State has made a lot of progress in selling their products to the world and one of such success stories he said was *“the Egypt-China Force Luo Festival held in Egypt in 2016”*.

Participant 2, on the other hand, had this to say regarding the marketing of CRNP ecotourism products;

“An international agency is responsible for the marketing of ecotourism products of the State. In addition, the international agency contracted for the marketing of the state tourism product is to ensure that the tourism assets of the State are showcased not only to other states of the nation or continent but to the rest of the world, thereby making the international market the target market and some of the identified marketing strategies of the State are the use of media houses, both radio and television stations, urban marketing strategies and word of mouth”.

It can be observed that there is not much difference in the marketing strategies of the State. However, it is important to know some of the actions taken to ensure that the CRNP is promoted as well.

5.2.1.14 Actions taken to market the CRNP as an ecotourism product

According to Participant 1, the CRNP is not left out in the marketing of the State’s tourism products as the park exists as one of the assets of the State. According to Participant 1,

“All the marketing strategies used for marketing the state’s tourism products also incorporate the CRNP and one of the notable measures was the green carnival held recently in the State aimed at marketing and promoting the CRNP as an ecotourism product and also as a destination that promotes sustainability and wildlife conservation”.

The Cross River State Tourism Bureau, according to Participant 2, is charged with the responsibility of marketing the ecotourism products of the national park. According to him, *“my office is directly in charge of this task and the national park is not left out in all the mediums used by the State to market its tourism products”*. Participant 2 notes some of the marketing strategies, which include:

“The use of television and radio adverts and discussions about the park, adverts placed on recreational and travel newspapers and magazines such as the government-controlled

newspapers of the State like the 'Chronicles' and other national dailies like the Guardian newspaper and Punch newspaper". The purpose, he said, "was to market the ecotourism products, activities and experiences and attract more activities-oriented visitors to the park and also strive to increase the length of stay of tourists visiting the park".

Although there had been a commendable effort towards the ecotourism product marketing of the park, the CRNP still battles with the issue of underutilisation of the reserve. This implies that efforts towards product marketing need to be intensified by either ensuring that the products reach the target market or employing the right strategy.

5.2.1.15 Community participation in ecotourism product development of the Park

While the need for community participation is seen as a success factor in ecotourism product development, the level of community participation in the study destination can be said to be indirect, although participants generally believe that the community is involved with the park developmental activities. Participant 1 stated that it's very difficult to successfully run tourism products located in a community without the input of the locals. He said;

"The community are involved in programme executions, security, provision of services and facilities, the running of facilities and the protection of the forest against encroachment and from poachers".

Participant 2 had this to say;

"The communities, on their part, have been playing the role of protecting the park from poachers, providing souvenirs to visitors as well as the provision of services".

However, Participant 2 notes that the government, on its part, has also ensured the locals are empowered. The statement below illustrates the point:

"The State government has made a concerted effort towards ensuring the locals are part of the development of the national park by requesting that the surrounding communities form cooperatives through which they can be funded to engage in businesses that promote the development of the park".

Community participation, as reviewed by most tourism literature, is the key to tourism product development (Moyo & Ichaawa, 2017; Thetsane, 2019; Michael, 2009; Suwannarat & Sangkakorn,

2013). In spite of this general knowledge, the level of community participation in product development in the CRNP can be said to be low, especially with regards to planning and management. As both participants highlighted, the role of the community in tourism development ranges from the provision of services and products to protection of the park. However, it was not indicated whether the community were part of decision making. Community participation, therefore, needs to be enhanced. Community participation, according to Godfrey and Clarke (2000:23) can be enhanced by promoting active representation in the decision-making process and involving locals in ecotourism development benefits. When this is done, it will not only bring about community development and productivity but will also enhance tourist experience (Van der Merwe, 2004:29).

5.2.1.16 Role expected of the community to play in tourism development of the Park

With respect to the role expected of the locals towards the development of ecotourism of the park, Participant 1 believes the community can contribute more towards the development of the park by playing the following roles:

“...continuous provision of services, provision of souvenirs to tourist, security, and the general protection of the park”.

Participant 2 advocates total support of the community for tourism to thrive. He had this to say:

“I, personally, would like the community to ensure their community assets are developed by being part and parcel of the running of the park, securing the park against poachers and for the safety of tourists, and provision of services to visitors”.

By so doing, they both believe the community can contribute towards ecotourism product development of the park.

The expected role of the community towards ecotourism products development of the park as highlighted by the participants correlates with, but is not in agreement with, the report by Godfrey and Clarke (2000:23) as they both advocate total support of the community towards ecotourism product development through continuous provision of products and services as well as park protection but not in planning and decision making.

5.2.1.17 Anticipated ecotourism product/s for the CRNP

This study revolves around the development of an ecotourism product that will help grow the park for tourism. Therefore, the essence of the interview was to seek participants' opinions as well as the ideal tourism product/s they considered appropriate for the park. In light of this, Participant 1 considered;

“...an eco-lodge and a canopy walkway are the ideal products for the park and also for government and other corporate bodies to be more committed to the affairs of the park”.

However, Participant 1 laid emphasis on the protection of the forest, especially from poachers and encroachment.

Participant 2 recommends the following ecotourism products:

“Skydive for an all-round eco-experience, ecotourism drive for children like the dumbo ride, canopy walkway for easy access of park's tourism products, an eco-lodge for relaxation after the day's tour, a mini-golf course for an unlimited golf thrill and a treehouse”.

For these products to be developed, Participant 2 had this to say;

“I think with government financial support, community involvement in the planning and management of tourism products, and through government partnerships, with other stakeholders of the state and NGOs the primary objectives for which the CRNP was established will be actualised i.e. nature conservation, wildlife protection, provision of services to tourists and many more. In addition, having numerous tourism products in the park will help market the products themselves. As you know, having different activities will also enhance its development”.

However, the issue of embarking on developmental activities without putting nature into consideration was of great concern to Participant 2. He therefore recommends;

“To avoid the adverse effects that are associated with unplanned developmental activities that are capable of impacting the ecological system, I suggest the park should be left in its natural state so that nature lovers can go there and hike and engage in eco-activities or the principles of environmental sustainability might be compromised”.

The need for ecotourism product/s that will work for the park came as a result of the challenges of inadequate tourism product to meet the needs of tourists and to fill the gaps identified in the literature

(Ngoka, *et al.*, 2014; Owem, 2004:15; Eneji, 2006:5). The measures for ensuring the development of these products suggested by the interviewees are government financial support, community involvement in the planning and management of tourism products, and through government partnerships with other stakeholders of the State and NGOs. There was not much difference in relation to the anticipated ecotourism products. In addition, the measures suggested for ensuring ecotourism product development were in agreement with what is reported in most ecotourism literature.

5.2.2 The results and discussion of the semi-structured in-depth telephone interview with park management

PARTICIPANT 3: Park management, research officer

5.2.2.1 Demographic information of the participants

This interview was held with the research officer of the park who is not only a knowledge holder but also the head of research unit of the park and a specialist in tourism management with over 10 years' experience. Just like Participants 1 and 2, he is also male.

5.2.2.2 Background and history

To evaluate the ecotourism potentials in CRNP so as to determine the key aspects for ecotourism product development for the park, there is a need for background knowledge of its history. According to Participant 3;

“CRNP is one of the seven national parks in Nigeria conceived to protect and conserve the last vestiges of the rainforest ecosystem in Nigeria. Lying within longitudes 5°05'N and 6°29'N and latitudes 8°15'E and 9°30'E and occupying a total area of 4 000 km² and is divided into two non-contiguous sectors, southern Oban sector (3 000km²) which borders the Korup National Park in the Republic of Cameroon and Okwangwo sector (1 000km²) which is contiguous with Takamanda National Park also in Cameroon. The concept of the park originated from the Oban group of Forests Reserves, Okwangwo Forest Reserve, Boshi forest Reserve and Boshi Extension Forest Reserve. However, the park was established in 1991 under Act 36 which was repealed by Act 46 of 1999 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria. So, the park has been in existence for almost three decades”.

This is in agreement with the report by the National Park Service (2000:3) and Oshuntokin (2001). The result of the analysis of the background and history of the CRNP shows that the park has been in

existence for almost three decades and was established with the aim of conserving and protecting the country's vestiges (wildlife) assumed to be going extinct as well as the rainforest ecosystem. The Act for which the park was established indicates that its establishment is in line with the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria which is focused on the protection of Nigeria's biodiversity, all associated heritage, landscapes through a system known as the national parks.

5.2.2.3 Features that make the CRNP unique

There is no doubt that the rate of patronage of a tourist's destination depends on the uniqueness of the destination in terms of a tourism product. It is therefore pertinent to evaluate the tourism potentials of the park. According to Participant 3, the main features that make CRNP unique are:

“Out of 23 primate species in Nigeria, 18 are found in the CRNP, and the park is home to 199 mammals, 63 frogs and toads, 20 reptiles, 380 bird species, 48 fish and 950 butterfly species. There is the presence of Cross River gorilla (gorilla dehli) which is endemic to the park, the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee, elephants, leopards, forest buffalo and other wild animals. There are over 1 500 plant species, beautiful scenery including undulating hills, waterfalls, caves, smooth flowing rivers and adorable features which have earned the park the recognition of, and been nominated by, the United Nations as one of the 25 biodiversity hotspots in the world”.

The result of the interview with the participant from CRNP shows that there is, indeed, a wealth of tourism resources in the park and there are also potentials for developing these tourism assets of the park as reported by Ngoka *et al.* (2014). Therefore, it will be inaccurate and uncalled-for for one to assume that the CRNP is not an ecotourism destination.

5.2.2.4 Number of tourists visiting the Park per year

With regards to the number of tourists visiting the park per year, Participant 3 gave a ten-year report of tourist visitation to the park (i.e. from 2009 – 2019). The report is presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Tourist numbers to the Park

S/N	Year	Number of tourists
1	2009	861
2	2010	655
3	2011	1,009
4	2012	981
5	2013	178
6	2014	372
7	2015	12
8	2016	8
9	2017	822
10	2018	1,934
11	2019	212

A review of the statistics of the number of tourists visiting the park yearly (i.e. 2009 – 2019) as reported by the participant shows a great decline in tourism visitation. This is in line with the study by Ngoka (2013:6) who reported a patchy and low utilisation of the park for tourism in a five-year study. This decline may be attributed to factors such as environmental conditions; inadequate funds, government negligence, lack of community involvement, political upheaval, distance from the major cities; publicity of park's tourism potentials; accessibility and ecological impact as reported by Ngoka *et al.* (2014) and Ezenagu (2018). Therefore, there is a need to identify these lapses and examine the ecotourism product needs of tourists so as to create an influx of visitors to the park.

5.2.2.5 The main market

Just as the decision for a target market is taken after identifying the market segments, it is also necessary to know the market for which a tourism product can thrive on as it has an impact on the tourism products offered as well as the destination itself. Participant 3 sees the local market as the principal market for the park. Although the literature reported setbacks in the efforts to determine the global ecotourism market due to the inability of various national immigration agencies to provide information about visitors to the country, the consideration of the local market as the principal market for the park as pointed out by Participant 3 may be viewed from the perspective of an appraisal of the size of the ecotourism market in the country and on the basis of ecotourism sustainability.

5.2.2.6 Ideal market for the Park

With regards to the ideal market for the park, Participant 3 considered the domestic market as the ideal market for the park. The consideration of domestic tourism as the ideal market for the park as indicated by Participant 3 may be due to the positive trend in the domestic travel segment of the country's tourism industry. A point that was noted by the Westgro (2017:2), that the domestic travel segment of the industry remained strong at three million trips in 2017, following a growth of 4% that was greater than the 3% growth recorded in 2016. This is in agreement with the report by Kruger (2004:77) and WTTC (2006) who report that international tourism is only one part as domestic tourism is many times bigger than international tourism. This point was highlighted in Section 2.6. Again, the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic which has greatly impacted the industry, leading to a worldwide lockdown of all social, economic and recreational activities. It is worthy of note that the spread of the virus across the globe was facilitated by travelling. Hence the issuance of the current travel restrictions on popular destinations with concentrated outbreaks called hotspots. This will bring about a decline in international travel and a boom in domestic travel that is characterised by backpacking, ecotours and road trips.

5.2.2.7 The situation of tourism products and infrastructures

Despite the current natural and man-made tourism products existing in the park, Participant 3 considered them insufficient, especially the infrastructure as well as the facilities. In his words;

“There is no doubt that the CRNP is blessed with a wealth of natural tourism products but there is still a deficiency in the aspect of man-made products, especially the infrastructural components of the park”.

The analysis of the current tourism situation of the park's infrastructure shows that, despite the presence of the identified unique tourism potentials of the park, there is an observed deficiency in man-made tourism products in the park. This is in line with the results of the analysis of the current tourism offering in the park as highlighted in section 5.2.1.5. Nevertheless, products such as an eco-lodge, an outdoor/indoor game like a mini-golf, horse riding, fishing and canoeing, natural swimming pool and a treehouse were proposed to fill the gap. The study by Meyer and Meyer (2016) shows that infrastructure development is essential for the creation of an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, including tourism-related businesses. The findings by the same authors in another study also showed that the tourism business is highly dependent on the quality of the infrastructure in a destination, i.e. without a satisfactory infrastructure, a tourism business may not realise its full economic benefits (Meyer &

Meyer, 2015). However, the infrastructural components of the park can be enhanced if it is given more attention, and all necessary facilities are developed within the park for optimal tourism use.

5.2.2.8 Meeting the needs of tourist with the existing infrastructures

The success of any business depends on its ability to meet the needs of its customers/tourists. Participant 3 indicated that;

“...indeed, the existing tourist facilities exist to meet the needs of tourists although they are inadequate, especially the infrastructural components of the park. In addition, if facilities and other amenities are developed, it will go a long way in ensuring that the park realises its full potential”.

The knowledge that Participant 3 believed the infrastructure exists to meet the need of tourists, although insufficient, is not a bad thing as the essence of destination tourism product is to meet the travel requirements of its customers and should be considered from a personal point of view. This view is in line with the opinion of Participant 1, who also considered that tourism products of the park exist to meet the needs of the tourist. Participant 2, however, offered no comment in this regard, probably because he was sceptical about the matter. This, therefore, calls for the development of ecotourism products that will augment and supplement the existing ones for an all-round tourist's experience.

5.2.2.9 Anticipated ecotourism products for the CRNP

The study sought to discover the ecotourism product needs of tourists. To achieve this, there is a need to know the perspectives of tourism experts with respect to ecotourism product that will be convenient for the park. Participant 3 recommends the following ecotourism products:

“I think products like a canopy walkway, treehouse, outdoor/indoor games (e.g. mini golf, yoga classes, hunting, horse riding, fishing, canoeing etc.), eco-lodge, natural swimming pool and toy car driving for children will work perfectly for the park”.

The need for an ecotourism product/s as well as activities for the park has been recorded in different sections in the findings of the interviews (refer to section 5.2.1.9 & section 5.2.1.17). Therefore, the development of the anticipated ecotourism products is of paramount importance not only for the benefit of the park but also for the diversification of activities within the park.

5.2.2.10 Developing the anticipated ecotourism products

For the anticipated products to be developed, Participant 3 had this to say:

“...for these products to be developed, it will take proper funding from the government, NGOs, private individuals, investors as well as support from the local communities. In addition, any of these tourism products, if not all of them, can be developed, but it’s also important to put the six principles of ecotourism (a. minimise impact b. provide a financial benefit for conservation, must provide a positive experience, etc.) into consideration before embarking on any developmental plan or activities so as to achieve sustainability and to ensure benefits are derived from the products developed”.

According to Garcia-Rosell *et al.* (2013:30), the development and diversification of activities in a destination is the key to the destination actualising its full potentials, and it plays a crucial role in keeping the current customer section, pulling in new customers and differentiating from competitors. As suggested by Participant 3, it will take proper funding from NGOs, private sectors, government, investors, as well as the assistance of the locals to get these products developed. This is in agreement with the results of the analysis of the measures for ensuring the development of the anticipated ecotourism products as highlighted by Participants 1 and 2 (see section 5.2.1.17). Participant 3 was optimistic that the development of ecotourism products in the park will not only attract tourists and grow the park for tourism, but has the ability to create job opportunities for the locals.

5.2.2.11 CRNP plans for ecotourism product development

Acha-Anyi (2016:1) postulates that the development and planning of attractive tourism products is seen as the chief “cornerstone” for the sustainable development of a destination. Participant 3 revealed that the ecotourism product development of the CRNP depends on the government since the park exists as a federal government facility managed by the National Park Service. In his words;

“All ecotourism development plans of the park depend on the federal government since the CRNP is a federal facility managed by the National Park Service. But, currently, the State government uses one of its tourism arms known as CRSTB to execute all developmental plans of the park. In addition, the memorandum of understanding entered by the State government with the National Park Service enables them to develop products and the construction of product like a canopy walkway in the park is one of such plans”.

Participant 3, however, regrets that the government has not paid much attention to the park. He comments;

“...regrettably, the CRS Government has not done much towards ensuring that CRNP is developed”

Government negligence has been generally reported by the participants as noted in different sections of the study (refer to sections 5.2.1.5 and section 5.2.1.6.). This is in agreement with the study by Ijeomah *et al.* (2011:154). However, rather than the overdependence on the government for financial support, the park can source private funds from world-renowned private organisations such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Namibian Association of CBNRM Organisation (NACSO), Wilderness Safaris (WS) etc., since projects involving private organisation funding has proven to have a high success rate as private sectors are known for their philanthropic funding of development projects. Nevertheless, the government should create an enabling environment by providing the institution necessary to ensure private sector investment as well as local support.

5.2.2.12 Challenges to tourism product development and measures for addressing the identified challenges

The participant identified two major challenges confronting the development of ecotourism in the park. He noted;

“...the park is faced with the challenges of lack of funds and community restiveness which, I can say, results from negligence by the government and hence limited the opportunities the park can offer to the locals and the State in particular. However, some of the measures employed by the park in addressing the challenges of product development of the park are financial appeal (to government, NGOs, and well-meaning citizens), dialogue as well as enforcement”.

It is worthy of note that the measures employed by the park for tackling its challenges do not include community participation, i.e. in decision making and planning and the management of the park which is said to be the key to the successful development of ecotourism products in a destination.

5.2.2.13 Safety concerns

According to Balaji and Venkatesan (2015:173) and Eraqi (2006:477), tourism products must be safe for use, and must not pose a danger to the life and integrity of the tourists. This explains why the issue of safety is not taken for granted. Participant 3 considers safety concerns in the park. According to him;

“Safety and security are key aspects for the success of tourism in any destination and the determinant of tourist’s destination choice. However, the issue of safety can be addressed but it’s also important to note that there is no “quick-fix” solution to tourism safety and therefore the need to develop a Tourism Safety Management Plan (TSMP) that will help to investigate and tackle all the challenges from the grass-root, by providing modern security gadgets and adequate training for personnel (Rangers)”.

He further recommends;

“...also, important is addressing individual destination issues and taking into account all infrastructural, environmental management and visitor services in the destination as a whole. With all these in place, the destination will be safe for tourists and able to provide services to its customers”.

As suggested by Tao and Wall (2009:90), with good planning, funding, community participation etc., destinations with special tourism products can pull in more visitors and achieve more prominent financial benefits for the local people, fortify auxiliary businesses and attract foreign trade and venture into the economy. In addition, the government should create an enabling environment for tourism destination to thrive by ensuring political stability in the environment, ensuring the safety of tourists, adequate protection of life and property, provision of a good road network, electricity and other basic amenities

5.2.2.14 Community participation in product development

Rating the community participation in product development, Participant 3 indicated that the community is involved in the product development of the park. He comments;

“There are different roles played by the community towards the ecotourism product development of the park. These are the building of lodges for visitors, provision of cultural offerings for visitation, provision of souvenirs (arts and craft), offering catering services (local cuisines), tour guiding and pottery services as well as the general protection of the park”.

There is an observed high level of community participation in product development in the study destination. This can be seen in the various roles played by the locals towards ecotourism product development of the park. However, it was not mentioned whether the community is part of decision making, planning and the general management of the park, which is generally believed to be the key to success in ecotourism product development. From this, it is clear that community participation in tourism development of the park is inactive because their opinions are either collected and represented by the local chiefs or not sought. This is in agreement with the report by Ibrahim (2013) and similar to the findings of Dogra and Gupta (2012).

5.2.2.15 Roles expected of the community in tourism development of the CRNP

Participant 3 wishes for complete support of the community towards product development of the park. He had this to say;

“Although the communities are already playing the roles assigned to them by safeguarding the park i.e. forming vigilante groups to guard the park from intruders especially from poachers and any form of encroachment, building lodges for visitors, providing cultural offerings for visitors, souvenirs such as arts and crafts, providing catering services (local cuisines), tour guiding as well as pottery services, I would still advocate for a complete support of the community in all areas necessary for the progress of the park”.

Based on the analysis of the roles expected of the community towards product development of the park, it is quite clear, that the locals are expected to play their respective roles from a distance by a continued provision of products and services and not as decision makers.

5.2.2.16 The relationship between the government, NGOs and the park

In examining government and NGOs’ relationships in ecotourism product development of the park, Participant 3 explained that”

“There are collaborations between the government, NGOs and the park as well as the media which are organised and coordinated by the CRSTB whose responsibility and mandate is to bring about a coherent relationship between the different players in the industry. The Cross River State Forestry Commission also collaborates to ensure the effective protection of the park resources cos you know they are “the goose that lays the golden egg” for ecotourism to thrive in CRNP”.

Participant 3 further stressed; *“I still think government should be at the forefront of product development of the park by creating an enabling environment that allows for collaboration with other stakeholders of the State”*.

It is observed that both government and NGOs are playing their part in ecotourism product development of the park, although in separate ways. In summary of government’s involvement with the park as well as the NGOs, there is a need to evaluate the relationships existing between these players that will be aimed at bringing about a coherent relationship between the different players in the industry, i.e. the government creating an enabling environment that allows for private sectors investment.

5.2.2.17 The person in charge of product development within the park

The importance of putting someone in charge of product development is a matter of necessity so as to ensure all development plans are executed. Participant 3 had this to say about the person in charge of product development of the park:

“As I earlier indicated, CRNP is a federal government facility managed by the State. So, CRS government through the National Park Service (NPS) is directly responsible for product development within the park. In addition, the state government uses one of its tourism arms known as the CRSTB to accomplish the development of tourism product in the CRNP”.

However, there was an admission by Participant 3 that the government needs to be more committed to the product development of the park by taking responsibility for its affairs. He explained that;

“I understand the national park is a federal facility, but since it exists within the jurisdiction of the State, the State should take full responsibility for its affairs. What I mean is that, rather than always running to the federal government on little issues which we know require protocols that delay progress, the State can take actions on its own”.

It is therefore understood that the government being in charge of product development in the park is not satisfactory as there are still more to be done.

5.2.3 Summary of qualitative results

This section of the chapter summarises the findings of the analysis. The empirical result of the qualitative study was obtained from three samples; CRSMCTD, CRSTB and the CRNP. The results of the analysis are summarised under the following headings:

5.2.3.1 Current tourism product situation

The result of the analysis of the current tourism product situation shows that the man-made tourism products of the park are insufficient, and a participant felt that the inadequacy of park infrastructure has led to a situation of a decline in tourists' visitation. The participants were of the opinion that this situation results from government negligence and overconcentration of tourism efforts on culture and heritage tourism which was said to be the state biggest revenue generator. Nevertheless, they all proposed government commitment to ecotourism and the decentralisation of tourism products within the State as a way of mitigating the situation.

5.2.3.2 Tourism product potentials of the CRNP

By examining the outcome of the responses from participants, it could be observed that there is a wealth of tourism potentials in the CRNP to attract and offer to visitors to the park, of which the most mentioned with great emphasis were the natural tourism products. Hence, it can be concluded that the CRNP is enriched with natural tourism products to be considered as a tourist destination that is limited to offering a limited range of man-made products. However, this can be addressed by identifying the needed products (man-made products) that will supplement the existing natural wealth of the park and able to create a memorable experience for tourists.

5.2.3.3 Ecotourism product development plan

Findings from the analysis of the ecotourism development plan show that, although not consistent, there is a product development plan in the State incorporating the CRNP that is focused on service delivery and how to improve these tourism products. In addition, the product development plan of the State was noted to exist in five stages; development phase, business phase, sub-station plan, maintenance plan and marketing plan. However, only two phases of the plan can be said to be often used and concentrated on cultural tourism. There is, therefore, need for the State to identify the gaps in its tourism assets, especially the ecotourism sector, which has gained less attention and also ensures that each phase of the tourism plan is executed. This also calls for the need to determine the key aspects of ecotourism product development that can help grow the park for tourism.

5.2.3.4 Tourism product marketing

With regards to tourism product marketing, although not consistent, the result shows that there is a product marketing plan of the State incorporating the CRNP as indicated by the participants. A participant noted that an international marketing firm was in charge of marketing the State's tourism

products with the purpose of showcasing the tourism products of the State to the rest of the world. They further reviewed some of the marketing strategies such as the use of media houses, national dailies, travel magazines and a host of others. Furthermore, while Participants 1 and 2 see the international market as the ideal market for the park, Participant 3 considered the domestic market to be a better option. This can be attributed to the positive trend in domestic travel. It can be noted that, despite the affirmation of the promotion of the CRNP as an ecotourism product, its promotion has not yielded any positive results as there were reports of low visitation of the reserve (see section 5.2.2.4). This, therefore, calls for a review and adoption of a marketing strategy that will be aimed at identifying the target market for the park and using the right marketing medium.

5.2.3.5 Anticipated ecotourism products

Another important aspect of the findings was an ideal ecotourism product for the park that will help grow the park for tourism. As highlighted by Participants 1, 2 and 3, a product such as an eco-lodge, treehouse (accommodation), nature trail and canopy walkway (see sections 5.2.1.9; 5.2.1.17; & 5.2.2.9) are considered ideal products for an eco-destination such as the CRNP. In addition, the result shows that there are possibilities of developing these tourism assets as all participants suggested government financial support, commitment and partnership with other stakeholders as well as community support as the measures to be taken to get these products developed. Worthy of note is the fact that participants see the state as the only body that can get these products developed whereas partnership with private/public organisation has been proved to be more effective. The participants, however, expressed concern over developmental activities that are not compliant with ecotourism principles. They felt that, rather than jeopardise the ecological system, the park should be left in its natural state.

5.2.3.6 Challenges to ecotourism product development

With regards to the perceived challenges to product development, the following challenges were cited by Participants 1, 2 and 3; lack of access roads, funds, poor state of the park's infrastructure, issue of visas, insufficient rangers as well as unequipped rangers. Furthermore, all participants considered safety as an impediment to ecotourism product development as this has a huge influence on destination choice. However, they proposed putting safety measures in place, provision of safety gadgets, personnel training as well as the development of a tourism safety management plan as a way of addressing safety issues in the park. They also believed that, through government financial support, the identified challenges could be mitigated. Hence, as a way of increasing the success of the suggestions, a participant (participant 2) concludes that the locals especially the youth should be employed as security guards which will not only ensure that the park is protected but will also create employment opportunities for the locals.

5.2.3.7 Community participation

The result of the analysis of community involvement in ecotourism product development shows that community participation in product development of the Park is inactive as they are merely service providers and not part of decision making, planning and management of the park. In addition, the need for community participation was not advocated for by all participants, even when asked about the role expected of the community in tourism development. This, therefore, calls for the need to seek community opinions as the literature reviewed that, for ecotourism product development to work, community involvement must be considered especially with regards to decision making and management.

5.2.3.8 Government involvement

An examination of the result of government involvement with the park as well as a mechanism for collaboration with other stakeholders in the State, shows a positive effort in that regard as it was noted by Participants 1 and 2 that the government uses one of its tourism arms known as CRSTB to execute developmental activities in the park. This assertion was in agreement with the result of the analysis of the person in charge of product development within the park (see section 5.2.2.17). In addition, there was an admonition by Participant 3 for the State to stop the over-dependence on the federal government for assistance on issues that can be addressed by the State. Furthermore, the medium for collaboration between the government and stakeholders of the State is quite commendable, considering their role in product development. However, there was a concern over the gap existing between the government, private sector and the park as noted by Participants 1 and 2. Hence, a call was made for private investors, sponsors as well as external investors to play their part as more could be achieved towards the ecotourism product development of the park if all players work together.

5.3 PART TWO: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

This section of the chapter presents the results of the 293 face-to-face questionnaires administered by the interviewer to tourists during the period from December 2019 to February 2020. Firstly (Section A), descriptive analysis of the respondents and, secondly, (Section B), the factor analysis, based on the travel motives, as well as ecotourism product needs of respondents.

SECTION A: Descriptive analysis

5.3.1 Demographic results

This section of the chapter presents the results of the data obtained from respondents. This includes gender, age, marital status, country of origin, State, level of education and other demographic details of respondents.

5.3.1.1 Gender

Figure 5.1 presents the result of respondent gender.

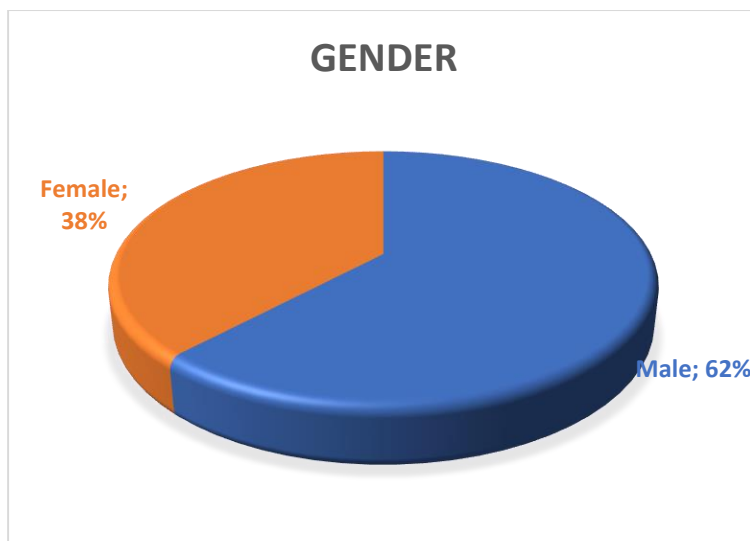


Figure 5.1: Gender

According to the result, the majority of the respondents were male, making up 62% of the total participants while the remaining 38% of the respondents were female. The result of the analysis of the participants' gender is in agreement with those of Makuzva (2018:68). The study by Akarolo-Anthony and Adebamowo (2014:34), reviewed low participation of Nigerian women towards recreation and found it to be exclusive to men. Again, Vumbunu (2020:169), in his study "A Diversification Framework for Ecotourism Products of Botswana", reported 53% males.

5.3.1.2 Age

It is essential to determine the age of the respondents so that the ecotourism product needs of ecotourists can be ascertained. Figure 5.2 illustrates the age group of respondents. The largest percentage of the respondents (39%) fell within the ages of 31-40 years. This is followed by the second highest grouping (34%) in the category of 21-30 years. Respondents in the age category of 41-50 years, as well as 51-58 years, represent 14% and 8% respectively. Only 5% of the participants were under the age of 20. The

average age of respondents is 32 years. Digun-Aweto *et al.* (2015:107) also reported a similar result carried out on the attitude of local dwellers towards ecotourism in the Okumu National Park, Edo State Nigeria, stating that 40% of respondents who took part in the research were in the age range of 31-40 years. The recognition of such a younger age group implies that younger generations engage more on ecotours and are more environmentally conscious than the older age group.

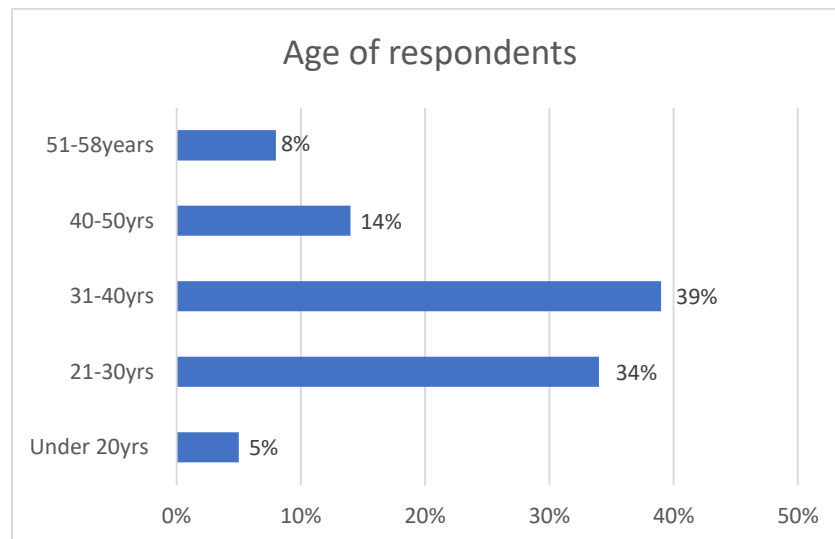


Figure 5.2: Age of respondents

5.3.1.3 Marital status

Figure 5.3 shows the marital status of respondents. In contrast to research conducted in South African national parks where most respondents were married (Saayman & Slabbert, 2004:5; De Witt, Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2014:180), this study recorded a greater percentage of the respondents to be single. According to the results, 61% of respondents are single, followed by 33% that are married, 3% accounts for participants living together, 2% are widows/widowers, and only 1% is divorced. This result correlates well with that of Adetola and Ayodele (2013:71) who assessed tourist's visitation patterns, interests and satisfaction in the CRNP, Nigeria and reported a greater percentage of the study population (70.7%) to be single.

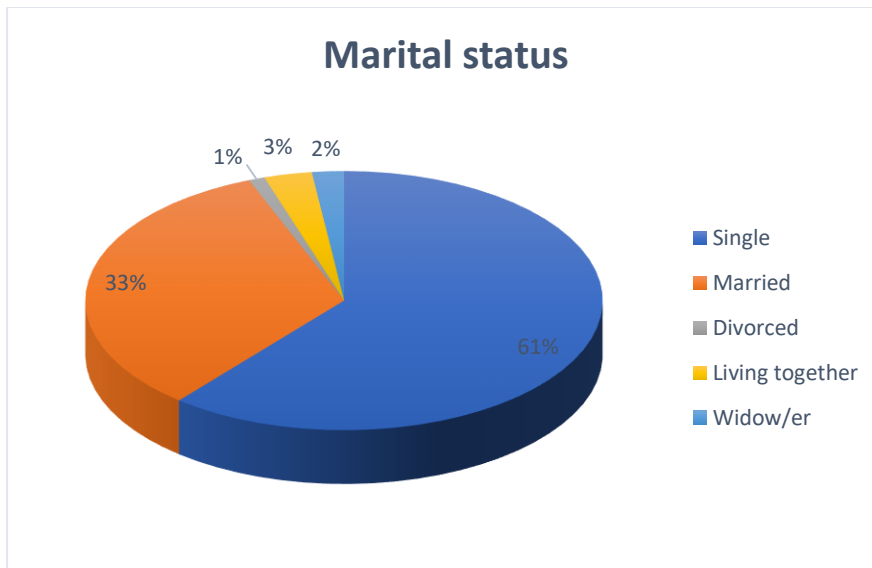


Figure 5.3: Marital status

5.3.1.4 Country of origin

The result of the analysis of the respondent's country of origin as presented in Figure 5.4 below, shows that 98% of respondents are Nigerian, and only 2% are foreigners (mainly Cameroon, Ghana and Kenya). This is in agreement with Ngoka (2013) who reported a greater proportion of Nigerians visit to two national parks of the country. This study also aligns with the reported difference in the percentage of local and international tourist visits to most African national parks.

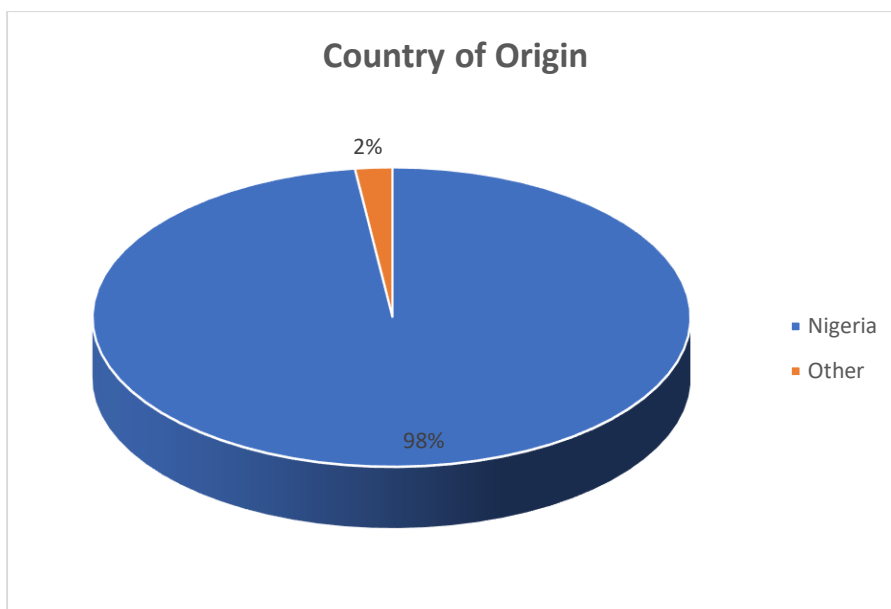


Figure 5.4: Country of origin

5.3.1.5 State of residence

Figure 5.5 below indicates that 37% of respondents reside in CRS, and 20% live in Akwa Ibom. River State represents 9% of respondents and Edo and Anambra States account for 8% each. Respondents from Delta State make up 7% of participants while respondents from other parts of the country represent 6% and Imo state formed 5%. In respect of the greater percentage recorded in CRS, it's important to state that the study destination, as well as the survey site, is in CRS and this may have contributed to the greater percentage of participants from this state.

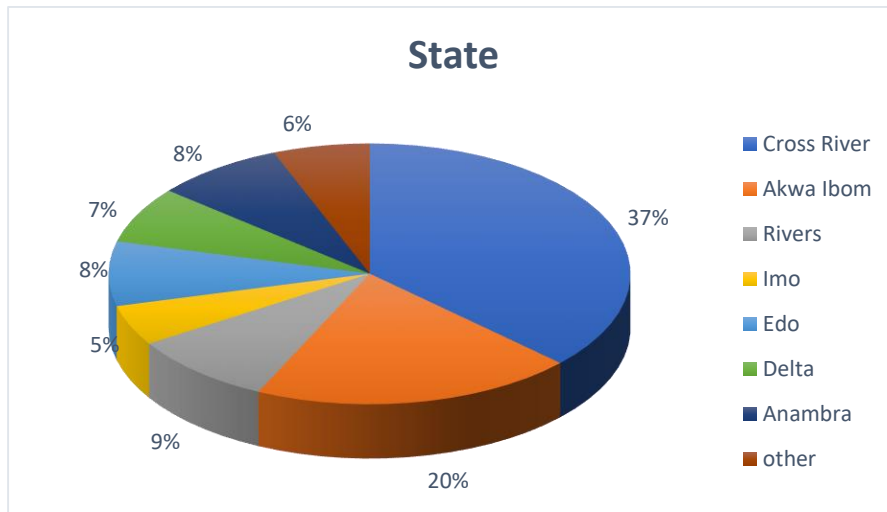


Figure 5.5 State of residence

5.3.1.6 Level of education

Figure 5.6 illustrates the level of education of respondents. According to the result, 47% of respondents have a degree, 18% have a diploma, 16% a secondary school qualification and 15% are post-graduates. Three percent of respondents have other qualifications, and 1% have primary school qualification. This result agrees with Adetola and Ayodele (2013:71) in a study “assessment of tourist’s visitation patterns, interests and satisfaction in CRNP, Nigeria” and reported that 81% of their study population have university degrees.

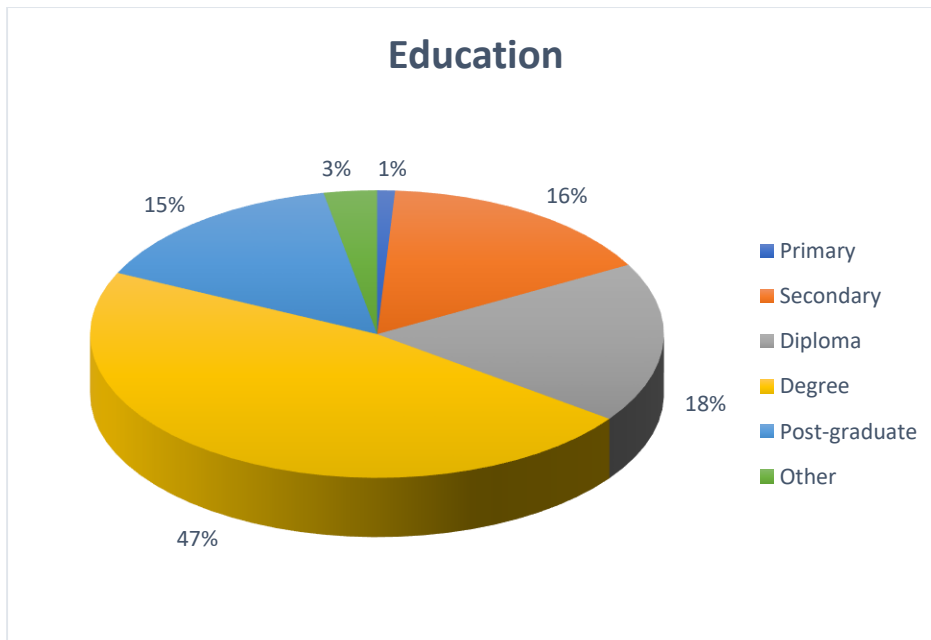


Figure 5.6: Level of education

5.3.1.7 Employment status

The graph (Figure 5.7) illustrates the respondent's employment status. The largest number of respondents are employed with 41%. The second-highest number were self-employed with 24%. Twenty percent of respondents were students, with 13% being unemployed. Respondents who are pensioners, as well as others, account for 1% each. The results of the analysis show that ecotourism, as well as the purchase of tourism products, appeals mostly to people who are employed and earning an income and this findings correlates well with Kruger, Viljoen and Saayman (2017:331).

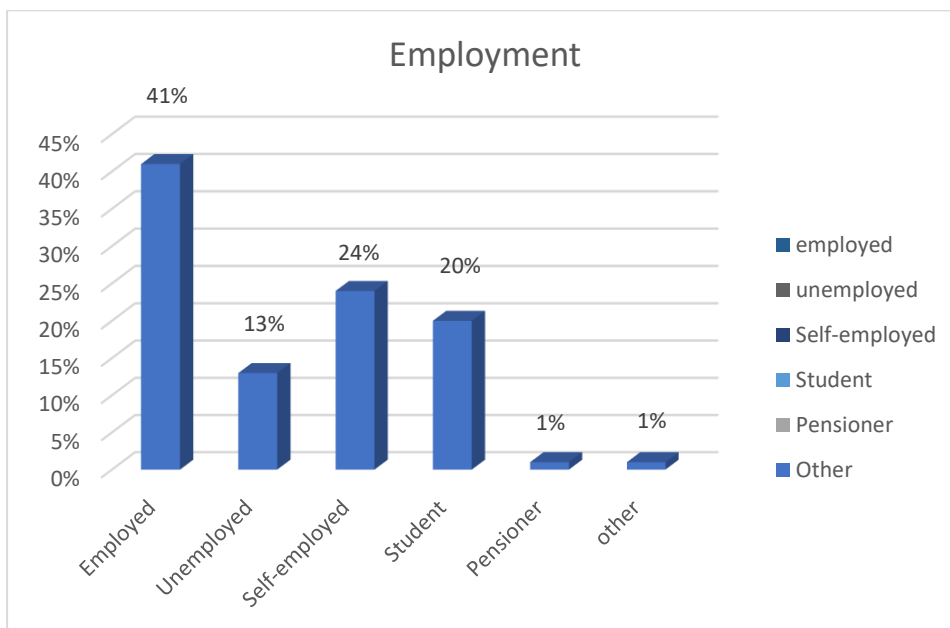


Figure 5.7: Employment status

5.3.1.8 Monthly income

Figure 5.8 illustrates the monthly income of respondents. According to the results, 24% of participants earned ₦200 000 – ₦300 000 per month (USD 521.60 - USD 782.40 which is equivalent to R7 568.25 – R11 360.28). The result by Bushell (2001:13) on the place of ecotourism, with particular reference to New South Wales in Australia reviews that ecotourists are employed and earn between \$40 000 and \$60 000. This is followed by participants earning ₦50 000 – ₦100 000, 17% represent those earning ₦20 000 – ₦50 000 and 15% represents ₦150 000 - ₦200 000. Eleven percent of participants receive ₦100 000 – ₦150 000 as their monthly income while participants who earn ₦20 000 and others represent 9% and 4%, respectively.

Participant's employment status reveals that 41% of participants are employed and earning an income which implies that participants are likely to spend their disposable income on travel and tourism. This result further illustrates that participants are high-income earners, an indication that Nigeria is an expensive destination afforded by only wealthy tourists leading to trends towards a 'low volume-high cost' destination as described by Ngoka and Lameed (2013:195), a situation that can bring about the low visitation of tourism destinations with high spending due to high pricing of tourism products.

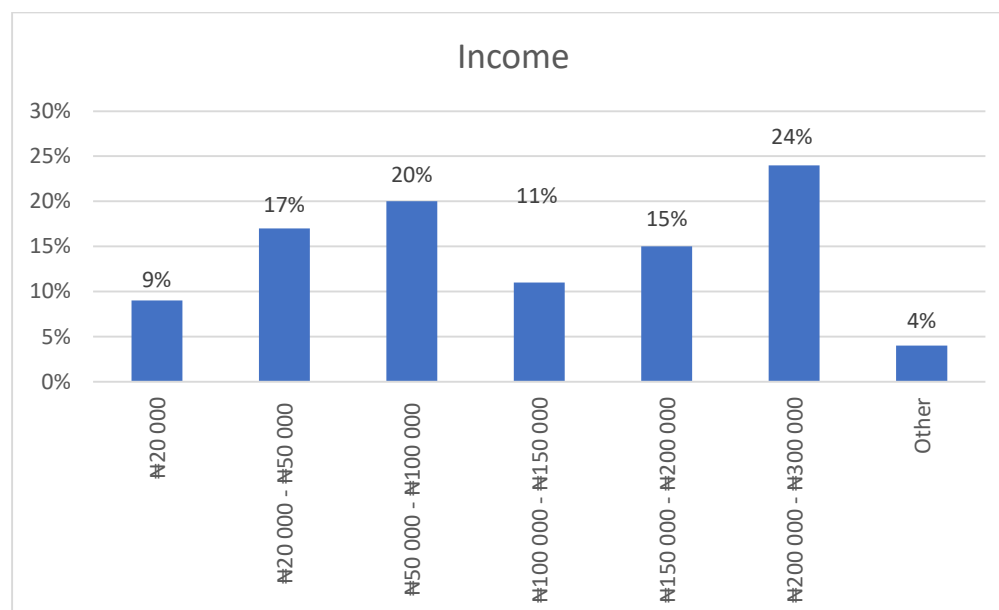


Figure 5.8: Monthly income of respondents

5.3.1.9 Number of people travelling in a group

According to the results presented in Figure 5.9, the majority of participants (49%) were travelling in groups of between 3 and 5 people, followed by respondents whose travel group is made up of 1 or 2 people, which accounts for 36%. Participants in a travel group of 6 to 10 people represent 9%, while 6% represents those in a travel group of 11 people or more. These results correspond with the result of

Archer and Griffin (2005:8) who studied visitor use and satisfaction in Mungo National Park, New South Wales, Australia and found that participants travel in a group of 1 to 5.

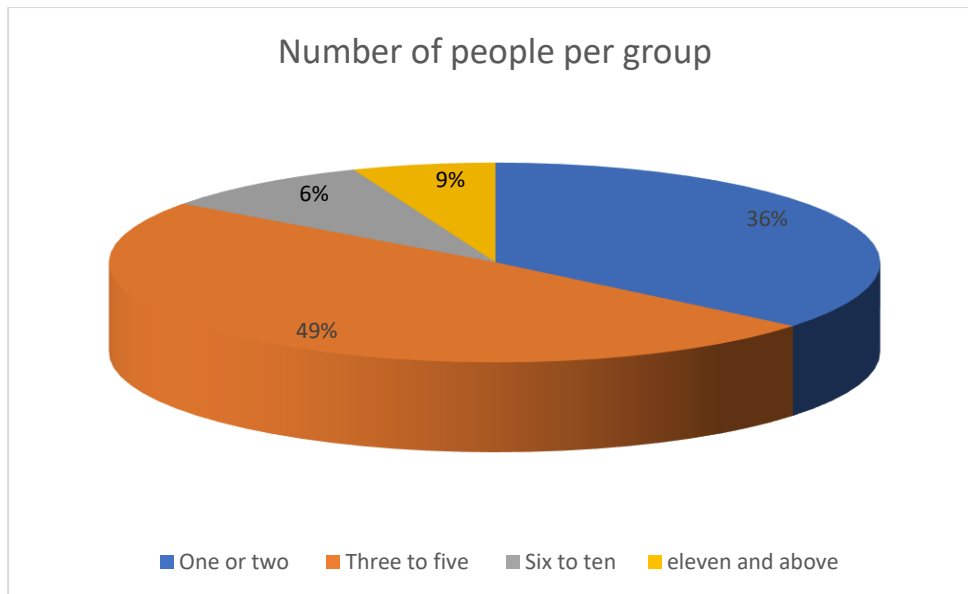


Figure 5.9: Number of people per group

5.3.1.10 Number of times went for holiday/vacation

As can be seen from the Figure 5.10, 44% of participants went on vacation only once a year, and 36% travelled twice a year. Seventeen (17%) percent went on a vacation/holiday three times in a year and participants who went on vacation four times in a year account for 2%. In contrast, participants who went on a holiday five times or more in a year represent 1%. This result shows that tourists nowadays are considering once a year vacations that are characterised by memorable experiences rather than going on vacations two times or more in a year that are not worthwhile. This result is in agreement with Van Vuuren and Slabbert (2011:298) who studied the travel motivations and behaviour of tourists to a South African resort and reports that 54% of respondents travel only once a year.

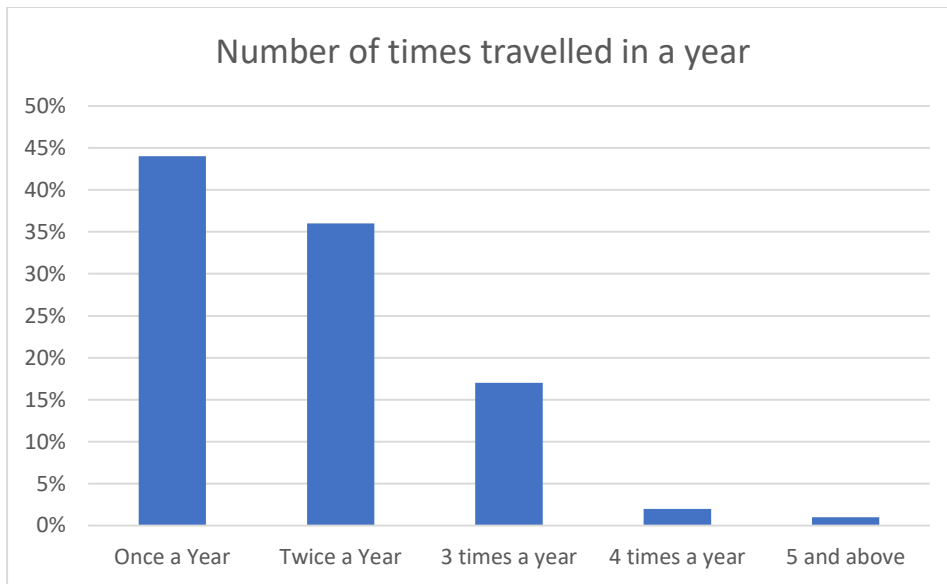


Figure 5.10: Number of times travelled in a year for holiday/vacation

5.3.1.11 Average length of vacation

Table 5.2 presents the result of participant's length of vacation.

Table 5.2 Length of vacation

Length of vacation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	59	22.01
2	81	30.22
3	34	12.69
4	19	7.09
5	12	4.48
6	4	1.49
7	32	11.94
8	6	2.24
10	6	2.24
11	3	1.12
14	12	4.48
Mean	3.77	

According to the results presented in Table 5.2 most of the respondent's vacations (30.22%) lasted for two days, 22.01% spent only one day, respondents whose vacation lasted for three days account for 12.69% and participants who spent four to five days taking their vacation account for 13.06%. Participants whose vacation lasted for seven days accounted for 11.94% and only 10.08% accounts for

respondents whose vacation lasted for eight to fourteen days. The average length of the vacation was three days. This result is somewhat similar to Wei *et al.* (2018:17) in terms of length of vacation.

5.3.1.12 Type of holiday destination

According to the result of the analysis of respondent's holiday type, most of the respondents (40.14%) had nature-based areas/national parks as their holiday destination and 32.53% visit resorts. Friends and relatives represent 8.99%, and cities and coastal areas represent 4.49% and 5.88% respectively. Aquarium and cultural attractions formed 3.37% and 2.08% while 1.38% had arts and culture sites as their holiday destination. Lakes, museums and zoos had 0.35%, 1.38 and 1.73, respectively. The high percentage recorded in nature-based areas/national parks as the participant's holiday destination shows that participants are generally nature lovers, which is one of the characteristics that define an ecotourist. This was expected as the study was conducted in a national park and important as the aim of this study is to develop tourism products for the CRNP. Therefore, it is necessary to have input from ecotourists.

Table 5.3 Type of vacation destination

Holiday destination	Frequency	Percentage
Coastal area	17	5.88
Resorts	94	32.53
Nature-based areas/national parks	116	40.14
Lakes	1	0.35
Cities	13	4.49
Museums	4	1.38
Friends and relatives	26	8.99
Cultural attractions	6	2.08
Arts and cultures	4	1.38
Aquariums	3	3.37
Zoos	5	1.73

5.3.1.13 Heard about the CRNP

Since the survey was not conducted in the CRNP, there was a need to know whether the respondents were familiar with the park to determine its popularity as well as the level of destination marketing.



Figure 5.11 Heard about the CRNP

According to Figure 5.11, 78% of the respondents indicated that they have heard about the CRNP while 22% maintained they have not heard about the park. There is, therefore, a need to intensify the level of destination marketing to increase the level of awareness that will bring about an increase in visitation as there was a reported low visitation of the reserve (refer to section 5.2.2.4).

5.3.1.14 Source of knowledge of the CRNP

Figure 5.12 illustrates the source through which respondents heard about the park. Friends and relatives were the major sources through which participants got to know about the CRNPC (35%), followed by 23% who knew the park through television. Twenty percent got to know about the CRNP through radio and 7% through another medium. Four percent indicated they heard about the CRNP through a travel agent while website and twitter represent 3% and 0% respectively. The high percentage recorded on friends and relatives, which can also be regarded as word of mouth as the medium through which respondents got to know about the park shows the level of destination marketing. As noted by Madafuri (2018:234), the success of tourism product marketing depends on the marketing strategies employed. Word of mouth is indicated in the tourism literature as the most effective medium for marketing as people trust what others have to say regarding a product. While it is easy for someone to ignore adverts regarding a product, a product recommended by friends and relatives is not easily ignored and can therefore be regarded as the most influential sources of information about products and services (Philips, *et al.*, 2013:15; Lai *et al.*, 2018:2).

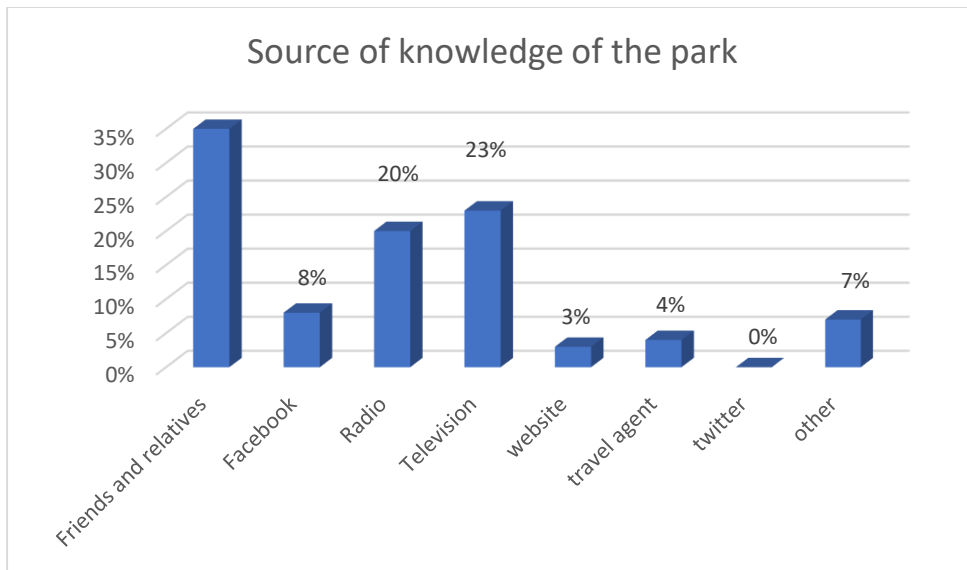


Figure 5.12: Source of knowledge of the park

5.3.1.15 Mode of travel

Accessibility, according to Gupta *et al.* (2015:50), is one of the elements that determine a successful tourist destination. It plays a vital role as it influences tourists' destination choice especially in terms of costs and ease of access to the location. Hence, a knowledge of participant's mode of travel determines destination accessibility. As can be seen in Figure 5.13, most of the respondents, 55%, made use of a private car, 33% chose public transport, and 7% made use of a 4 x 4 vehicle. Three percent used aeroplanes and only 2% used other modes of transport.

The choice and mode of transport differ depending on factors such as group size, journey length or destination. The result on the analysis of participants' state of residence as well as group size shows that most of the respondents (37%) reside in Cross River State with a travel group that is composed of 3 to 5 people. This could be attributed to the fact that it's a close destination and also due to the group size and hence the choice of a private car as a mode of transport as it allows for comfort and convenience. This result supports the findings of Gupta *et al.* (2015:50).

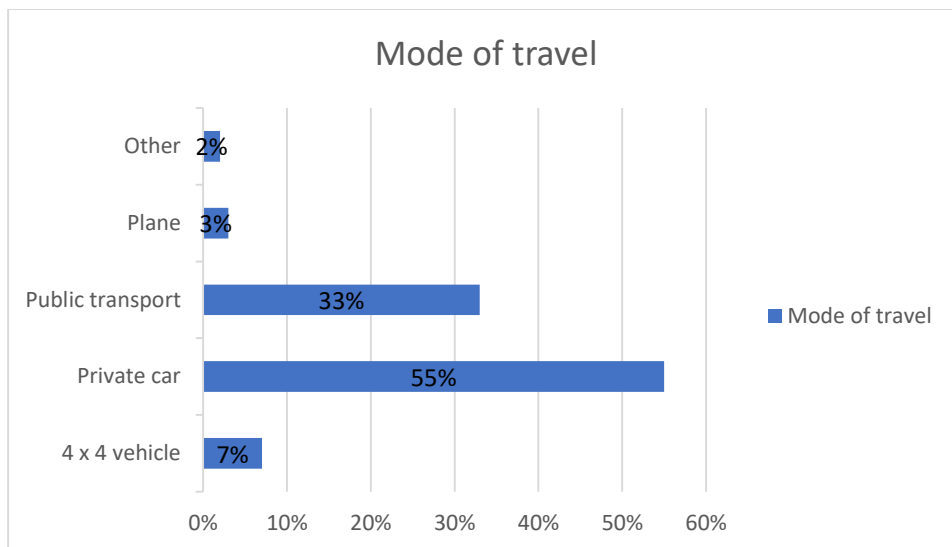


Figure 5.13: Respondents' mode of travel

5.3.2. Accommodation preference

This section of the chapter presents the results of the analysis of respondent's accommodation preference. It includes accommodation type and accommodation units preferred. The section also contained past visits to protected areas/national parks, reasons for visiting or not visiting protected areas/national parks in the past, the importance of tourism product elements and travel motives.

5.3.2.1 Accommodation type

Tourist's accommodation needs and preferences, especially on aspects such as accommodation type, is important since it plays a crucial role in product development as well as decision making (Saayman & Van der Merwe, 2017:67). The result of the analysis of respondents' accommodation type shows that the most preferred accommodation type was self-catering with 39%. This is followed by full board with 35%, while 26% of the respondents indicated that they prefer bed & breakfast. This result indicates that participant's preference for self-catering accommodation may be attributed to the fact that self-catering properties with one or more bedrooms, dining areas and lodge with self-occupied units, accord tourists the opportunity to be self-sufficient, relax and experience the destination as though you were a local thereby making it "a home away from home". This result in agreement with Saayman and Van der Merwe (2017:67) in their study "Identifying ecotourists' accommodation needs and preferences" and indicates that a variety of accommodation types, including self-catering, are preferred by ecotourists.

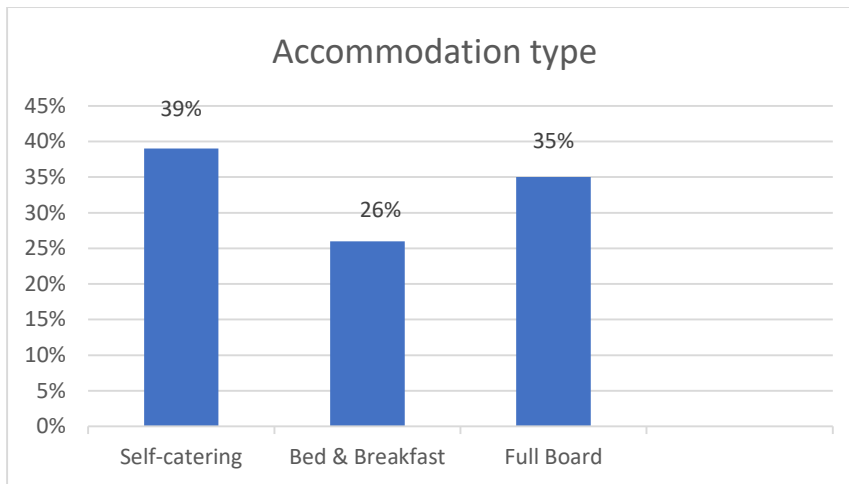


Figure 5.14: Participants' preferred accommodation type

5.3.2.2 Accommodation units

Accommodation is one of the most common demands, as it enhances tourist experience in a destination (Weaver & Oppermann, 2000). The results in Figure 5.15 indicate that the majority of the respondents preferred a rondavel 27%, followed by a log cabin with 20%. Seventeen percent preferred chalets and 12% went for huts. Nine percent of the respondents chose guesthouses, some respondents (8%) preferred camping while those who preferred glamping and hotel were made up of 4% and 3% respectively. This result agrees with Kruger *et al.* (2017:3), who opine that today's tourist prefers an accommodation type that is nature based. It is also similar to the findings of Van der Merwe and Slabbert (2018:4) regarding tourists' preference for accommodation such as rondavels, chalets, camping and log cabins.

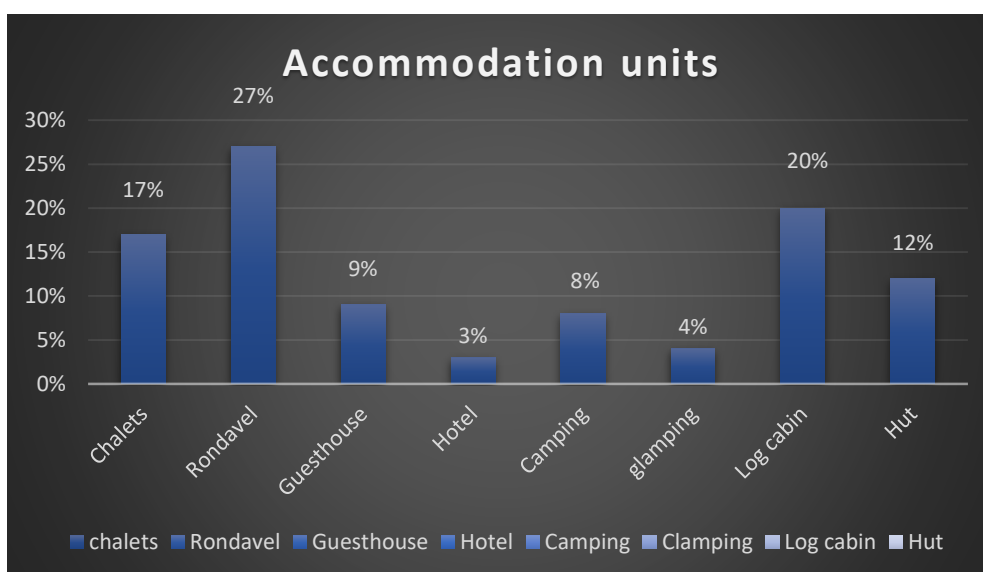


Figure 5.15: Accommodation units

5.3.2.3 Past visit to protected areas/national park

Figure 5.16 presents the result of participants' response regarding their past visits to protected areas. It can be seen that respondents indicated that they had visited a protected area or a national park in the past with a 64% response, thirty-six (36%) percent indicated that they had not visited a protected area or a national park in the past.



Figure 5.16: Past visit to protected area/national park

5.3.2.4 Reasons for visiting or not visiting a protected area/national park in the past

An open-ended question was used to enquire about participant's travel history. This was necessary to understand why participants had visited protected areas in the past as well as their reasons for not visiting, and a number of reasons were given by respondents. For better understanding and for the analysis of the results, the reasons were categorised and themes assigned to the responses. Table 5.4 summarises the reasons indicated by participants for visiting protected areas in the past as well as their reasons for not visiting. The following reasons emerged as participants' purpose of visiting protected areas:

- Sightseeing,
- Wildlife experience
- Knowledge-seeking
- Relationship enhancement
- Relaxation and escape
- Other reasons.

Also identified were the reasons participants had not visited.

The following reasons emerged:

- Not aware
- Not interested
- Lack of finance
- Too busy.

Table 5.4 Reason for visiting or not visiting protected area/national park in the past.

Reason for visiting (89%)		Reason for not visiting (11%)	
Sightseeing	30%	Not aware	6%
Knowledge seeking	21%	Not interested	3%
Wildlife experience	17%	Lack of finance	1%
Relationship enhancement	11%	Too busy	1%
Relaxation and escape	8%		
Other reasons	2%		

As can be seen from Table 5.4, 30% stated that they visited protected area/national park for sightseeing, 21% noted that it was for knowledge seeking, those who went for wildlife experience represents 17% and 11% visited for relationship enhancement. Relaxation and escape as well as for other reasons, represent 8% and 2% respectively. It is important to note that tourists visit places that are famous or interesting to them. Interestingly, the respondents' major reason for taking a vacation at a national park or a protected area was for sightseeing, an indication that participants are attraction-oriented and thus calls for the development of ecotourism products within the park as there is reported lack of man-made tourism products in the park. Tourism providers are, therefore, encouraged to make their destinations appealing by developing the right tourism products that will encourage sightseeing that will bring about a memorable experience. This result is backed up by Archer and Griffin (2005:9) who reported that sightseeing was the major reason for visitor's visits to Mungo National Park, New South Wales, Australia.

Based on the 11% who indicated their reasons for not visiting protected areas/national parks in the past (Table 5.4), 6% stated it was because they weren't aware, 3% noted they are not interested, participants who cited lack of finance and too busy as their reasons represent 1% each, respectively. This result indicates that there are possibilities that participants lack knowledge about the existence of a protected area or a national park in the area. The result regarding the source through which participants heard about the CRNP shows that the majority (35%) heard about the park through friends and relatives (see section 5.3.1.14), which therefore calls for destination marketing. Another reason for consideration is lack of interest as indicated by the respondent for not visiting the protected area in the past. It is important to state that the introduction of diverse activities, as well as the development of attractive

tourism products within a destination, will not only trigger interest, it also has the potential to create an influx of tourist to a destination, to increase spending and generate revenue.

5.3.3 Importance of tourism product elements

This study investigates the ecotourism product needs of ecotourists to determine the key aspects for ecotourism product development that will be suitable for the study destination. To achieve this, it was important to understand the perspectives of ecotourists on the elements of tourism products. Using a 5-point Likert scale, the following response options were put forward to assess participants' level of agreement with the tourism products: 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Low importance, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important and 5 = Very important.

In accordance to the level of agreement or disagreement with the importance of tourism products, participants' responses are presented in Table 5.5 using frequency distribution in terms of percentages.

Table 5.5: Tourism products importance

Elements of Tourism product	Not at all important	Low importance	Neutral	Important	Very important
Accommodation at the destination	10%	23%	3%	24%	40%
Activities and tour	7%	5%	4%	32%	52%
Accessibilities	5%	10%	5%	20%	60%
Attractions	1%	5%	2%	37%	55%
Destination facilities/amenities	4%	10%	6%	25%	55%
Appeal	3%	3%	11%	20%	63%
Price	1%	5%	4%	31%	59%

5.3.3.1 Accommodation

According to Poudel (2013:1), accommodation is a crucial element of the tourism product as the type, scale and nature of accommodation accessible at the destination determine the type and scale of tourism that is feasible at such a destination. No wonder that 64% of the respondents see accommodation as important to very important. On the other hand, 33% of respondents considered accommodation of low importance or not at all important, perhaps because they are day travellers who return to their home after a trip and hence do not need accommodation. Three percent of respondents remained neutral regarding the importance of this tourism product.

Since accommodation is seen as an important element of a tourism product that must be considered when choosing a destination to visit, it therefore calls for the development of the right type of accommodation in the CRNP such as rondavels which are a self-catering accommodation and other eco-situated accommodation that permits tourists to feel one with nature, i.e. an accommodation unit that shapes a portion of the generally nature experience so as to encourage a longer stay in the park.

5.3.3.2 Activities

As can be seen from the results in Table 5.5, 84% of respondents considered activities and tours at a destination important to very important. Ritchie and Crouch (2003:60) referred to activities as a “trip motivator” and “generator of expenditure”. This high percentage could be attributed to the important role that activities play in the lives of tourists as activities and tours are the essence of tourism in a destination. Twelve percent of respondents remained neutral about the importance of activities at a destination while some participants (4%) felt it was of low importance or not at all important. This, therefore, implies that, for tourists’ needs to be met, an eco-destination such as the CRNP needs to develop the right ecotourism products, i.e. activities in which tourists can engage at the destination. As indicated by the respondents, activities such as game viewing, camping, hiking, a guided safari tour, bird watching, self-drive opportunity, a mini-golf course, picnicking and barbecuing, observing drill monkeys, as well as hunting and fishing activities, can be developed within the park to encourage activity-oriented visitors to the park.

5.3.3.3 Accessibility

According to the results presented in Table 5.5, it is interesting to see that 80% of respondents considered accessibility important to very important. This may be due to the crucial role played by accessibility as a tourism product. As opined by Gupta *et al.* (2015:50), accessibility is an important tourism element that determines a successful tourist destination as it influences tourists’ choice of a destination to visit, especially in terms of ease of access of the location as well as cost. Fifteen percent felt it was of low importance or not at all important, while 5% remained neutral to this tourism product element. The literature reported accessibility as one of the factors affecting the use of existing potentials of the CRNP (Ngoka *et al.* 2014:564), a factor that was also identified as the major stumbling block to the tourism development of CRS as well as in the CRNP by tourism officials of the state (see section 5.2.1.10). This, therefore, calls for the development of access roads within the park for ease of location as well as the accessibility of the destination’s tourism products.

5.3.3.4 Attraction

Attraction, as indicated by Middleton and Clark (2001:125), is the first component that is the driving force that motivates and influences tourists' destination choice the most. Considering the importance of attraction in a destination, it's not surprising to see that 92% considered attraction as an important to very important aspect of tourism products (see Table 5.5). This implies that, of all the elements of the tourism products, the attraction is seen as the most important element considered by participants when making decisions regarding tourism destinations to visit and hence should be considered as a pull factor, a point noted by Benur and Bramwell (2015:213). Some respondent (6%) thought it was of low importance or not at all important, while only 2% of the participants were neutral about the importance of attraction as an element of a tourism product. This result aligns with Swarbrooke (2002:1) who is of the view that attractions are the core elements that constitute tourism products.

The reported inadequacy of the CRNP's tourism products, especially the man-made component of the park, has not only affected the rate of patronage of the reserve but has also attracted few or no tourists. This is a situation that can be mitigated through the development of tourist attractions (man-made products) within the park to supplement the existing natural wealth of the park as they are the first component and the driving force that motivates and influences tourists' choice of a tourism destination or product to purchase, an element that exists as the 'life wire' of the tourism system. Also, as suggested by Fayissa, Nsiah, and Tadaese (2008:4), destination attractions should be the major concern for facility development as they are the central key where other economic activities will emerge to bring about the desired growth in any particular area.

5.3.3.5 Destination facilities/amenities

As indicated by Jovanović and Ilić (2016:289), the infrastructural facilities at a destination are the basis of tourism development and destination's resource use. Without these facilities, as argued by Bennett *et al.* (2005:9), many potentially attractive tourists' regions will remain underdeveloped. Most of the respondents (80%) believe the presence of facilities/amenities is important to very important, especially when planning to visit a tourism site. Fourteen percent assumed it is of low importance or not at all important, probably because they were preoccupied by activities and never had the opportunity to use facilities or amenities that a destination had to offer. Six percent of the respondents remained neutral. As reported by Ngoka (2007) and Ofem *et al.* (2012:553), the inadequacy or sometimes non-existence of infrastructures and facilities in the CRNP such as lodging facilities, park viewing tracks/trails, adequate power supply, water facilities, communication facilities, services as well as the quality of management has greatly affected destination marketing and thus the need to develop facilities within the park for tourists' comfort and convenience.

5.3.3.6 Appeal

The appeal is seen as the image, perception and preferences of a destination. As noted by Bennett (2000:12), tourist perception and preference of a destination or the products available at a destination play a crucial role in their destination choice. This assertion by Bennett (2000:12) was welcomed by participants as it can be seen that 69% considered appeal important to very important and 20% thought that it was of low importance or not at all important, possibly because they believed there was no need to consider a destination's image if it provides all the needed facilities as well as activities. Eleven percent, on the other hand, remained neutral.

The importance of destination appeal cannot be overemphasised as the preference of one particular destination over another is largely dependent on its image and perceptual beliefs i.e. tourist's characteristics. Factors such as security concerns, political instability, poor maintenance of tourist sites, corruption, amongst others as identified by Yusuf (2014:15-16) and Ezenagu (2018:5) are some of the factors affecting tourism development in Nigerian national parks which can negatively impact destination image. A situation which can be salvaged by ensuring that the issue of safety, security and other problems as identified by Yusuf (2014:15-16) and Ezenagu (2018:5) posing a great threat or challenges to tourism development and a dent to the image of the CRNP are addressed as well as the marketing and development of ecotourism products that will be appealing to tourists.

5.3.3.7 Price

Price plays an important role in tourist choice of tourism product to purchase, as high prices and extreme competition can greatly influence product choice and affect sales. As can be seen from Table 5.5, participants (90%) considered price important to very important, especially when purchasing a tourism product as well as visiting a particular tourism destination since tourists are interested in destinations that offer value for money. This was noted by Cirikovic (2014:113). Six percent of the participants felt that price was of low importance or not at all important if value was offered and 4% remained neutral. Since price is considered crucial by participants in their destination choice as well as a tourism product to purchase, it is therefore important for tourism product providers to ensure their products are priced accordingly to sustain actual and potential customers.

5.3.4 Travel motives

Travel motives, according to Gnanapala (2012:49) is the starting point of product development and the decision-making process. Using a 5-point Likert scale, the following response options were used to examine respondents' level of agreement with their motivation to travel: 1 = Not at all Important, 2 = Low Importance, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important and 5 = Very Important. In accordance to the level of

agreement or disagreement regarding the importance of the motivation to travel, Table 5.6 below presents the results of respondents travel motives in the form of a percentage.

Table 5.6 Travel motives

Motivation to Travel	Motivation in Percentage (%)				
	Not at all Important	Low Importance	Neutral	Important	Very Important
To see the big five	5%	4%	12%	35%	18%
For new experience	1%	1%	4%	43%	51%
To meet new people	43%	8%	2%	7%	40%
For my personal wellbeing	0%	4%	9%	44%	43%
For the scenic beauty	48%	12%	2%	12%	26%
For bird watching opportunities	39%	7%	14%	7%	33%
To see endangered species	6%	5%	10%	33%	46%
To see plants	35%	13%	12%	7%	33%
To take photos of plants and animals	6%	3%	44%	9%	38%
To attend a conference	17%	44%	25%	14%	26%
To attend events	57%	30%	12%	39%	10%
To experience wildlife	3%	4%	8%	38%	47%
Spend time with family and friends	7%	7%	5%	39%	42%
To explore new destinations	39%	6%	2%	3%	50%
Socialise with friends	3%	3%	5%	9%	32%
Explore new areas	1%	3%	7%	42%	47%
To get away from a regular routine	2%	6%	7%	41%	44%
To relax	0%	4%	5%	28%	63%

Participants rated the following travel motives as *important to very important*, as shown in Table 5.6.

- For new experiences (94%)
- To relax (91%)
- To explore new areas (89%),

- For my personal wellbeing (87),
- To experience wildlife (81%)
- To get away from a regular routine 85%.
- To spend time with family and friends (81%)
- To see endangered species (79%)
- To see the big five (53%)
- To explore new destinations (53)
- To socialise with friends (41%).

The aspects that were seen as *not at all important to of low importance* were:

- To attend events (87%)
- To attend conferences (61%)
- For the scenic beauty (60%)
- To meet new people (51%)
- To see plants (48%)
- For bird watching opportunities (46%).
- To take photos of plant and animals remained neutral at (44%).

For a better understanding and identification of the critical factors motivating tourists travel to natural areas, a factor analysis was performed on the variables to ascertain the relationship amongst the travel motives and this is presented in section D.

SECTION D: Factor analysis

5.3.5 Factor analysis

Factor analysis is a technique used to condense a large number of items into fewer numbers of factors. By grouping items with similar features, factor analysis is able to produce a fewer number of factors from a larger number of variables that are able to interpret the variance of the larger number of variables which can then be applied for further analysis (Tustin *et al.*, 2005:341). This section contains the factor analysis of the results chapter and consists of the following: factor analysis of participants' travel motives and factor analysis of potential ecotourism products.

5.3.5.1 Factor analysis of travel motives

To determine the ecotourism product needs of ecotourists, there is a need to know tourists' travel motives and hence the use of the factor analysis as it assisted in recognising the important factors that motivate tourists to travel to natural areas/national parks as it provides the platform to better investigate the underlying relationship existing among the 18 ecotourism travel motives of Nigeria ecotourists.

Also, by using the factor analysis, one is able to obtain a definite and well-defined tourist travel motivation to natural areas just like the motives obtained from this study, as shown in Table 5.7 below.

To further probe the travel motivation items as contained in the questionnaire, a principal component exploratory factor analysis was considered. This involves extracting the factor, retaining the factor and factor rotation as proposed by Patil *et al.* (2008:163). By using the principal component exploratory factor analysis, five factors were identified explaining 62% of the variation data. For each of the factors, the mean value, Cronbach's Alpha and inter-item correlation were examined. Cronbach's Alpha was employed to determine the measure of internal consistency among items as well as data reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011:1). In addition, the second measure of reliability i.e. inter-item correlation was performed to ascertain the level to which results on one item are linked to results on the entire items in a scale. The mean values show the importance of a factor with respect to the other factors (Salkind, 2007). In accordance with the variables from which the test was calculated and the level of agreement with the importance of the identified travel motivations using a 5-point Likert scale which includes; 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Low importance, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important and 5 = Very important. The identified factors are shown in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7 Factor analysis of motives for visiting natural areas

Factor Components					
62% variance explained	Factor 1: Fauna and Flora	Factor 2: Socialisation	Factor 3: Relaxation	Factor 4: Experiences	Factor 5: Events and Conferences
Cronbach's Alpha	0.815	0.723	0.546	0.668	0.471
Inter-item Correlations	0.466	0.371	0.236	0.394	0.346
Mean Value	4.04	4.20	4.35	4.26	3.78
Travel Motives					
To see plants	0.815				
For bird watching opportunities	0.716				
To see endangered species	0.702				
For the scenic beauty	0.701				
To take photos of plants and animals	0.685				

To meet new people		-0.643			
For wildlife experience		0.643			
To socialise with friends		-0.470			
For my personal wellbeing		-0.346			
For relaxation			0.756		
To get away from a regular routine			0.741		
To explore new destinations			0.723		
To explore new areas			0.672		
To spend time with family			0.401		
For new experiences				0.807	
To see the big 5				0.780	
To attend events					0.802
To attend conferences					0.591

The following five factors were identified; fauna and flora, socialisation, relaxation, experiences and events and conferences.

- **Factor 1: Fauna and flora**

The factor fauna and flora yielded a mean value of 4.04, a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.815, and an inter-item correlation of 0.466. This was important (particularly the Cronbach's Alpha to determine the measure of internal consistency among items as well as data reliability). The loaded factor explains the extent to which participants appreciate the beauty of nature and their interest in seeing fauna (animal) and flora (plants) or natural tourism products. A total of five items were loaded into this factor, and it includes items such as, to see plants, for bird watching opportunities, to see endangered species, for the scenic beauty and to take photos of plants and animals. All these items are important with respect to a factor such as fauna and flora, and the factor loadings (the correlation coefficient for the variable and factor) ranged between 0.685 (lowest) and 0.815 (highest). This factor is confirmed by Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008:157) as a motive for visiting a natural area or a national park. Awaritefe (2004:322) also reports that nature appreciation, as well as bird viewing, are the significant motive of domestic and foreign visitors to two national parks of Nigeria (Yankari and Kainji parks).

- **Factor 2: Socialisation**

Socialisation included items such as to meet new people, for a wildlife experience, to socialise with friends and for my personal wellbeing. This factor has a mean value of 4.20, making it the factor with third-highest value and the measure of reliability i.e. Cronbach's Alpha is 0.723 with an inter-item correlation of 0.371. All loaded items portrayed an important attribute of socialisation with a factor loading ranging from -0.346 (lowest) to -0.643(highest). This factor loading reviews participants' interest in engaging in social activities (i.e. to meet new people, for wildlife experience, to socialise with friends and for my personal wellbeing). Saayman and Saayman (2009) identified family and socialisation as factors that matter in travel motivation and socio-demographics in managing a national park.

- **Factor 3: Relaxation**

This factor is made up of the following items; for relaxation, to get away from a regular routine, to explore new destinations, to explore new areas and to spend time with family. The factor had an overwhelming mean value of 4.35, making it the factor with the highest mean value while the measure of reliability, i.e. Cronbach's Alpha is 0.546. The inter-item correlation was 0.236. The loaded items incorporate items that represent relaxation with a loading ranging from 0.401 (lowest) to 0.756 (highest). This factor loading portrays the rate at which ecotourists value and show great interest in activities that encourage relaxation and afford one the opportunity to explore new destinations and spend time with family after an exhausting regular routine. This, therefore, entails that the most important factor, as well as the most preferred factor, was relaxation followed by experiences and then socialisation. The high mean value recorded in this factor also shows that the development of ecotourism products in the destination (the CRNP) has the potential of influencing tourist destination choice that will bring about enhanced ecotourist relaxation due to an array of products within the destination. This factor agrees with Botha (2011:76) who established that escape and relaxation are some of the factors motivating travellers to visit selected national parks in South Africa.

- **Factor 4: Experiences**

Experience included aspects such as; for new experiences and to see the big 5. Chan and Baun (2007) reviewed that ecotourists are special visitors who purchase and consume ecotourist related tourism products and experiences. The experience factor has a mean value of 4.26, making it the second-highest value. HLA Consultants, as cited by Chan and Baum (2007) identified new experiences, a form of novelty as being the main motivator for nature-based visitors. This factor is in agreement with Van der Merwe and Slabbert (2018:15) when they described ecotourists' desire to be close to nature, a place to sit and enjoy the outdoors, outside showers/toilets and good food, as part of the experience. The Cronbach's Alpha for experience is 0.668 while the inter-item correlations is 0.394. The factor loading

portrays participants' great interest in products and activities that provide experiences with items that capture experiences and having a factor loading of 0.780 and 0.807.

- **Factor 5: Events and conferences**

This factor includes aspects such as; to attend events and to attend conferences. The factor events and conferences have a mean value of 3.78, the measure of reliability, i.e. the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.471 while the inter-item correlation is 0.346. Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008) determined that activities such as to attend events and conferences are some of the travel motives of tourists visiting the Kruger National Park. This factor was the factor with the lowest mean value (3.78) and an indication that ecotourists have a minimal interest on activities such as events and conferences in natural areas.

Tourists have different motives and preferences for visiting different destinations. The result from the study by Van der Merwe and Saayman (2008), confirm the notion that different attraction feeds different motives to travel. Based on this, it is expected that the motives for visiting the CRNP would also be different from studies conducted at other national parks. As can be seen from the results, it is quite clear that the main travel motives of participants were for relation, experiences and socialisation and can be classified as "Push Factors" (internal desires and emotions propelling tourists to go away from home and travel), motives that can be harnessed to the advantage of the CRNP by developing the right tourism products within the park for an all-round new experience that is memorable. Nevertheless, there must be a strong relationship between motivation and destination (attraction) as proposed by Reinius and Fredman (2007).

5.3.5.2 Factor analysis of ecotourism activities

This study investigates the ecotourism product needs of ecotourists to determine the key aspects of ecotourism product development that will be suitable for the study destination. To achieve this, it was important to understand the perspectives of ecotourists on the elements of tourism products. A factor analysis was therefore conducted to further investigate and enhance the value of the ecotourism products as identified in Table 5.8.

To confirm the validity of the construct contained in the questionnaire for the ecotourism products and services, the principal component exploratory factor analysis was employed, and it resulted in three factors explaining 60.50% of the variables from which the test was calculated. The levels of agreement with the importance of the identified potential ecotourism products were accessed using a 5-point Likert scale which includes; 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Low importance, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important and 5 = Very important. The element, activities produced three factors, which include sporting activities (Factor 1), wildlife viewing (Factor 2) and outdoor stays (Factor 3). Table 5.8 presents the result of the analysis.

Table 5.8 Factor analysis of ecotourism products and activities

Factor components			
60.5% Variance explained	Factor 1: sporting activities	Factor 2: Wildlife viewing	Factor 3: Outdoor stays
Cronbach's Alpha	0.626	0.822	0.298
Inter-Item Correlations	0.354	0.481	0.179
Mean Value	3.90	4.14	4.15
Activity Factors			
Mini-golf course	0.881		
Cycling	0.802		
Self-drive opportunities	0.722		
Hunting and fishing	0.721		
Guided safari tour	0.701		
Boating/canoeing	0.650		
Hiking trail	0.573		
Horse riding	0.564		
Gorilla tracking		0.880	
Chimpanzee encounter		0.862	
Observing the drill monkeys		0.843	
Bird watching		0.570	
Game viewing		0.542	
Picnicking and barbecuing			0.624
Camping			-0.496

The factor analysis portrayed participants' perceptions regarding the importance of activities in a destination, and more value was placed on factors with elements of recreation and game viewing.

Factor 1: Sporting activities

This factor had a mean value of 3.90, making it the factor with the lowest mean value. It has a Cronbach Alpha of 0.626 and an inter-item correlation of 0.298. The factor shows the participant's level of interest in sporting activities in a destination. A total of eight items were loaded into this factor and they are as follows: mini-golf course, cycling, self-drive opportunities, hunting and fishing, guided safari tour, boating/canoeing, hiking trail and horse riding. Van der Merwe and Saayman (2014:2) identified this factor when they recognised self-drive and guided safari tours as important factors that determine tourists' memorable experiences. Van der Merwe and Slabbert (2018:13) and Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003:5) also identified activities such as hunting, hiking, horse riding, boating, fishing etc. as some of ecotourists' product preferences for nature-based activities. The items had loadings ranging from 0.564 (lowest) to 0.881 (highest). Although this factor has a minimal demand by participants, it is interesting to see that all loaded items captured sporting elements making it very important with respect to sports.

Factor 2: Wildlife viewing

This factor captured elements that are significant to wildlife viewing and they include; gorilla tracking, chimpanzee encounters, observing the drill monkeys, bird watching and game viewing. It has a 0.822 measure of reliability, i.e. Cronbach's Alpha, a 0.481 inter-item correlation (a second measure of reliability) and a mean value of 4.14 making it the factor with the second highest mean value. The loaded items ranged between 0.542 (lowest) to 0.880 (highest) which shows participants' level of interest in game viewing and an indication that the development of ecotourism products (such as gorilla tracking, chimpanzee encounters, observing the drill monkeys, bird watching and game viewing) is of the essence in a destination. Holden (2008) confirmed this factor when they described ecotourists as people who participate in ecotourism activities such as wildlife viewing, visit a national park and other natural areas.

Factor 3: Outdoor stays

The factor, outdoor stays captured participant's quest for an outdoor activity that is refreshing and revitalising, and two items were loaded into this factor which includes activities such as picnicking and barbecuing. The measure of reliability, i.e. the Cronbach's Alpha, was 0.298 while the inter-item correlation was 0.179. The mean value was 4.15, making it the factor with the highest mean value, which is an indication that outdoor stays were of tremendous importance to ecotourists longing for a refreshing eco-tour. This factor is in agreement with Maleski (2012:4) who compared ecotourists' and conventional tourists' travel motivations and concludes that ecotourists place higher importance on being outdoors and viewing the scenery.

Of all the identified factors that are associated with activities, outdoor stays were the most preferred factor by participants followed by wildlife viewing and sporting activities.

5.3.5.3 Factor analysis of ecotourism facilities/amenities

A factor analysis was also used to identify the important factors that reveal preference for particular ecotourism products (facilities). Using a principal component exploratory factor analysis, the perspectives of ecotourists regarding the elements of ecotourism products such as facilities/amenities in a destination were determined. The analysis resulted in three factors for ecotourism facilities/amenities; supporting facilities (Factor 1), security (Factor 2) and amenities (Factor 3). This, therefore, confirms the report by Jovanović and Ilić (2016:289) that the infrastructural facilities at a destination are the basis of tourism development and destination's resource utilisation. Similar to section 5.3.5.2, a 5-point Likert scale was used to ascertain the level of agreement with the importance of the identified potential ecotourism products and they include; 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Low importance, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important and 5 = Very important. Table 5.9 below present the results of the pattern matrix which is followed by detailed interpretation.

Table 5.9 Factor analysis of ecotourism facilities/amenities

Factor Components			
Variance explained 60.5%	Factor 1: Supporting facilities	Factor 2: Security	Factor 3: Amenities
Cronbach's Alpha	0.723	0.642	0.581
Inter-Item Correlations	0.396	0.381	0.329
Mean Value	4.46	4.35	4.56
Facilities/Amenities Factors			
Excellent road infrastructure in the park	0.819		
Provision of adequate power	0.683		
Natural swimming pool	0.659		
Provision of communication facilities	0.542		
Basic security facilities		-0.781	
Provision of adequate water supply		-0.729	
Provision of adequate nature trails for park viewing		-0.462	

Braai facilities			0.743
Parking space			0.730
Restaurant services			0.348

Factor 1: Supporting facilities

Supporting facilities, which can be regarded as ancillary services, have been described by Lenoir (2011) as “*any additional services offered by travel and tourism providers beyond the main product or services*”. The supporting facilities included the following items: excellent road infrastructure in the park, provision of adequate power, natural swimming pool and provision of communication facilities. The loaded items incorporated elements that enhance tourists’ stay in a destination with factor loadings ranging from 0.542 (lowest) to 0.819 (highest). Although this factor had a moderate value, it shows the extent to which tourists appreciate supporting facilities in a destination and is very important especially to tourists aspiring for a longer stay as these facilities have the potential to enhance one’s experience. Supporting facilities had a mean value of 4.46, making it the factor with the second highest mean value with a reliability coefficient of 0.723 and an inter-item correlation of 0.396. This factor confirmed Camilleri (2017:16) when he highlighted facilities such as banks, telecommunication, medical services and hygiene as elements of ancillary services.

Factor 2: Security

The second factor illustrates the extent to which tourists value their safety and hold security in high esteem. A total of three items were loaded into this factor, and they are basic security facilities, provision of adequate water supply and provision of adequate nature trails for park viewing. This factor has a mean value of 4.35, a measure of reliability i.e. Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.642 and inter-item correlation of 0.381. Since tourists visit destinations that they considered safe, products providers should ensure there is an adequate security in the destination by ensuring all security measures are put in place for the safety of their visitors and by providing a unified quality product that would meet the security standards (Uzun *et al.*, 2014:3). Adequate safety facilities have been confirmed by Yacob *et al.* (2013:359) as factors enhancing the development of ecotourism products in Kilim Geopark with respect to tourists’ perceptions. Camilleri (2017:16) also identified security as one of the factors enhancing a customer’s experience.

Factor 3: Amenities

The last factor identified as amenities has the following three items: braai facilities, parking space and restaurant services. The mean value was 4.56, making it the factor with the highest mean value and an

indication of tourist desire and preference for a destination with amenities (such as braai facilities, parking space and restaurant services) that meet their needs. The measure of reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was 0.581, while the inter-item correlation was 0.329. This factor is in agreement with the findings of Hermawan *et al.* (2019:12), who assert that the availability of amenities in a destination improves tourists' satisfaction.

In summary, as can be seen from the results, the factor with the highest mean value is amenities and therefore considered the most important in this study. This importance can be reflected in the fact that these amenities or facilities can enhance tourists' experience and contribute to increasing the quality of production, service delivery and also increase remote destinations' supply of tourism products and services.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to analyse and introduce the results of both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this study. Using a content analysis that involved preparing the data for analysis, exploring the data, analysing the data, representing the analysis, interpreting the analysis, and validating the data and interpretations, the qualitative study was analysed and results obtained. The results of the qualitative study clearly show the roles played by the government and its agencies in ecotourism product development of the state as well as in the CRNP. Although the roles of the government agencies are linked as they all played an active role of ensuring tourism development in the State, there is a great gap existing between the government, private organisations, the community and the park, a situation which has led to total negligence of the park. Worthy of note is that the roles of the private sector and the government are absolutely necessary in bringing about the desired growth and development and therefore should be strengthened. This calls for the need for a decision to be taken on measures that will create and establish a formal relationship amongst these key players of the industry to ensure an effective and active role that will bring about ecotourism product development of the park. The community, on the other hand, should not be left out in the development and planning of tourism resources which they host and hence they must be part and parcel of the development process both in decision making and management as community participation has been proved to be very effective in product development.

This was followed by an analysis of the quantitative study. The quantitative study was performed to examine the perspectives as well as the ecotourism product needs of ecotourists. This was achieved through a descriptive analysis of respondents' demographic profile involving frequency analysis, percentages and charts. Also, with the use of factor analysis, respondents travel motives, as well as ecotourism product needs of respondents, were determined. According to the result, the profile of

ecotourists to natural area are as follows: the ecotourists are male and 32 years of age, single with a graduate degree, employed and a high-income earner. He travels in a group of 3-5 people, goes on holiday/vacation once a year, spends approximately 3 days, visits nature-based areas/national parks as a holiday destination and travels in a private car. The ecotourists prefer self-catering accommodation as well as a rondavel as an accommodation unit.

Furthermore, the factor analysis identified fauna and flora, socialisation, relaxation, experiences and events and conferences as participant's travel motives. The factor with the highest mean value was relaxation, making it the most important reasons of ecotourists to Nigeria's natural areas/national parks. Also, the factor analysis of ecotourism products and activities for natural areas revealed three factors each for activities and facilities/amenities. The activities factors included sporting activities, wildlife viewing and outdoor stays. Outdoor stays had the highest mean value followed by wildlife viewing and then sporting activities. On the other hand, the facilities/amenities factor identified three factors of which amenities was the most preferred, with supporting facilities and security being the second and third, respectively. Since the study is concerned with the development of ecotourism activities and facilities, the following ecotourism products, accessibility and attributes were excluded from the factor analysis as they were of less importance to the study.

Finally, while the findings of the qualitative study clearly identified and defined the roles of government and its agencies in ecotourism product development as well as the barriers to product development of the park, the result communicates the importance of community participation in product development as this has proved to be very effective in achieving a competitive advantage in any given tourism destination. Tourism product providers and planners are therefore encouraged to incorporate the opinions of the local people into their decision-making processes as they can assist in identifying a great number of ecotourism-related products in the community that will not only help to grow the park for tourism but will also create employment opportunities and improve ecotourism economic benefits. The locals can also help in providing most of the needed products such as amenities which was the most preferred factor by ecotourists, and security as identified by the factor analysis in the quantitative study.

The following chapter (Chapter 6) concludes the study with a detailed discussion from the previous chapters as well as recommendations with regards to the key aspects of ecotourism product development for CRNP.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was the evaluation of the tourism potentials in the study site so as to determine the key aspects of ecotourism product development for the destination. The main purpose of this chapter is to draw conclusions from, and to make recommendations based on, the literature and research results of the study. The recommendations were derived from the results of the study. To achieve the purpose of this chapter, the following objectives were considered:

Objective one: to conduct a literature analysis regarding ecotourism and wildlife tourism. Part of these objectives is further to look at future trends and the needs of ecotourists. This objective was achieved in Chapter 2 where a literature review was done regarding ecotourism, wildlife tourism, the future trends and product needs of ecotourists as well as Chapter 5 where the analysis of the results of this study provided the ecotourism product needs of ecotourists.

Objective two: To research the ecotourism product development literature to determine the critical aspects of importance for tourism product development. This objective was achieved in Chapter 3, with a detailed analysis of the literature on tourism product development. The chapter ensured the following aspects were well covered: a background knowledge of the concept 'tourism product', the definitions of tourism products, the different types of tourism products, a detailed discussion of the components of a thriving tourism destination (Seven 'A's of tourism products), the tourism resources of the CRNP, an examination of the planning and development of the tourism product, the marketing of tourism products and barriers to tourism product development in Nigeria as well as CRNP.

Objective three: to conduct empirical research on the roles played by the government and its agencies in ecotourism product development of the state as well as in CRNP. This objective was achieved by means of a qualitative study (chapter 5).

Objective four: to conduct an empirical research on ecotourists to Obudu Mountain Resort (survey site) to determine the ecotourism product development needs of ecotourists by means of quantitative study. Part of this objective is to further carry out a descriptive analysis of demographic profile of respondents, factor analysis of respondents' travel motives and ecotourists product needs (chapter 5).

Objective five: to draw conclusions from, and to make recommendations based on, the results of the study i.e. on the aim and objectives pertaining to the roles of the government and its agencies in

ecotourism product development of the park as well as the determination of the ecotourism product needs of ecotourists in order to make recommendation with regards to the key aspects of ecotourism product development for CRNP (chapter 2, 3, and 5). This chapter also highlights the limitations of the study as well as future study suggestions.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARDS TO THE STUDY

The conclusions are drawn from the literature review carried out in Chapters 2 and 3 (i.e. ecotourism, wildlife tourism and tourism product development) as well as the empirical results.

6.2.1 Conclusions regarding the literature analysis on wildlife tourism and ecotourism (Chapter 2)

The following conclusions can be drawn from the literature analysis of wildlife and ecotourism:

- Nature-based tourism is tourism based on the natural environment where the features, as well as the settings of these undisturbed natural environments, are the main attractions and categorised into adventure tourism, wildlife tourism, car camping and ecotourism (c.f.2.2).
- Wildlife tourism is a tourism that originated from nature-based tourism to fill the gap created by nature-based tourism and ecotourism in its inability to deal with the issues and situations related to wildlife (c.f.2.3.1).
- It is an encounter with wildlife both flora and fauna in a range of settings such as in the wild, captive or semi-captive and involves activities such as safaris and birdwatching (c.f.2.3.1 & c.f.2.3.2)
- Wildlife tourism can be consumptive (i.e. capturing/killing of animals) or non-consumptive (involving animal photography, viewing and touching) (c.f.2.3.3).
- Passive observation is the best wildlife viewing option (c.f.2.3.3).
- There are four sub-sections of wildlife-based tourism: hunting tourism, wildlife watching, fishing tourism and captive wildlife tourism (c.f.2.3.4).
- Wildlife tourism is partly nature-based tourism, adventure tourism and some key characteristics of ecotourism (c.f.2.3.5).
- The need for sustainable tourism that is entirely based on natural settings and non-consumptive, has led to the emergence of ecotourism which will serve as an alternative approach to tourism development (c.f.2.4).
- Ecotourism is a sustainable type of tourism in natural areas with the ability to assist in achieving; sustainable objectives, enhance tourism development and contribute to the long and difficult processes of ecotourism implementation (c.f.2.4).

- Ecotourism originates from the word 'conservation' (c.f.2.4.1)
- Ecotourism is achieved by combining nature tourism and sustainable tourism (c.f.2.4.1)
- Ecotourism is based on the following pillars: conservation and promotion of the natural and cultural environment, sustainable management of the environment, participation by the local community and tourist satisfaction (c.f.2.4.2).
- The principles of ecotourism were established in 1990s and the principles revolve around the following five main components: nature appreciation, ecological sustainability, environmental education, more benefits for locals and tourist satisfaction (c.f.2.4.3).
- The trends in ecotourism product development can be categorised into activities, experiences, products (accommodation), profile, travel behaviour and ecotourism market (c.f.2.5).
- Ecotourism activities are nature-based activities that increase visitors' understanding and appreciation of nature (c.f.2.5.1).
- Experience is the reason for the existence of the hospitality and tourism industry (c.f.2.5.2).
- Accommodation: a green, sustainable and eco-situated accommodation (c.f.2.5.3).
- Tourists' profile and behaviour are better understood through their:
 - Travel motivations, which are essential for defining tourism products, market segmentation, and for meeting tourists' needs, desires and expectations, efficiently (c.f.2.5.4.1).
 - Travel behaviour which results from their states of mind before, during, and after travelling or using a certain product and their reaction after using the product (c.f.2.5.4.2).
 - Demographic characteristics such as gender, age, nationality, income, marital status and education influence tourist's decision-making processes (c.f.2.5.4.3).
- Ecotourism market determines consumers of ecotourism products (c.f.2.6).
- Ecotourism will set the record of a trend towards sustainability of ecotourism product development for all other tourism types, especially mass tourism (c.f.2.7).

6.2.2 Conclusions regarding the literature on tourism product development (Chapter 3)

The following conclusions are drawn from Objective 2, Chapter 3 regarding tourism product development.

- Tourism products are complex and challenging to understand (c.f.3.2).
- There are two levels of tourism product:
 - Total tourism product (physical products like services, physical plant activities etc.) (c.f.3.2).

- Specific tourism product (containing; the core, tangible or augmented products) (c.f.3.2).
- Tourism product is a mixture of tangible and intangible elements around a specific place of interest that creates an overwhelming experience (c.f.3.2.1).
- Tourism products are classified based on their diversity into: natural tourism products, man-made tourism products, symbiotic tourism products, site-based tourism products and event-based tourism products (c.f.3.2.2.1 to c.f.3.2.2.5).
- The elements of the tourism product include the physical plant, service, hospitality, freedom of choice and involvement (c.f.3.2.3.1 to c.f.3.2.3.5).
- Tourism product is made up of different characteristics; intangible, heterogeneous, inseparable, perishable, seasonality and complementarity (c.f.3.2.4.1 to c.f.3.2.4.6).
- A successful tourism destination comprises attraction, accessibility, accommodation, available packages, activities, ancillary services and appeal and these are known as the seven 'A's of tourism product (c.f.3.3).
- Tourism product development and planning ensures efficient and quality service delivery, attracts more tourists, creates economic return for the locals and attracts foreign exchange (c.f.3.4).
- A product is defined by four components, the core, expected, augmented and potential (c.f.3.4.1).
- Tourism product development is the process through which a destination's potential is transformed to meet the needs and wants of tourists (c.f.3.4.2).
- The following tourism product development standards are expected of every tourism destination: safety and security, hygiene, accessibility, transparency, authenticity and harmony (c.f.3.4.2.1 to c.f.3.4.2.6).
- Eight product development stages have been recognised, idea generation, idea screening, concept development and testing, market strategy, business analysis, product development and testing, test marketing and commercialisation (c.f.3.4.3.1 to c.f.3.4.3.8).
- The CRNP is endowed with a wealth of natural resources (both flora and fauna) and man-made tourism products (infrastructure) suitable for ecotourism and that nature lovers will find interesting (c.f.3.5).
- Developing a product comes with challenges that might hinder its success and tourism product development in Nigeria as a nation as well as a destination like the CRNP is not an exception (c.f.3.6).
- To mitigate the challenges associated with tourism product development in Nigeria as well as in the CRNP, the government, NGOs and corporate individuals are required to play their part in addressing the identified challenges (c.f.3.6).

6.2.3 Conclusion regarding the empirical analysis (qualitative study) (Chapter 5).

With respect to the objective set out for the qualitative study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- The deplorable tourism situation of CRNP can be mitigated through government commitment to ecotourism and the decentralisation of tourism products within the State (c.f.5.2.3.1).
- Through the identification of the needed man-made products, the natural wealth (natural tourism products) of the park can be supplemented to provide tourists a memorable experience (c.f.5.2.3.2).
- The determination of key aspects of ecotourism product development appears to be the only remedy to addressing the issue of tourism development of the state, particularly the ecotourism sector reported to have gained less attention by the government (c.f.5.2.3.3).
- The review and adoption of a product marketing strategy that will be aimed at identifying the target market for the park and using the right marketing medium is the key to addressing the issue of low visitation of the reserve (c.f.5.2.3.4).
- The following ecotourism products, as anticipated by participants, can be considered for development: eco-lodge, a treehouse (accommodation), a nature trail and a canopy walkway (c.f.5.2.3.4).
- Currently, CRS and CRNP are confronted with the challenges of lack of access roads, funds, the poor state of the park's infrastructure, issue of visas, insufficient rangers as well as unequipped rangers (c.f.5.2.3.6).
- Through government financial assistance as well as employment of youths as security guards, these-identified challenges could be mitigated (c.f.5.2.3.6).
- Safety is a major concern in CRNP and an impediment to ecotourism product development as it has a huge influence on destination choice. This issue, however, can be addressed by putting safety measures in place through the provision of safety gadgets, personnel training as well as the development of a tourism safety management plan (c.f.5.2.3.6).
- The overall level of community involvement in ecotourism product development of the park can be described as inactive. This can be strengthened by seeking community opinions and ensuring that the locals are part of the decision making and management of the park (c.f.5.2.3.7).
- The government is involved with the park through one of its arms known as CRSTB in the ecotourism product development of the park (c.f.5.2.3.8).
- The state (government) collaborations with other stakeholders of the state in product development of the park. Private investors (both internal and external) and sponsors, however, are encouraged also to play their part as more could be achieved if all players work together (c.f.5.2.3.8).

6.2.4 Conclusion regarding the empirical analysis (quantitative study) (chapter 5).

The following conclusions were drawn from the quantitative study derived through a descriptive analysis of participants' demographic profile and factor analysis of respondents' travel motives and ecotourists product needs:

- According to the result, the profile of ecotourists to the natural area are as follows: the ecotourists are typically male and 32 years of age, single with a graduate degree, employed and a high-income earner. He travels in a group of 3-5 people, goes on holiday/vacation once a year, spends approximately 3 days, visits nature-based areas/national parks as a holiday destination and travels in a private car. The ecotourists prefer self-catering accommodation as well as a rondavel as an accommodation unit (c.f.5.3.1 to c.f.5.3.2.2).
- There are several reasons why tourists visit a protected area/national park and one of these reasons, as reported by the result, is for sightseeing, an indication that ecotourists are attraction-oriented and thus calls for the development of ecotourism products within the park to supplement the existing natural products (c.f.5.3.2.4).
- One of the noted reasons why tourists have not visited a protected area or a national park in the past was because they were unaware of the existence of a national park in the area, which calls for destination marketing and the development of attractive tourism products that will trigger interest (c.f.5.3.2.4).
- Of all the tourism product elements (accommodation, activities, accessibilities, attractions, facilities/amenities, appeal and price), attraction is seen as the most important element considered as a pull factor propelling tourists to travel. In other words, attraction is the first element and the driving force that motivates and influences tourists' destination choice (c.f.5.3.3.4).
- The factor analysis for participants' travel motives obtained the following five factors: Factor 1: fauna and flora, Factor 2: socialisation, Factor 3: relaxation, Factor 4: experiences and Factor 5: events & conferences (c.f.5.3.5.1).
- It is clear from the result that the main travel motives of ecotourists to CRNP were for relaxation, experiences and socialisation and can be classified as "Push Factors", a motive that can be harnessed to the advantage of the CRNP by developing the right tourism products within the park for an all-round memorable experience. Nevertheless, there must be a strong relationship between motivation (push factor) and attraction (pull factor) as proposed by Reinius and Fredman (2007:843) (c.f.5.3.5.1).
- The factor analysis of ecotourism activities produced factors such as sporting activities (Factor 1), wildlife viewing (Factor 2) and outdoor stay (Factor 3), whereas ecotourism

facilities/amenities factors produced; supporting facilities (Factor 1), security (Factor 2) and amenities (Factor 3). While the former identified outdoor stays as the most preferred activity, the latter sees amenities as the most sought-after ecotourism product in a destination (c.f.5.3.5.2 to c.f.5.3.5.3).

It can therefore be concluded that CRNP offers enormous natural tourism products that can bring about the development of the park. The park, however, still struggles with the issue of underdevelopment resulting from government negligence, lack or non-existence of human-made tourism products and other issues calling for urgent attention. Although there are efforts from the government to develop this sector of the industry in the state, the community has not been incorporated into its planning and management processes that call for concerted efforts towards seeking the opinions of the local people towards the planning and development of the tourism resources that they host.

Finally, by determining the key aspects of ecotourism product development for the destination incorporating the identified needed man-made products as well as all measures needed for addressing all the challenges hindering the development of CRNP into a tourist haven, the key aspects when integrated into the management of the park is expected to grow the park for tourism by enhancing the aesthetic nature of the park, creating employment opportunities, enhancing tourists' experience leading to an increase in the level of visitation and for a competitive advantage. The recommended ecotourism products are discussed in detail in the next section.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO KEY ASPECTS OF ECOTOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT FOR CRNP (DIRECT AND INDIRECT KEY ASPECTS)

The results revealed key aspects regarding tourism product development for the studied area.

6.3.1 Indirect key aspects

The following indirect aspects of tourism product development are, therefore, recommended for the CRNP:

- It is recommended that the government become more committed to product development of the park by providing funds and creating an enabling environment such as providing the institution necessary to ensure investment from the private sector as well as local support as the result of the study revealed lack of government's commitment to the affairs of the park.
- All key players; the government, public and private sectors, as well as NGOs, are encouraged to collaborate as more could be achieved towards ecotourism product development of the park if all players work together.
- Community participation has been proved to be effective in product development and has gone beyond the mere provision of products and services. Therefore, the community must be part

and parcel of the development processes of the park both in decision making, planning and management and possibly made shareholders of their community assets.

- The park is encouraged to seek financial assistance from world-renowned private organisations such as World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Namibian Association of CBNRM Organisation (NACSO) and Wilderness Safaris (WS), since projects involving private organisation funding have proved to have a high success rate as private sectors are known for their philanthropic funding of development projects and shun the overdependence on the government as well as the park management head office (i.e. National Park Service).
- Ecotourism should be promoted as much as cultural tourism is promoted in CRS by decentralising the tourism assets of the State as this sector plays a fruitful part in conserving wildlife, nature preservation, empowering local communities and has made the industry greener and natural through its sustainable development goals.
- The State must ensure that all ecotourism product development plans of the State are brought to execution.
- The result identified the domestic market as the main market, and hence the market focus should be primarily Nigerians, especially now that the industry has been greatly impacted by the pandemic (COVID 19), the domestic segment of the industry is therefore expected to boom.
- Marketing has been reported to be the key to the success or failure of every business. The use of media houses is one of the popular means of product marketing. However, this has not yielded any positive results for the CRNP, which calls for the adoption of the right marketing strategy. The result of this study identified word of mouth as the most effective and influential medium for marketing. The State and the park are therefore encouraged to use the positive views of tourists as their main marketing strategy by developing the right tourism product and ensure that tourists' needs and wants are met. This will, in turn, result in destination loyalty as well as recommendations because products recommended by friends and relatives are not easily ignored.
- The issue of safety in the CRNP can be addressed by putting safety measures in place through the provision of safety gadgets, personnel training (rangers) as well as the development of a Tourism Safety Management Plan (TSMP). Also, the youths can be employed as security guards for park protection which will, in turn, create employment opportunities for the locals.

6.3.2 Direct key aspects

The demographic data, which was obtained from the analysis of the respondents' demographic profile, enables the researcher to understand the needs and wants of ecotourists as this may have an impact on the development of an ecotourism product, particularly the right tourism product. The directly identified key aspects of tourism product development are as follows:

- **Activities:** the literature recognised activities as a vital element of the tourism product as without them a destination will attract few or no tourists. The following activities are therefore recommended as a result of the research: horse riding, hiking trail, yoga classes, self-drive opportunities, guided safari, camping opportunities, picnicking and barbecuing, game viewing and observing drill monkeys to attract activity-oriented tourist to the park.
- **Attraction:** the result shows that man-made attractions are lacking in the park. It is therefore recommended that products such as a treehouse, mini-golf course and a canopy walkway must be developed to supplement the existing natural wealth of the park. These were seen as most important by the demand and supply side.
- **Facilities/amenities:** infrastructural facilities at a destination are the basis of tourism development. Hence, the CRNP is encouraged to develop facilities such as an adequate power supply, communication facilities, braai facilities, parking space, adequate water, restaurant services, excellent road infrastructure, and a natural swimming pool in order to encourage extension of stay.
- **Accessibility:** for ease of location and easy access to the park's tourism product, the following are necessary: better road infrastructure both within and leading to the park and adequate nature trails for park viewing.
- **Accommodation:** due to the crucial role played by accommodation in enhancing tourist experience in a destination, the CRNP is encouraged to develop the right type of accommodation that will enhance the tourist experience. This study identified the following accommodation types as possible options: rondavel, which is a self-catering accommodation as an ecotourist accommodation choice. This accommodation type and other eco situated accommodations that allow tourists to feel one with nature can be developed in the park.

6.4 FUTURE STUDY SUGGESTIONS

The following is suggested regarding future research:

- There was an observed lack of research regarding ecotourism product development in Nigeria; therefore, more research in this regard is needed, especially in protected areas.
- Further study is recommended that will not only focus on the demand side but a combination of the demand and supply factors in tourism product development.
- Ecotourism is a dynamic type of tourism that occurs in the natural environment and has the potential to help in achieving sustainable objectives that will bring about the desired

development in the industry. Further study is therefore recommended in this regard with special attention on ecotourism implementation, which was reported to be a long and difficult process.

- The study has shown that product marketing is the key to the success or failure of every business and the effectiveness in accessing tourism products within a destination depends on the strategies employed in communicating the products to the market. This, therefore, calls for further research on the potential marketing strategies for Nigerian tourism products that will not only focus on the local market but be able to promote the country's tourism products both within and outside the shores of the continent that will bring about competitive advantage.
- The literature analysis revealed that community participation is the key to product development and limited research exists on community participation in ecotourism development in Nigeria. Further research is therefore needed that will not only pay attention to local rights and responsibilities but will also sought for community perspectives on their community assets and issues limiting their active participation in product development.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There were two main limitations to this study, they include:

- Due to lack of financial support during data collection, the two-research assistance that was designed to assist with the data collection was reduced to one as the researcher could only afford to pay one and so, this limited the sample size to 293.
- The on-campus restriction access due to COVID-19, having to work from home with limited internet access and Skype meetings with study supervisor are no substitutes for face-to-face interaction as well as the use of the campus library where there is a wide range of resource options.

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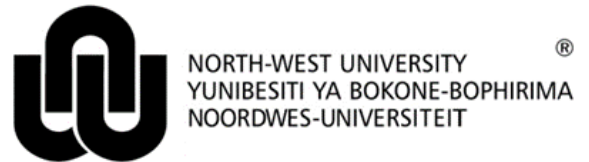
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethics Letter



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Tel: 018 299-1427
Email: Bennie.Linde@nwu.ac.za

29 November 2019.

Prof P van der Merwe

Per e-mail

Dear Prof van der Merwe

EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 29112019

Student: Duruibe, C (31244807)(NWU-01439-19-A4)

Applicant: Prof P van der Merwe – MSC in Tourism Management

Your ethics application on, *An ecotourism product development plan for cross river national park*, that served on the EMS-REC meeting of 29 November 2019, refers.

Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number NWU-01439-19-A4 is given for three years of ethics clearance.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bennie Linde'.

Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Potchefstroom Campus

Appendix B: Consent Letter



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Ethics Number: NWU-01439-19-A4

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER: SEMI-STRUCTURED TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

I, Ms D. Charity, am a student at Tourism Research in Economics, Environs, and Society (TREES), the tourism research entity at the North-West University. I am currently conducting research and would like you to form part of it.

The current research title is; an ecotourism product development plan for cross river national park. The primary goal of this research is to evaluate the tourism potentials in the study destination and proposed an ecotourism product development plan for the Park.

Please note the following:

- Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and confidential, and you will receive no form of compensation.
- Your information will remain anonymous – no personal information that can link the data to you will be asked.
- If you feel, at any time, that you want to halt participation in this study, please feel free to do so without judgment.
- This interview should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
- With your consent, the interview will be recorded.

By continuing with this interview, you agree to the terms and conditions of this research. For any further information, feel free to contact the principal researcher, Miss D. Charity, at successugolink@yahoo.com or the study leader Prof Peet van der Merwe at peet.vandermerwe@nwu.ac.za

Yours sincerely,

Ms D. Charity
MSc Student at the NWU

Appendix C: Interview Guide – Questions addressed to government/ Cross River State

Part 1. Tourism planning/development

Question 1: What are your responsibilities regarding tourism development (for example, tourism policy formulation, product development, marketing, etc.) in CR State?

Question 2: How would you describe the current tourism situation in Cross River State? Is it growing or decreasing?

Question 3: Is there a tourism development plan for CRS? Please elaborate.

Question 4: Are you aware of what is the current tourism offering in CRNP?

Question 5: What is government involvement in ecotourism development in CRNP?

Question 6: Is there any plan in place by the state to develop and promote CRNP as a tourism destination? If no, please elaborate? If yes, please elaborate?

Question 7: What is the mechanism used by the government to collaborate with other key stakeholders in the development of ecotourism in CRNP?

Question 8: Can you think of any tourism product/s that you will like visitors to enjoy or experience in the CRNP or that will work in the park?

Question 9: What would you consider to be the major challenges to tourism development in CRS as well as CRNP, and how can these challenges be addressed?

Question 10: Do you consider safety in CRNP to be a problem? If no, explain. If yes, how can this be addressed?

Part 2. Product Marketing

Question 11: Is there a marketing plan for CR State?

Question 12: How are the ecotourism products in CR State currently being marketed? Which markets are the target?

Question 13: What are the actions taken to market CRNP as an ecotourism product?

Part 3 Community involvement

Question 14: How is the community involved in the tourism development of the park?

Question 15: What part would you like the community to play in tourism development in the park?

Part 4. Way forward

Question 16: What ecotourism products do you anticipate will work for the park? What needs to be done to get it developed?

Appendix D: Interview Guide – Questions addressed to CRNP

Part 1. History and market

Question 1: Give us some background on the park and its history?

Question 2: What do you think makes this park unique?

Question 3: How many tourists visit the park per year?

Question 4: Who is the main market?

Question 5: What do you consider to be the ideal market for the park?

Part 2: Tourism products within the park

Question 6: How would you describe the current situation regarding tourism products and infrastructure in CRNP?

Question 7: In terms of tourist facilities such as activities, accommodations, attractions, transport, and services, does the infrastructure exist to meet the needs of tourists?

Question 8: What ecotourism products do you anticipate will work for the park?

Question 9: What needs to be done to get it developed?

Question 10: Can you think of any unique tourism product/s that you will like the visitor to enjoy or experience in the park?

Question 11: What plan does CRNP have to develop ecotourism products in the park, if any?

Question 12: What are the major stumbling blocks for tourism product development in the park?

Question 13: What initiatives are already being employed for tackling these stumbling blocks/challenges?

Question 14: Is safety a concern. If yes, how can this be addressed?

Question 15: How is the community involved in product development?

Question 16: What part would you like the community to play in tourism development in the park?

Part 3: Government involvement

Question 17: How much collaboration is there between the government, NGOs and the park?

Question 18: Anyone assigned to product development within the park?

Appendix E: Consent Letter



Private Bag
X6001,
Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

ETHICS NUMBER: NWU-01439-19-A4

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY FOR TOURISTS

I, Ms D. Charity, am a student at Tourism Research in Economic Environs and Society (TREES), the tourism research entity at the North-West University. I am currently conducting research and would like you to form part of it.

The current research title is; an ecotourism product development plan for cross river national park. The primary goal of this research is to evaluate the tourism potentials in the study destination and proposed an ecotourism product development plan for the Park.

Please note the following:

- Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and confidential, and you will receive no form of compensation.
- Your information will remain anonymous – no personal information that can link the data to you will be asked.
- If you feel, at any time, that you want to halt participation in this study, please feel free to do so without judgment.
- This questionnaire should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

By continuing with the questionnaire, you agree to the terms and conditions of this research. For any further information, feel free to contact the principal researcher, Miss D. Charity, at successugolink@yahoo.com. Or the study leader Prof P. van der Merwe at peet.vandermerwe@nwu.ac.za

Yours sincerely,

Ms D. Charity
MSc Student at the NWU

APPENDIX F: QUESTIONNAIRE
SECTION A (DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE)

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY FOR TOURISTS

1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

2. Which year were you born?

3. Marital Status

Single	1
Married	2
Divorced	3
Living together	4
Widow/er	5

4. Country of origin

Nigeria	1
Other (specify)	2

5. You are from which state in Nigeria?

Cross River	1
Akwa Ibom	2
Rivers	3
Imo	4
Edo	5
Delta	6
Anambra	7
Other (specify)	8

6. Highest level of education

Primary	1
Secondary	2
Diploma	3
Degree	4
Post-graduate	5
Other (specify)	6

7. What is your employment status (choose one only)?

Employed	1
Unemployed	2
Self-employed	3
Student	4
Pensioner	5
Other (specify)	6

8. What is your monthly income?

N20 000	1
N20 000 - N50 000	2
N50 000 - N100 000	3
N100 000 - N150 000	4
N150 - N200 000	5
N200 000 - N300 000	6
Other (specify)	7

9. How many people are travelling in your group?

10. How many times per year do you go on holiday/vacation?

11. What is the average length of your holidays/vacation (Number of days?)

12. Which type of holiday destinations do you usually visit?

Coastal area	1
Resorts	2
Nature-based areas (such as a national park)	3
Lakes	4
Cities	5
Museums	6
Friends and relatives	7
Cultural attractions	8
Arts and cultures	9
Aquarium	10
Zoo	11

13. Have you heard about Cross River National Park (CRNP)?

Yes	1
No	2

14. If yes to question 13, where have you heard about the park?

Friend & relatives	1
Facebook	2
Radio	3
Television	4
Website	5
Travel agent	6
Twitter	7
Other (specify)	8

15. Mode of travel?

4 x 4 vehicle	1
Private car	2
Public transport	3
Plane	4
Other (specify)	5

SECTION B (ACCOMMODATION PREFERENCE)

16. What type of accommodation do you prefer?

Self-catering	1
Bed & Breakfast	2
Full board	3

17. What type of accommodation units do you prefer?

Chalets	1
Rondavel	2
Guesthouse	3
Hotel	4
Camping	5
Clamping	6
Log cabins	7
Hut	8

SECTION C (TRAVEL MOTIVES)

18. Rate on the scale your travel motives

	5 Very important				
	4 Important				
	3 Neutral				
	2 Low important				
	1 Not at all important				
To see the Big 5	1	2	3	4	5
For new experiences	1	2	3	4	5
To meet new people	1	2	3	4	5
For my personal well-being	1	2	3	4	5
For the scenic beauty	1	2	3	4	5
For bird watching opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
To see endangered species	1	2	3	4	5
To see plants	1	2	3	4	5
To take photos of plants and animals	1	2	3	4	5
To attend conferences	1	2	3	4	5
To attend events	1	2	3	4	5
To experience wildlife	1	2	3	4	5
Spend time with Family	1	2	3	4	5
Explore new destinations	1	2	3	4	5
Socializing with friends	1	2	3	4	5
To explore new areas	1	2	3	4	5
To get away from a regular routine	1	2	3	4	5
To relax	1	2	3	4	5

19. Have you visited any protected area/national park in the past?

Yes

No

☐
☐

20. If yes or no to question 19 above, what were your reasons?

21. Rate on the scale of importance each element of a tourism product that you might consider when choosing a tourism destination. (Tick appropriate box.) 1 = Not at all important 2 = low important, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important 5 = Very Important

	5 Very important				
	4 important				
	3 Neutral				
	2 Low important				
	1 Not at all important				
1. Accommodation at the destination	1	2	3	4	5
2. Activities and tours	1	2	3	4	5
3. Accessibilities (getting to the destination effortlessly/easy access to infrastructure, booking, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
4. Attractive attractions	1	2	3	4	5
5. Destination's facilities/ Amenities/available packages (Shopping Centre, entertainment, electricity, water supply, security, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
6. Appeal (i.e. the image of the destination, friendliness or warmth reception by management, personal safety)	1	2	3	4	5
7. Price of the tourism product (Entrance fee, and other services within the destination)	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D (POTENTIAL ECOTOURISM PRODUCTS)

22. The table below lists possible ecotourism products and activities for natural areas. Rate on the scale of importance each element (tick appropriate box) 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Low importance, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important, 5 = Very important.

	5 Very important				
	4 Important				
	3 Neutral				
	2 Low important				
	1 Not at all important				
a. Activities	1	2	3	4	5
Horse riding	1	2	3	4	5
Guided safari tour	1	2	3	4	5
Boating/Canoeing	1	2	3	4	5
Cycling	1	2	3	4	5
Self-drive opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Mini-golf course	1	2	3	4	5
Hunting and fishing	1	2	3	4	5
Camping	1	2	3	4	5
Hiking trails	1	2	3	4	5
Bird watching	1	2	3	4	5
Game viewing	1	2	3	4	5
Picnicking and barbecuing	1	2	3	4	5
Observing the Drill Monkeys	1	2	3	4	5
Gorilla tracking	1	2	3	4	5
Chimpanzee encounter	1	2	3	4	5
b. Facilities/amenities	1	2	3	4	5
Braai facilities/amenities at chalet/tent	1	2	3	4	5
Restaurant services and food	1	2	3	4	5
Natural swimming pool	1	2	3	4	5
Excellent road infrastructure in the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Provision of adequate power	1	2	3	4	5
Provision of communication facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Provision of adequate water supply	1	2	3	4	5
Provision of adequate nature-trails for park viewing	1	2	3	4	5
Basic security facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Provision of parking space for visitor's convenience	1	2	3	4	5
c. Accessibility	1	2	3	4	5
Provision of adequate access roads	1	2	3	4	5
Maintenance of access roads	1	2	3	4	5
Making destination's products and services accessible	1	2	3	4	5
Signage should be provided where necessary	1	2	3	4	5
Provision of car rental services	1	2	3	4	5
d. Attributes	1	2	3	4	5
Destination landscape	1	2	3	4	5
The climate (e.g. pleasant weather)	1	2	3	4	5
Destination scenery (e.g. natural beauty)	1	2	3	4	5
Geological and geomorphological appreciation	1	2	3	4	5

22. Any recommendations to improve ecotourism products in CRNP?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix G: National Park Service Letter



NPH/GEN/121/T/23

9th OCTOBER, 2019

Miss Charity Duruibe
No.5 River Street,
North West Province,
South Africa.

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN CROSS RIVER NATIONAL PARK.

Your letter dated 7th October, 2019 on the above subject matter refers please.

2. I am directed to convey approval for you to carry out your research titled; "AN ECOTOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR CROSS RIVER NATIONAL PARK".
3. In line with the policy of the Service, you are expected to submit two copies of your findings to the National Park Service Headquarters.
4. Please, find as attached, application forms for research and declaration of compliance to be filled and submitted to the Conservator of Park, Cross River National Park.
5. Thank you.


Anya Ifeoma
For: Conservator-General



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.M. B 0258,

UMARU MUSA YAR' ADUA EXPRESS WAY,
GARKI, ABUJA,
NIGERIA

TEL. +234 96714926

E-MAIL: nigeriaparks_headquarters@yahoo.com

**APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH PERMIT/ RESEARCHERS
UNDERTAKING**

(Please type or print)

1. Applicant Personal Particulars

Surname.....First Name.....Other

Name (s).....

Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Prof/Dr) (delete if not applicable)

Nationality..... Date of birth

Highest academic qualification

Institutional Affiliation.....

.....
Mailing Address

Town/City.....LGA.....Sta

te.....Country.....

Permanent address.....

.....

2. Title of proposed research project

.....

.....
.....
3. Purpose of research: PhD/MSc./B.Sc/BA/other (specify)

.....
.....
(Delete if not applicable)

4. Research methodology (brief description)

.....
.....
5. Research objectives

.....
.....
6. National Park where research will be conducted.....

7. Date research will commence.....

8. Estimated period of research

9. Sponsor.....

10. Contact address while in Nigeria

.....
.....
11. Name of Head of Department

12. Name of Supervisor

13. Signature of Supervisor.....

14. Signature of applicant



DECLARATION OF COMPLIANCE BY THE RESEARCHER TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

In return for being allowed to work in any National Park in Nigeria and to use the facilities provided by National park Service,

I hereby undertake:-

1. To adhere to the research activities that have been approved by NPS subject to such subsequent amendments as may be agreed between us.
2. To submit residence permit (s) to the Conservator of Park of the Unit Park and any other places as the case may be; immediately on arrival.
3. To follow and abide by the instructions of the Conservator- General, NPS in all matters concerned with the administration and discipline of the organization.
4. To prepare such progress reports on my work as the Conservator- General NPS may require.
5. To provide the Conservator- General, NPS with such duplicate records and copies as he may require of photographs of observations made by me for retention in the organization. The copyright of any films on the experiments shall remain the property of NPS.
6. To submit copies of bound research findings to the Conservator-General on completion of research work.
7. To assist to the best of my abilities the authorities of the organization particularly supporting local scientist as the case may be.

8. To abide to the rules laid down by the Conservator- General of NPS for conducting scientific work in Nigeria, as per the law of the land.

9. In the event that any of the above is violated, my contract will be revoked and/or myResearch clearance will be withdrawn. We can also notify the supervisor / sponsors on professional associating to take action.

Full Name of Researcher.....

Signature.....Date.....20.....

Name of Witness.....

Signature.....

Date.....

Appendix H: Obudu Mountain Resort Letter.



P. M. B. 1037, OBANLIKU, CROSS RIVER STATE – NIGERIA

Email: frontdesk.obudu@gmail.com

☎ : 0805 364 8209

7th November 2019.

Tourism Research in Economics and Society,
North-West University, North West Province,
South Africa.

Dear Charity,

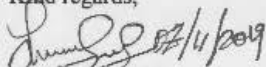
PERMISSION LETTER FOR MRS CHARITY DURUIBE - 31244807

Following your emails requesting permission to use Obudu Mountain Resort for your research survey titled; *"An Ecotourism Product Development Plan for Cross River National Park"*, I have the pleasure to inform you that your request has been approved.

I would like to inform you that Obudu Mountain Resort has a Temperate climate all year round, it rains at irregular intervals, naturally chilly, especially between May – October and breezy between December – February. In the light of the above, suitable wears for the weather (Clothing's, Shoes, and Head cover) should be brought along.

I will appreciate if you can communicate to us the definite date or period of the commencement and termination of your assignment in Obudu Mountain Resort.

Kind regards,



Godfrey M. Ichile
General Manager,
Obudu Mountain Resort.

Appendix I: Language editing letter

Rod Taylor

Language editor & proofreader

Trading as
Wordstar

**215 Republic Road
Randpark 2194**

Telephone: 084 716 6588

Email: wordstar@iafrica.com

3 May 2021

To whom it may concern

Language Editing – Dissertation – C. Duruibe

I have reviewed the dissertation entitled “Determining key aspects of ecotourism product development” in terms of spelling, language and grammar and have made recommendations to the author concerning the changes necessary.



R. Taylor

MBA BSc DTM

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