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SANDRA PERKS
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa

DANIE FERREIRA
Nelson Mandela Metropole University, South Africa

NADINE OOSTHUIZEN
Nelson Mandela Metropole University, South Africa

THE EFFECTS OF EMPLOYMENT PROFILE ON TRAVEL MOTIVATION AND DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract:

Purpose of the study: This study investigated the effects of employment profile on travel motivation and destination attributes in the South African outbound travel market.
Research design and methodology: The study utilised the quantitative research paradigm. A self-administered structured questionnaire was distributed to travellers who have finished high school and have at least travelled once internationally. A response rate of 302 respondents was obtained. A literature review were carried out on the role of motivational forces and destination attributes in attracting tourists to an outbound destination. From the literature review, twenty seven hypotheses were developed to test the relationships between the nine valid and reliable independent motivational forces, destination attributes and the employment profile (independent classification variables). Employment profile was measured in terms of employment status, position in the organisation and income earned. Multiple Analysis of Variance tests determine whether the employment profile of South Africans are influenced by motivational forces and destination choice attributes when choosing an outbound destination choice. Post-hoc Sheffé tests were conducted to determine where the group differences exist in the statistical significant relationships and Cohen D tests to indicate which relationships were of practical significance.
Research findings: The MANOVA results reveal six statistical significant relationships between: employment status and physical motivators, stature motivators, events and political issues; position in organisation and events; and income earned and natural attractions. From the post-hoc Sheffé test results, group differences were noted for employment status with regards to events and natural attractions, position in organisation and events, as well as income earned and natural attractions. Taking into consideration these group differences, the Cohen D tests revealed three practical significant results.
Research implications: There may be other travel motivators and destination attributes that influence the South African outbound travel market besides those tested. The results of the study was only limited to Nelson Mandela Bay in the Eastern Cape.
Practical implications: The results provide advice to travel agents on marketing destinations and indicate which tourism products will appeal to them based on employment status, position in organisation and income earned.
Contribution of paper: This paper contributes towards the body of knowledge with regards to outbound destination choices based on employment profile of the potential tourist, which have wider implications than just in the South African context.

Keywords:

Travel motivation; destination attributes; outbound travel

JEL Classification: M00

Introduction

Total tourist volume in South Africa, which includes outbound, inbound and domestic travel declined as a whole from 2005 to 2009 due to the weaker economic climate and global recession (Euromonitor International, 2012, p.1). However, due to the increase in the strength of the South African rand in the early months of 2011, travelling outside South Africa was relatively cheap (Euromonitor International, 2012, p.1). South Africans took advantage of this and travelled extensively overseas. The importance of the outbound tourist market has evoked significant interest in understanding tourists' motivation for travelling overseas (Mohammad & Som, 2010, p.41). Countries with emerging outbound travel markets have been identified as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, which are collectively referred to as the BRICS's countries (World Travel Market, 2012, p.19). Tourists from these countries are being sought after by the world's tourism boards. The BRICS's countries are also seen as the future powerhouses of the travel and tourism industry and they have been as such included in all three world travel market industry reports.

Although South Africa is seen as an emerging outbound tourism market and is seen as a future powerhouse of the travel and tourism industry (World Travel Market, 2012, p.19), very little information is available regarding South African outbound tourism (Stats SA, 2008, p.3). There is a lack of information on factors influencing tourists to visit international destinations and the specific destination choice (Van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011, p.695).

Understanding the forces that affect peoples' choices with regard to destination selection can play a vital role in activities being planned more efficiently by role players within the travel industry. Furthermore, understanding why people travel and take holiday trips, how they go about selecting their destinations and why one country is preferred above the other are vital to those who work in the travel industry (Holloway & Taylor, 2006, p.64). If travel marketing is executed effectively, it will generate revenue and employment (Ahn, Ekinci, & Li, 2013, p.720; Badarned & Som, 2011, p.38). Lubbe (2005, p.35) concludes that individuals working in the travel industry should ensure that the tangible attributes of the tourism product match up with intangible motivations of the tourist.

Lubbe (2005, p.245) confirmed that the most important aspect of travel and tourism management is to understand the key drivers of tourism and how they impact on tourism. One of these key drivers is the conventional way of addressing tourist behaviour and motivation (Lubbe, 2005, p.245). According to Mahika (2011, p.18) and Jonsson and Devonish (2008, p.403), employment profile can influence the destination choice of a tourist to some extent. However, there is lack of in-depth research on if and how these employment profile variables can influence outbound destination choice. This study focuses on an investigation into the effects of employment profile in terms of employment status, position in organisation and income earned that influence outbound destination choice. The objectives of this research are thus as follows:

- To determine empirically whether there is a relationship between the employment profile variables and travel motivation;
- To determine empirically whether there is a relationship between the employment profile variables and destination attributes; and
- To offer practical suggestions to travel and tourism businesses on how to market outbound travel destinations to South African tourists taking into consideration their employment profile.

A theoretical exposition of travel motivators and destination attributes will be outlined in the following section.

A Theoretical Exposition of Travel motivators and Destination Attributes

Kassean and Gassita (2013, p.2) and Teja (2013, p.25) agree that destination attributes and motivation to travel are major incentives in tourism demand. Demand forces are the reason for the trip while supply forces are concerned with the destination and its attributes (Guillet, Lee, Law & Leung, 2011, p.558). The concept behind destination attributes and motivation to travel forces are that people travel due to their own internal motivational forces and are attracted by the exterior forces of destination's attributes (Mohammad & Som, 2010, p.41).

Motivational Forces

People partake in travel because of motivational factors influencing their travel decisions (Kassean & Gassita, 2013, p.3), or as indicated by Mohammad and Som (2010, p.41) due to the intangible or basic desires of the individual traveller. In other words motivation to travel refers to the desire of a person to partake in tourism (Goossens, 2000, p.303).

In general motivators to travel include physical motivators which are associated with reduction of stress through physical activities, such as sport and adventure and are grounded in the need to find peace, tranquillity, and relaxation at the destination (Jonsson & Devonish, 2008, p.401; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007, p.245). Another travel motivator may be interpersonal motivation which is associated with maintaining, prolonging and forcing new personal relationships, for example, visiting family and friends (VFR) and making new friends while travelling (Liên, 2010, p.6). Travel stature motivators can also play a role in destination choice and be associated with the need for recognition by others or to enhance their social status by visiting exclusive and sought after destinations (Van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011, p.695). The more accessible a destination is, the more appealing the destination becomes to the tourist (Chiang, King & Nguyen, 2012, p.23).

Destination Attributes

Destination attributes are generally considered as tourism attractions (Mohammad & Som, 2010, p.41). Lee, Lee and Lee (2005, p.841) point out that, within literature, it is

generally accepted that destination attributes have an influence on destination choice. These forces are inspired by the attractiveness of a destination and include: beaches, recreational facilities, cultural attractions, entertainment, scenery, shopping and parks (Yoon & Uysal, 2005, p.46). Art, history and culture such as language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, arts and history can also influence destination selection (Zimmermann, 2012, p.1). A traveller might want to taste different food or deepen their religious beliefs and visit destinations that are known for their cuisine such as Thailand or Muslims visiting Mecca (Smith, MacLeod, & Robertson, 2010, p.75; Tarlow, 2010, p.1). Travellers might also be influenced by the atmospheric conditions in a country in terms of temperature, humidity and precipitation (Wordweb, 2013, p.1). A tropical climate like Mauritius may attract visitors when it is winter in their country (Liên, 2010, p.7).

Many travellers travel to destinations that have events or specific rituals, presentations, performances or celebrations of a special occasion and so achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives (Allen, O'Toole, McDonnell & Harris, 2005, p.11). The features of the physical environment like the landscape, forests including plants and wildlife natural attractions can 'pull' travellers to choose a specific destination (Page, 2007, p.278). Furthermore, political issues such as political instability, wars, coups, labour unrest and epidemics may leave tourists feeling unsafe in countries where these circumstances prevail and discourage tourists to not travel to these locations (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003, p.319; Saayman, 2000, p.40). Absence or inadequate availability of general infrastructure in a country such as the basic facilities for example roads, water, sewage, power lines, services, and installations or airports may caution tourists to think twice before choosing such a destination (Farlex, 2013, p1).

Based on the preceding literature review, 27 hypotheses were formulated to test the relationships between the nine valid and reliable independent motivational forces and destination attributes and the employment profile (dependent variables). The following hypotheses were formulated:

- $H0_{1.1\text{-}1.9}$: There is no relationship between employment status and the independent variables (travel motivators and destination attributes) when choosing an outbound destination.
- $H0_{2.1\text{-}2.9}$: There is no relationship between position in the organisation and the independent variables (travel motivators and destination attributes) when choosing an outbound destination.
- $H0_{3.1\text{-}3.9}$: There is no relationship between income earned and the independent variables (travel motivators and destination attributes) when choosing an outbound destination.

Methodology

This research study followed the quantitative research paradigm and utilised a newly developed scale as no existing scale could be found for the items measured in this study. To participate in the study respondents had to reside in Nelson Mandela Bay,

South Africa, be older than eighteen years, in possession of a senior certificate and having travelled abroad at least once. The questionnaire was distributed via email to friends and family. In turn these individuals distributed the questionnaire amongst their friends and colleagues. The sampling method adopted in this research was thus a combination of convenience- and snowball sampling. A 5 point Likert scale was utilised varying from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed. After data cleaning, 301 questionnaires were subjected to statistical analysis. The statistical computer package STATISTICA 12 (2014) was utilised to analyse the data.

Face- and content validity were confirmed during the pilot study of 30 respondents as items in the questionnaire were based on the literature study and subjected to expert judgement of people employed in tourism and business management. To test the reliability of the valid items and factors, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated. All values exceeding 0.6 was deemed as a reasonable indicator of the internal consistency of scale as suggest by George and Mallery (2003, p.50).

The validity of the research instrument was tested in terms construct validity by conducting an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on the final sample of 301 questionnaires. The principal component analysis using varimax and orthogonal method of rotation was used to extract the factors. All factor loadings not loading to 0.4, associated as the cut-off point for a sample size of 302 respondents, were deleted and excluded from further analysis. Items with cross-loadings were also deleted in the factor matrix. It must be noted as this paper is part of a much larger study, the factor matrix of the motivational factors and destination attributes will not be provided in this paper but merely a summary of the results as depicted in Table 1. The Cronbach alpha values of the retained items in each factor will also be provided in Table 1.

The employment profile of the 302 respondents was indicated. Descriptive statistics were provided on the travel motivates and destination attributes. Multiple Analysis of Variances (MANOVAs) were calculated to identify whether employment profile variables such as employment status, position in organisation and income earned can predict travel motivators or attributes with regards to destination choice. Values represented by a large F ratio (f-value) with a probability (p-value) of less than 0.05 constituted statistical significance (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007, p.448). Post-hoc Scheffè tests were completed to identify where the significant differences occurred between the different categories (Lund Research, 2013, p.4). Cohen's d-values were also calculated in order to assess the practical significance of the mean scores if there were significant differences (Walker, 2008, p.1). Cohen's d-values of $0.2 < d < 0.5$ were considered as a small effect size; $0.5 < d < 0.8$ an average effect size and $d > 0.8$ a large effect size (Walker, 2008, p.1).

The Empirical Results

Table 1 present the findings of the empirical factor structure and Cronbach's alphas calculated for the travel motivators and destination attribute variables.

Table 1: Empirical factor structure

Travel motivators	**Number of items retained**	**Minimum factor loadings**	**Maximum factor loadings**	**Cronbach alphas**
Physical motivators	4	0.529	0.786	0.659
Interpersonal motivators	5	0.495	0.734	0.688
Stature motivators	6	0.404	0.778	0.681
Destination accessibility	6	0.607	0.809	0.767
Destination attributes	**Number of items retained**	**Minimum factor loadings**	**Maximum factor loadings**	**Cronbach alphas**
Richness of art, history and culture	5	0.540	0.818	0.825
Events	3	0.800	0.869	0.853
Natural attractions	5	0.433	0.839	0.770
Political issues	4	0.569	0.774	0.784
General infrastructure	10	0.494	0.829	0.910

Source: Own construction

As can be seen from Table 1, four travel motivator factors and five destination attribute factors were extracted. Items with cross-loadings were deleted and only items with a factor loading of 0.4 and above were considered as valid. All the variables returned Cronbach's alpha coefficient scores of above the cut-off point of 0.6 for this study. There is thus satisfactory evidence of the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument.

Table 2 present demographic data on the employment profile of the respondents.

Table 2: Demographic information of respondents

Variable	**Levels**	**Percentage**
Work status	Full-time employed	75
	Part-time employed	2
	Self-employed	15
	Retired	3
	Student	4
	Unemployed	1
Position in organisation	Business owner	15
	Management	25
	Employee	52
	Unemployed (including retirees and students)	8
Income per month	Less than R10 000	15
	R10 001 – R20 000	23
	R20 001 – R30 000	17
	R30 001 – R40 000	11
	R40 001 – R50 000	9
	R50 001 – R60 000	7
	R60 001 +	8
	Not willing to disclose	10

Source: Own construction

From Table 2, it is evident that 905% of the respondents are employed, either self-employed (15%) or on a full-time basis (75%). More than half (52%) of the employed respondents in the sample are ordinary employees, with 25% being managers and 15% owners of the businesses. Some respondents (10%) indicated that they are not willing to disclose their income, while the other respondents earned income varying from low, middle to high income earnings.

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for the valid and reliable independent variables.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for travel motivators and destination attributes

Number of items	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
	Travel motivators		
4	Physical motivators	4.0	0.6
5	Interpersonal motivators	3.8	0.7
4	Stature motivators	2.5	0.8
6	Destination accessibility	3.3	0.8
	Destination attributes		
6	Richness of art, history and culture	3.2	0.8
3	Events	2.8	1
5	Natural attractions	3.8	0.7
4	Political issues	4.1	0.8
10	General infrastructure	4.1	0.6

Source: Own construction

As can be seen from Table 3, physical motivators, interpersonal motivators, natural attractions, political issues, general infrastructure and destination choice had means that tended towards agreement on the scale (rating 4). Respondents were on average neutral regarding stature motivators, destination accessibility, richness of art, history and culture and events. All the standard deviations were relatively low (varying from 0.6 to 1.0) which indicates low response variances.

It must be noted that in this sample, the majority (85%) of the respondents travelled for leisure purposes, while only 15% of the respondents indicated that they have travelled for business purposes.

A total of 27 MANOVAs were performed on the nine independent variables that had been established as valid and reliable and three employment profile variables. Table 4 present the findings of the ANOVAs calculated for the employment profile variables and the travel motivators.

Table 4: Relationship between employment profile and travel motivators

Independent variables	Employment status		Position in organisation		Income earned	
Travel motivators	**F-value**	**P-value**	**F-value**	**P-value**	**F-value**	**P-value**
Physical motivators	2.60	0.019**	1.45	0.203	0.95	0.460
Interpersonal motivators	1.34	0.239	0.88	0.500	1.16	0.327
Stature motivators	2.75	0.013**	1.44	0.207	0.729	0.647
Destination accessibility	1.45	0.194	1.57	0.167	0.88	0.527

* p < 0.001 ** p <0.05

Source: Own construction

From Table 4 it is evident that no statistically significant relationships exist between position in the organisation and income earned and any of the travel motivators. Only two positive significant relationships exist between employment status (dependent variable) and the independent variables, physical motivators (0.019; p <0.05) and stature motivators (0.013; p <0.05). However, the post-hoc Scheffè tests were not powerful enough to detect group differences for the relationships between employment status and physical motivators or stature motivators. These relationships could possibly exist as employed individuals would be more likely to travel with the purpose of relaxation than unemployed individuals would. Employed individuals would also be more likely travel to impress friends, family and colleagues than unemployed individuals would.

Table 5 present the findings of the MANOVAs calculated for the employment profile variables and the destination attributes.

Table 5: Relationship between employment profile and destination attributes

	Employment status		Position in organisation		Income earned	
Independent variables	**F-value**	**P-value**	**F-value**	**P-value**	**F-value**	**P-value**
Richness of art, history and culture	0.24	0.962	0.27	0.930	0.95	0.470
Events	4.53	0.000*	6.05	0.000*	0.79	0.593
Natural attractions	0.34	0.913	1.55	0.171	3.11	0.003*
Political issues	2.29	0.035**	2.18	0.056	1.27	0.260
General infrastructure	1.87	0.085	0.73	0.602	0.72	0.657

* p < 0.001 ** p <0.05

Source: Own construction

As depicted in Table 5, no statistical significant relationships were found between richness of art, history and culture as well as general infrastructure with the employment profile variables. From Table 5 it is evident that significant positive relationships exist between the demographic variable employment status and the independent variables,

events (0.000; p < 0.001) and political issues (0.035; p <0.05). The post-hoc Scheffè test for the positive relationship between employment status and events revealed two groups of significant differences. The significant differences identified that students (ẋ = 3.384) had a higher mean score than retirees (ẋ = 1.818) and self-employed individuals (ẋ = 2.250). The Cohen's d-value was 6.17 and 4.47 respectively which presents large practical significances. Therefore, students may regard choosing destinations where events take place whereas self-employed or retired people did not regard it as a destination attribute that will attract them to a destination. These findings are confirmed by Richards and Wilson (2004, p.60) who state that students travel to destinations where music and sport events are hosted, and usually participate in activities associated with excitement.

The post-hoc Scheffè test was not powerful enough to detect group differences for the relationship between employment status and political issues. This relationship could possibly exist as employed people could be more up-to-date with world affairs, in particular political issues, as it is expected from them in the workplace and could therefore when travelling for work insist on travelling to politically stable destinations where there is no terrorism or riots. The employment status of potential travellers thus influences destination attributes such as events.

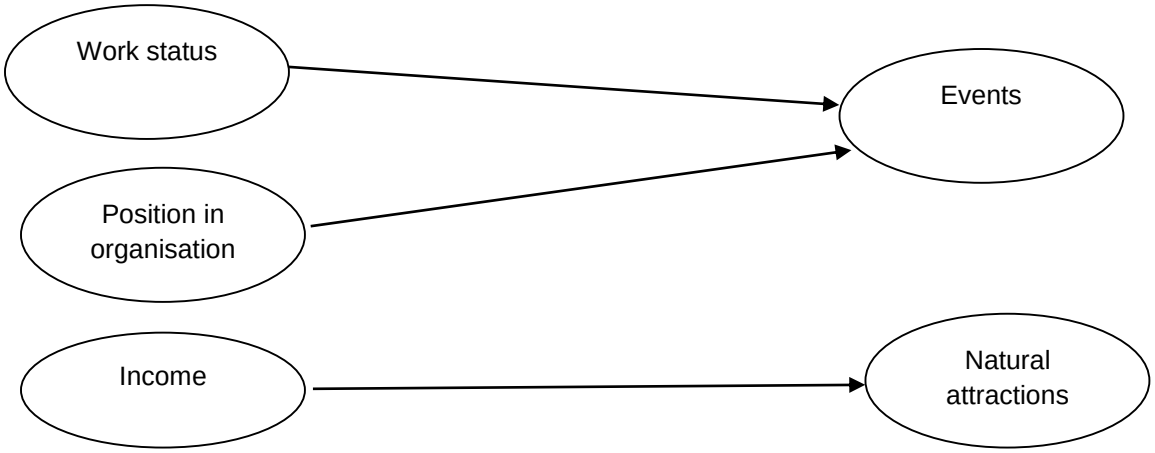
In support of the previous findings, there is a significant positive relationship between the demographic variable position in the organisation and the independent variable, events (0.000; p < 0.001). The post-hoc Scheffè test for this relationship revealed three groups of significant differences. The first significant difference identified that students (ẋ = 3.818) scored a higher mean score than business owners (ẋ = 2.726). The Cohen's d-value was 0.93 which presents a large practical significance. Students (ẋ = 3.818), likewise had a higher mean score than employees (ẋ = 2.568), the Cohen's-d value was 1.35 which presents a large practical significance. Students (ẋ = 3.818) also had a higher mean than unemployed individuals (ẋ = 2.104). The Cohen's d-value was 1.60 which presents a large practical significance. Therefore, students more so than business owners, employees and unemployed individuals prefer destinations which host events. Therefore, the position the potential traveller has within the organisation he or she works in influence events when selection potential holiday destinations.

From Table 5 it is evident that a significant positive relationship exists between the demographic variable income and the independent variable, natural attractions (0.003; p < 0.01). The post-hoc Scheffè test for this relationship revealed two groups of significant differences. The first significant difference indicated that individuals earning between R10 001 to R20 000 (ẋ = 3.957) had a higher mean score than individuals earning R60 000 and more (ẋ =3.361). The Cohen's d-value was 0.91 which presents a large practical significance. The other significant difference was that individuals earning between R30 001 to R40 000 (ẋ = 4.037) had a higher mean score than individuals earning R60 000 and more (ẋ =3.361). The Cohen's d-value was 0.98 which presents a large practical significance. Based on these findings, individuals earning R60 000 and

more is probably not as motivated to visit natural attractions as the individuals earning between R 10 001 to R 20 000 and between R 30 000 to R40 001. This could be due to the fact that higher income groups (R60 000 + pm) prefer more luxuries at attractions and have more disposable income to visit attractions which have high admission fees, whereas the other two groups (middle and low income earners) have less disposable income and probably visit natural attractions with no or low admission fees. These findings concur with the findings in a study by Hallab (2006, p.77) that indicate that income influences which destination and travel package will be appealing to specific individuals.

The results indicated that although six statistical significant relationships were indicated only three practical significant relationships exist between the employment profile variables and the destination attribute variables.

Figure 1: Practical significant relationships between the employment profile variables and the independent variables



Source: Own construction

It is interesting to note that there were no practical significant relationships between employment profile and travel motivations. Figure 1 depicts that events had practical significant relationships with both work status and position in the organisation. Therefore, it is possible that self-employed individuals travel internationally mostly to attend business events, whereas retired individuals travel internationally to attend family events such as weddings and family gatherings when e.g. a grand child is born or a fiftieth birthday of their children as confirmed by Alén, Dominguez and Losada (2012, p.866). Students on the other hand, attend sport or music events. Income can play a role as not all natural attractions require an entrance fee.

Lower income groups will most likely chose destinations where they can view the natural attractions free of charge and at leisure. This finding could be attributed to the fact that the majority of respondents in this sample travelled for leisure purposes. These lower

or even middle income groups will probably chose destinations such as the Victoria Falls in Zambia where entrance to the falls is included in the accommodation package. Higher income groups on the other hand may not mind paying for sightseeing as they can afford it.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In the literature survey four travel motivators were identified, namely physical-, interpersonal- and stature motivators as well as destination accessibility. The destination attributes that influence destination choice identified in literature include richness of art, history and culture, events, natural attractions, political issues and general infrastructure. Employment profile indicators that motivate destination choice as well as the desired attributes were determined. These results provide advice to travel agents on how to market destinations according to the tourist's employment profile, for example, employment status, position in organisation and income earned indicate which tourism products will appeal to them. In the empirical study, three practically significant results were found between income earned and natural attractions as well as between work status and position in the organisation and events. The employment profile demographics of travellers could thus influence their destination choice, especially related to destination attributes. Travel agents should thus take these factors into consideration when marketing destinations and provide them with suitable travel packages.

Based on the practically significant MANOVA results of the relationships between the demographic and independent variables, the following conclusions and recommendations are forthcoming:

- There seems to be a practical significant relationship between work status of individuals and the events attracting them to a destination. The work status of individuals thus influence which event attract them to outbound destinations. Travel agents should compile budget travel packages for students to destinations hosting sport and music events. When marketing to employed individuals, events with a business focus at the outbound destination could be emphasized to attract both business owners and managers to the destination. This is especially applicable to business owners or managers of medium and large businesses.
- It appears there is a practical significant relationship between position of individuals in the organisation and the events attracting them to a destination. The position of employees in the organisation thus influence which event attract them to outbound destinations. Travel companies should not on offer leisure travel packages, but also business travel packages. Business travel packages can promote destinations where conferences, trade shows and major product launches are held; the business travel package should be all inclusive and should include transport, accommodation and entry to these events.
- There seems to be a practical significant relationship between income earned by individuals and the natural attractions attracting them to a destination. The income earned by individuals thus influence which natural attractions will attract them to

outbound destinations. Travel agents should market destinations with natural attractions free of charge to lower- and middle income groups. It is advisable to also include budget accommodation in the travel package and preferably find accommodation packages which include entrance to natural attractions free of charge. For higher income groups more luxury accommodation options should be made available to lure them to destinations with natural attractions. Tour operators could compile several packages to cater for different travellers' needs such as safaris, or for rock-climbing expeditions. Natural water attractions such as waterfalls or lakes could be marketed with sunset cruises to view wildlife. The visual aids utilised within the marketing material, should entice travellers to want to see these natural attractions.

Managerial Implications

The outcomes of the study provide all tourism businesses with insight to design appropriate marketing strategies for outbound destination marketing, especially for tour operators and travel agents within the NMBM and South Africa with regard to preferred travel destinations, as no such study has been conducted before in this region. The information will assist tourism businesses with knowledge on which destinations to market when compiling tours and travel packages based on to where NMBM-residents wish to travel. The findings of the research will assist travel-related businesses to develop new travel packages that are better suited to the needs of the residents of the NMBM, and for that matter, South Africans, as well as to develop outbound tourist marketing strategies to specific destinations. With new travel packages available, it will ensure that local travel agents retain local customers in the Eastern Cape, the poorest province in South Africa. It might also limit financial leakages to other regions, especially to international travel agencies based in South Africa and abroad.

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