

Can engagement in slow tourism activities at botanical gardens contribute to a less stressful lifestyle?

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Abstract

The concept and knowledge of slow tourism within the context of South Africa is limited, and very little local literature is available on this new, emerging niche form of tourism. International research on this topic including the practise, development, implementation and promotion of slow tourism has grown internationally at an exponential level during the last decade. This study investigates the meaning, understanding and definition of slow travel and tourism, and how slow tourism differs from other alternative tourism types. International and local case studies where slow tourism was implemented successfully were assessed. Slow tourism is considered an anti-thesis to mass tourism. Tourism role-players and visitors groups have become more environmentally conscious in which they develop, promote, travel and consume tourism products. Sustainable and responsible tourism practises are at the forefront of the slow tourism phenomena which induces the demand and the supply chain of tourism products emphasised by ethical values. The ideals of slow tourism places focus on the concept of time spent at the destination, liberating the visitor from angst and stress, set off by today's fast-paced lifestyles. Attention is directed at the visitor experiencing a qualitative more than a quantitative experience, found in a unique nature-based setting with the after-effects of feeling relaxed and rejuvenated. Slow tourism is centred on building good relationships with the local community, the preservation and appreciation for the environment and the production and consumption of local and responsibility sourced products. A predominately qualitative research methodology was conducted to collect the primary data, using the grounded theory approach at the KNBG, which was the study site. Qualitative data was obtained through observing visitors, and also in-depth interviews with visitors and the KNBG Management.

Key words: Kirstenbosch Gardens, Slow tourism, sustainable tourism development



Source: <http://www.sanbi.org/sites/all/themes/sanbi/garden-homepage-slideshow/kirstenbosch-1.jpg>

Introduction

KNBG was established in 1913 to promote, conserve and display the extraordinarily rich and diverse flora of southern Africa, and was the first botanic garden in the world, and a World Heritage site, to be devoted to a country's indigenous flora, displaying a wide variety of the unique plant life of the Cape Floral Kingdom, including fynbos, as well as plants from all the diverse regions of southern Africa. There are over 7 000 varieties in cultivation at KNBG, including many rare and threatened species South Africa National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), 2013.

More than just a garden, KNBG is part of a nature reserve which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2013. The 36 hectare garden is part of a 528 hectare estate that contains protected mountainside supporting natural forest and fynbos along with a variety of animals and birds. The KNBG estate borders the Table Mountain National Park and is the largest of a country-wide network of eleven National Botanical Gardens administered by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI, 2013).

Economic growth can be considered as propelled by the development of globalisation and specialisation; perhaps this could also be the reason for the ever escalating acceleration of society, note Weiermair and Mathies (2004:67) where the consequences of speed could have an adverse effect on people's private and professional life. These authors further emphasise that these effects can surface and display in the form of increased violence, disproportional income, and also as health issues. Our human independence appears to be limited due to tight schedules at work, at home or both.

Pressure is placed on individuals to fill free time with as many activities as possible (Weiermair and Mathies, 2004:67), suggesting that a resolution can be found in slow holidays for individuals who have lost their power to organise their own free time. Howard (2012:17) cites Ruskin, Evans and Whitehouse who mentioned that the only way to appreciate natural landscapes was on foot. Slow travel by rail, or even the oldest form of 'bipedalism' now

during the modern age, is romanticised and seen as a form of peaceful and a reflective alternative to the bustle of air travel and driving of motor vehicles (Erikson, 2001:54). As a society preoccupied by speed, economic growth and consumerism, the connection with oneself, one's culture, people and the world we live in appears to be lost as pace takes over our daily lives. This practice of slow movement is seen as a kind of relief in the time-space burdens present in today's emerging capitalistic and profit-driven world. Connectedness can be found in the most simplistic and basic daily rituals such as sharing a home cooked meal together, note Dorobanțu, Gheorghe and Nistoreanu (2012:1).

Spending meal-time together eating wholesome traditional food made from home grown fruit, vegetables and home reared livestock like poultry from the back garden; then after eating everyone assists with the cleaning up, establishes a connection with family and friends during these social meal times (Dorobanțu, Gheorghe & Nistoreanu, 2012:1).

Slow travel and tourism

Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010:2-3) describes slow travel as '*...an emerging conceptual framework which offers an alternative to air and car travel, where people travel to destinations more slowly overland, stay longer and travel less*'. Dickinson, Lumsdon and Robbins (2011:282) developed the definition further, that the idea of slow-tourism also encompasses a more experiential element such as '*(T)he importance of the travel experience to, and within, a destination, engagement with the mode(s) of transport, associations with slow foods and beverages, exploration of localities in relation to patrimony and culture at a slower pace, ... and for the environment*'

Fullagar, Markwell and Wilson (2012) note that '*...the concept of slow movement is present in many parts of everyday life and one can easily get the feeling that the adjective slow is added to all phenomenon, industries and sectors. One of these sectors is the tourism sector*'. This shift in tourism lends itself to a more alternative form which could perhaps be due to the fast paced lifestyles which affect most people today and their choice of place for recreational visits and

activities. Matos (2004:96) proposed a theory a decade ago and mentioned that slow-tourism, and slowing down, is illustrated as an antidote and an antithesis of 'speed'. Accordingly, Conway and Timms (2010:330) unanimously support the 'slow' theory and agree that a different angle of alternative tourist offerings can provide a new and viable promotional identity in the form of slow-tourism.

In particular, Conway and Timms (2010:330) refer to 'spreading' slow-tourism opportunities in under-developed areas of the Caribbean, areas which lack the necessary resources that mass tourism relies on for a social and economic advantage. They defend their argument by stating that slow-tourism alternatives centre on quality advancement rather than purely placing the focus on growing the number of visitors. These authors refer to the slow-tourism example in the case of the Caribbean by upgrading the tourism quality, as '*...building upon earlier models of alternative tourism, which we propose ... an authentic and encompassing slow-tourism model as a revitalized new tourism for the twenty first century in the Caribbean*' (Conway & Timms, 2010:331).

How does slow-tourism differ from other niche and alternative forms of tourism such as eco-tourism and nature-based tourism? Nature-based tourism places universal emphasis on the environment. The whole landscape and the surrounds is the principal focus of tours which usually provide for small-scale, but can become a mass emergent tourism activity. Even though nature-based tourism focuses on the tranquil environment, landscapes and natural surrounds, it does however differ (Newsome, Moore and Dowling, 2002:13-14) to slow-tourism. Nature-based tourism could be visited by masses of tourists at a frenetic pace, whereas the slow tourism visitor can engage in tours at a 'slower pace', leisurely take their time, stay longer and not be hurried through their travel itineraries. Ecotourism, described by Newsome, Moore and Dowling (2002:14) can be conducted through diversification, cultural, renewal, resource conservation, and economic growth. These authors believe that ecotourism is a form of tourism that should add value to people's lives on an individual level through their learning about the natural world.

The slow movement philosophy developed from the slow food movement which initially started as a campaign against the opening of the successful McDonalds fast-food chain in Rome in the 1980's, as a protest against the fast-food lifestyle (Independent Traveller.com, nd). Since the protest the Slow Food Movement (Vinul Slow Food, 2013) has more than 80,000 members in over 50 countries. In Rome people were displeased that the connection with good quality food and lifestyles was lost as people generally felt a connectedness when spending time preparing food with their families, instead of 'grabbing' a meal at a fast food outlet which is serviced and prepared in under 60 seconds (Rocket News24, 2012).

Time is considered a scarcity on a day-to-day basis and also during vacations. Howard (2012:16) refers to European writers of the 18th and 19th centuries, such as Rousseau, Wordsworth and Goethe and also Thoreau, Emerson and Whitman in America. These writers were described as often taking time out for the enjoyment of nature, meandering in the open air, away from the harm and self-indulgence of the city life; leisure-time usually requires time-out for oneself. Howard (2012:16) cites Urry (2007) who opines that leisure and time out became a valued ideal and was seen as a moral political statement. Testimony is given to Rousseau as a romancer, and his modern grandness of nature, where Howard (2012:16) noted Rousseau's romantic thoughts on the grandness of nature, and cited Thoreau describing his essay *On Walking* as '*...a valued ideal of rural solitude and unhurried movement of nature*'. Moskwa and Crilley (2012:407) agree with this notion by describing that gardens showcase early and significant landscapes, which displays an intention motivated by the romantic and English transcendentalist period of the mid-19th century.

Present-day lifestyles are seen as lacking in orientation in the world and a highly over stimulation of nerves that are experienced in modern cities. Howard (2012:16-17) who tells that in the late 19th and early 20th century leisure activities such as walking, cycling and hiking in the open air became increasingly popular among the bourgeoisie. The establishment of early gardens could be argued as perhaps an illustration or expression of

interest in the 'naturalisation' of introduced plant species in various gardens referred to in Heritage Victoria (2010) by Moskwa and Crilley (2012:407). Subsequently, many gardens today have become more visitor-focussed, and include sporting areas for active recreation, including facilities such as rotundas, summer houses and hedge mazes as innovative features in the gardens (Moskwa and Crilley, 2012:407).

Ward, Parker and Shackleton (2010:49) note ...*'(T)he use and appreciation of botanical gardens as urban green spaces'* in the South African context, and mention that urban green spaces, such as botanical gardens, are well appreciated and assist in significant *'...social, psychological, health, aesthetic and ecological functions'* for people living in cities. The value of green spaces and gardens provides a sense of peace and tranquillity. Furthermore, the benefits of connecting with arboretum can bring about a sense of recreation, well-being, stress reduction, health improvements and revitalisation to visitors.

Destinations largely develop tourism attractions and facilities for the money-making and commercial promise. Tourism spin-offs contribute to job creation, bringing in new money and this is seen as a relatively clean socio-economic activity (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000:16). There is also a down-side to tourism explains Godfrey and Clarke (2000:16) as it puts strain on local infrastructure and services. According to Kuvan (2005:263) the use of forests for tourism activity is eminent in its purpose to supply products and services needed by society and visitors for its tourism and recreational potential.

Australian studies (Bennett and Swasey, 1996; Ballantyne, Packer and Hughes, 2006) indicated that devoting time to family and friends by spending it at botanic gardens for enjoyment, relaxation and admiring garden aesthetics, was the preferred intention by most visitors, rather than visiting the gardens for conservation, research and educational purposes (Moskwa and Crilley, 2012:405). Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010:65) stated that slow travel provided opportunities to socialise and bond with family and friends. As the above study-outcomes demonstrated, people enjoyed

spending time in botanic gardens and to connect with family and friends. Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010:65) further noted that the slow travel philosophy provided opportunities for friends and families to bond, so one could conclude that botanic gardens may well be the ideal setting for slow tourism activities. An Australian academic report showed an example of this. Moskwa and Crilley (2012:405) cited Crilley, Hills, Cairncross and Moskwa (2010) that key interests carried out by visitors in gardens included viewing of flora, strolling, exercising, participation in kinship activities, outings, relaxing or reading. The outcome of the study suggested that 73% of visitors engaged in these aforementioned activities, whilst only 9% of the visitor preferences were for educational reasons - to gain knowledge on plants.

Principles of slow tourism

Matos (2004:100) maintains that for slow-tourism to be considered as 'authentic' it should follow fundamental principles, firstly as *'taking time'* and secondly *'attachment to a particular place'*. Mathos further elaborates on the time principle and interprets it as the need to alter the daily relationship with time, changing ones view of nature, existing in accordance with a particular place including the residents and their culture. Referring to the second principle, he adds that the attachment to a particular place and environment should not only be the visitor's experience through sense of sight, but using all five senses in the overall tourism experience.

In a Caribbean study conducted by Conway and Timms (2010:332), they agree that slow movement and travel has significant benefits in that recuperation is experienced through escaping all the stresses of a world governed by speed. These stresses could be at work, home and also during holidays. Time-off from work for vacations should be enjoyed and boosted by a quality experience and not in a frenzied attempt to see and do everything on one's travel itinerary (Conway and Timms, 2010:332). According to the study of Dorobanțu et al. (2012:1) in the Vâlcea county of Romania, concur that slow movement is valued and emphasised by the views of the loss of connection, time with the world and our needs as human beings.

Slow tourism should extend an assurance of '*...sensual pleasure and slow, long-lasting enjoyment to preserve the discerning, well meaning, inquisitive visitor*' (Conway and Timms, 2010:332). This directly distinguishes the slow tourist visitors from the tainted mass tourist followers who '*...mistakes frenzy for efficiency*' say Conway and Timms (2010:332). The authors further emphasise, and quote Woehler (2004), in that the slow tourism movement in the Caribbean should converge on conviviality, demonstrate a mood of welcome, sense of place, and leisure which focuses on local distinctiveness (Conway and Timms, 2010:332).

In understanding slow travel it can be described as a form of tourism which allows the tourist to embark on a journey that is typified by staying in one place for a longer period of time (Dorobanțu et al., 2012:1) and for the visitor to experience fascinations in the area that is meaningful to their soul. Indulging the visitors' experience and fascinations for visiting a particular area, Moskwa and Crilley (2012:408) note that academic studies confirm that people gain wide varieties of benefits from visiting botanic gardens, of which a form of outdoor pleasure is derived from being in a recreational space of lush vegetation, lawn and garden beds. In today's modern society people's lives are structured and controlled by man-made devices such as calendars, information systems and other time pieces in order for their particular outcomes to be achieved (Tiyce and Wilson, 2012:114). Much of these systems govern how our work and leisure time is spent, and to do as much as possible in the shortest period of time.

Matos (2004:102) strongly suggests that mountain regions should consider slow tourism alternatives especially for the shorter-stay holiday market, such as the Alpine region in Switzerland. Muller (1998:229) advocates that slow tourism in the Alps could diversify into a wider range of tourist offerings as '*...mountain tourism should promote slowness*'. Slow tourism in mountainous regions can provide a dual purpose, namely, offering a broader variety of tourism offerings and education to protect and enjoy the natural environment as a collective. The Zen Trail and Alpine Flower Trail are examples in Switzerland promoting the

theme of slowness and creating a connection with nature (Matos, 2004:99-102). This author further recommends that using the slow concept in local tourism services, for example heritage sites managers, local artists, mountain guides and tour guides, could have an opportunity to re-invent their tourism products by adding the 'slow brand' investing in a new 'niche sustainable tourism offering' involving local societies.

Slow travel and tourism: walking

Walking is not well exemplified in transport policies, and for those people whose travel desires is regularly met on foot, are not always satisfactorily represented (Hillman and Whalley, 1979:1). Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010:119) express a view that walking is an essential form of transport globally, whether this is travelling to a destination or through exploration at a particular destination, such as recreational walks. Harvey (1989:240) points out that the world today is much more easily accessible and can be seen as a '*global village*' which can uncover spatial and time-based opportunities in particular for people who are interested in travelling and exploring. Walking has been defined by Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010:119) as '*...a trip, made on foot, that involves physical activity, usually to access places for a variety of reasons... this includes walking trips to work, education, personal reasons, shopping or simply to enjoy recreation*'. Leisure walks and walking for tourism reasons centres around walking for the purpose of gratification such as rambling and hiking, and also during the Grand Tour custom where it was romanticised [(Dickinson and Lumsdon, 2010:121, citing Kay (1999) and Edensor (2000)]. Walking trails have a significant appeal to slow travellers and those enjoying taking time-out in nature.

Slow walking trails allow the visitor to explore the landscape through some kind of formalised access that is supported by the understanding of the natural environment and other ancillary services at the destination to service both short recreational walks and long trekking encounters (Dickinson and Lumsdon, 2010:128).

Slow travel and tourism: cycling

Cycling has a great impact on the lives of those who are more affluent and could afford this

mode of mobility. Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010:135) acknowledge that during the 1880's cycling became a very popular form of transport especially in areas where walking was the dominant mode of getting from one place to another. According to Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010:135) cycling also became a trendy mode of mobility for recreational purposes, used for to discover nature parks, the countryside, landscapes and other recreational excursions. These recreational excursionists include a smaller market (the accomplished explorer) who visits other countries if they have the luxury of time and resources available to them (Dickinson and Lumsdon, 2010:135). In respect of cycling tours for recreation, Fullagar (2012:99-100) investigates women's cycle touring events, such as Bicycle Queensland in Australia (a nine-day ride which covers 600 kilometres), as an alternative hedonism, the motivation and pleasure derived from holiday cycle touring as a culture of slow tourism. The author noted that the atmosphere of the event is one of cycling slowly, taking one day at a time. Moreover, the cycling motion offsets the daily stresses of work and car-centeredness, as the cyclists leisurely ride alongside each other, chatting casually and motivating each other.

Slow travel and tourism: slowtels and timeless hotels

Since the introduction of the 'slow food' and 'slow movement' many branches of the slow concepts have taken form as alternative ways of enjoying life in the slow lane. One of these slow concepts, which has taken off successfully by business owners and visitors with 'slow' niche tourism interests, is in the choice of accommodation selected when visiting a destination. In Switzerland, the establishment of hotels accepting the 'slow label', are known as 'slowtels' or even called 'timeless hotels', for example the Jugendstil Hotel Paxmontana in Flüeli, Hotel Riffelberg in Zermatt and Grand Hotel Giessbach located close to Brienz. These hotels are established in the Swiss mountainous regions and parks situated close to the UNESCO Biosphere Entlebuch Chlosterbüel, offering visitors a stillness and undisturbed, timeless experience with panoramic and wonderful natural views. Another form of slow accommodation referred to by Matos (2004:99-101) is the use of small monasteries or 'monastic hotels' which function

on the principles of slow tourism where guests are allowed to spend some of their leisure and holiday time resident in reflective meditation mode to rejuvenate and recharge their body and mind.

Slow travel and tourism: the food movement

Carlo Petrini was the champion and founder of the Slow Food Movement which initially started in protest at the opening of a McDonald's restaurant in his Italian home-town, serving mass produced fast-food restaurant meals (Markwell et al., 2012:228). This protest highlighted a stance against food that was prepared and consumed hurriedly, and lacked quality. Allen (n.d.), in an article in The Independent online newspaper, mentions that in 1986 Petrini's action were motivated by two reasons, firstly the establishment of the McDonald's fast-food restaurant and secondly, by the fact that 19 people at the time died and hundreds were poisoned by the consumption of cheaply manufactured wine. This meant that good Italian food and wine, which was then produced and sourced locally, prepared in a traditional style and sold at local Italian restaurants, was being replaced by American fast-food multi-nationals franchises like McDonald's and others. The value in supplying traditional high quality food was dying in Italy and traditional restaurants producing good authentic Italian food were being rapidly replaced (Allen, n.d.).

The Slow Food network currently enjoys support in 150 countries, including 'slow food' convivial in South Africa securing over 100 000 members who practice sustainable food creation based on a reduced-scale, but of good quality and superb nutritional value (Hall, 2012:56). The Slow Food (2014) website notes that '*... slow food unites the pleasure of food with responsibility, sustainability and harmony with nature*'. Hall (2012:57) also captures in his writings that the Slow Food Association believes in the value of '*neo-gastronomy*' which truly understands and practises the firm links between '*plate, planet, people and culture*'.

Slow travel and tourism: the Cittaslow concept – slow towns and slow cities

The Cittaslow, also known as Slow Cities, was established in Italy during 1999 by Paolo

Saturnini, who conceived the concept of slow cities which has proved exceptional in the Italian area. This idea was based on the concept of the successful Slow Food Movement (Cittaslow, 2011). Weiermair and Mathies (2004:67) mention that the Slow Cities concept has rapidly become an exact opposite notion of the bright, glittering-characterised metropolitan areas and capitals world-wide. According to Cittaslow (2011), in order for a town/city to gain membership to Cittaslow or be awarded an accredited Slow City status, a community must have less than 50,000 residents, and is reserved for passionate, ardent communities that choose to improve the quality of life for their inhabitants. Honoré (2005) describes the Slow Cities concept as based on towns that rethink how they can organise their urban landscape where for example, putting down a bench or establishing a green space that will aid taking time out, to decelerate and perhaps take the needed time for '*smelling the roses*' along the way.

Slow tourism in the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens

The KNBG have many facilities which attract international and local visitors. Visiting KNBG generates huge economic value for the Gardens, and also provides the visitor with enjoyment of the leisure activities, and relaxation at the gardens. KNBG is world-renowned for its general appeal, natural beauty and rich diversity of Cape flora. This Garden has been cited by Huntley (2012:ii) as the most beautiful in Africa, and the most remarkable and impressive botanical garden in the world (SANBI, 2014). There are many visitors who visit and spend time in the gardens not only to explore the rich flora and fauna but for leisure and other recreational activities. Some of these activities include enjoying tea and a meal at the restaurant, a short walk along the various paths in the gardens, attending a concert, photography, and exploring flora and fauna in the area.

The Kirstenbosch Tea House

According to Notten (2013:74-75) the first Tea House was built at KNBG in 1924 and was extended on a few occasions since by building extra rooms, a fireplace, and stoep to accommodate the increasing number of visitors.

A car park was also built behind and in front of the Tea House during 1960 and 1961. The Tea House was very popular and regularly supported by visitors enjoying tea and light meals at the gardens. In August 1981 the Tea House was razed by a fire and irreversibly damaged, and had to close down.

A new 'Kirstenbosch Tea Room' was built and opened in 2003 which continued the long-standing tradition of enjoying a relaxing meal and tea in one of most popular gardens in the world (Notten, 2013:74-75).

The Kirstenbosch summer sunset concerts

The amphitheatre in the Gardens provides a perfect location to host small musical performances according to Huntley (2012:190). The marketing manager of KNBG requested string quartets and baroque bands to perform; at that time the concerts were free of charge. Huntley (2012:190) confirms that audiences grew from a few dozen to a few hundred spectators. The popularity of the concerts grew rapidly especially when the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra performed in March 1993 and drew a considerable audience of 8 000 to this specific concert. This was the start of the Kirstenbosch Summer Sunset Concerts, and resulted in over 100 000 spectators, relaxing in the nature-setting, attending these concerts annually (Huntley, 2012:190).

Other facilities at KNBG

According to SANBI (2014) the number of visitors each calendar year to the KNBG has increased (visitors at entry gates, excluding concert visitors) by 1.6 % annually since the 2010 FIFA Football World Cup. KNBG management noted that during 2013, when KNBG celebrated its centenary, the percentage of visitors increased from 1.6 % for the 2012 calendar year to 9.3% in 2013, which amounts to 696 780 visitor-entries to the Gardens (SANBI, 2014). These appealing, and internationally prominent gardens, now draw well over half a million visitors each year, which includes those interested in botanical and environmental education, conservation, research, events or simply just to explore and experiences the leisure facilities on offer at KNBG, which does not distinguish between local and international visitors, but 40% of the

persons interviewed during the study were international visitors. This is not a definite figure as international visitor-numbers are higher in our summer months. Other slow tourism activities are listed as follows:

Recreational walks, photography of flora, fauna and landscapes, bird walks guided by experienced birders, free guided walks in the gardens which are two hours long and which must be pre-booked, and the Colonel Bird Bath attraction (constructed in 1811 by Colonel Christopher Bird). KNBG has a number of single-day hiking trails including a 15 to 30 minute self-guided Braille trail for those visitors who are sight-challenged; the 0.65 kilometres Boekenhout (Cape Beech tree) circular trail to the Old Dam built in 1916; the circular Stinkwood trail to the Fragrance Garden, Skeleton and Window Gorges. On this hiking trail the Cape Chestnut tree, planted in 1914, are the biggest and oldest trees on the KNBG campus; the Yellowwood trail is steep on the incline and descent and is three kilometres long.

KNBG also offers facilities for art exhibitions in the Sanlam Hall; environmental education lectures; a garden programme called 'Water-wise Gardens'; open lawns and grass areas for picnics with picnic baskets bought from the restaurants at KNBG; the Kirstenbosch Craft Market on Sundays; the Galileo Open Air Cinema screens classic movies, and the 'Boomslang Tree Canopy Walkway' (opened in 2014).

Sustainable tourism policy development

South African tourism policy provides a framework to manage and grow tourism sustainably on a national, provincial and local level. Macro policies, according to Steyn and Spencer (2011:179) are rules and regulations implemented to control tourism and all tourism activities in a country. These rules and regulations are required to positively grow tourism but also to limit the negative impacts associated with tourism, and to create constancy and sustainable tourism growth. These authors note that the White Paper of 1996 on the Development and Promotion of Tourism set the foundation for the development of future policies regarding tourism in South Africa. Since leisure and recreational segments

are considered valuable to the tourism industry so management of facilities in this segment requires work within the framework of national and local tourism policy. Spencer and Zembani (2011:201) note that numerous companies depend heavily on income generated from business within the tourism sector, and the significant contribution to job creation through tourism.

- White Paper of 1996 on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa

The Tourism White Paper (1996) clearly points out that, in order to realise the full potential of tourism, not any kind of tourism will be effective (South Africa Government, 2014). Furthermore, the White Paper explains that only a 'new tourism', referred to as 'Responsible Tourism', will be most effective as it includes business prospects for historically disadvantaged groups, has a softer impact on the environment, enhances other industries of the economy, and can bring harmony and success to the citizen of the country. Responsible tourism fervently incorporates the promotion of environmentally focussed tourism activities in a sustainable manner and the inclusion of local communities to benefit from this 'new' form of tourism that will foster investment in local culture, which must be protected from over-commercialisation (South Africa Government, 2014). One of the responsible tourism products which could offer good potential for development mentioned in the Tourism White Paper of 1996 is eco-tourism. It should be noted that no other forms of sustainable tourism are mentioned, except for the reference to 'Responsible Tourism'. There is no mention specifically of 'slow tourism' in the 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa. However, the principles of responsible tourism and eco-tourism closely resembles slow tourism, but do not essentially incorporate the use of lower carbon travel-modes, taking time out to enjoy the tourism activity at a slower, relaxed pace, or for the visitor to enjoy a comprehensive and captivating experience to connect with the environment and the local people.

- 2001 White Paper on Sustainable Tourism Development and Promotion in the Western Cape

This White Paper (2001) was directed at sustainable tourism development in the Western Cape, and drafted to feed into the national governments' tourism policy outlined in the 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa. Provinces were required to create a strategy that would meet the social, economic and environmental objectives in line with those suggested in the National Tourism White Paper of 1996 to grow tourism sustainably by applying responsible tourism principles. Sections of sustainable and responsible tourism that were highlighted in the Provincial Tourism White Paper of 2011 pertaining to this study are summarised as follows:

- Responsible Tourism Policy for the City of Cape Town 2009

The City of Cape Town's website quotes responsible tourism in uncomplicated terms as '*... tourism that creates better places for people to live in, and better places to visit*'. This form of tourism is based on a triple-bottom line approach which is to develop tourism sustainability on all three levels namely, economically, environmentally and socially (City of Cape Town, 2009). The Responsible Tourism Policy for the City of Cape Town was implemented in 2009.

Research Methodology

A predominantly qualitative research study was conducted for this investigation and took the form of a grounded theory approach. The grounded theory method is a form of qualitative research which was developed by sociologists Glaser and Strauss in the 1960's (Research Methods Knowledge Base, 2013). Analyzing the data using this method could prove significant to this study as it would give the researchers the opportunity to investigate whether visitors to KNBG were interested in the slow tourism phenomenon. This approach could also determine the role and future of slow tourism activities at gardens, tourist attractions and destinations. The grounded theory study is developed by firstly '*...entering the field work*

phase without an hypothesis; secondly, describing what happens, and then lastly formulating explanations as to why it happens on the basis of observation' (Bailey, 1987:54)

Data collection

For the purpose of collecting primary data, the researchers conducted non-participatory visitor observations at KNBG. The researchers wished to establish if visitors were currently undertaking any slow tourism activities in the KNBG, and the type of slow tourism activities that visitor were involved in. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with a KNBG management staff to understand views of the slow tourism concept, and opinions on introducing new slow activities in the KNBG. Semi-structured interview questionnaires were then developed for visitors and managed on an on-site, convenience method as part of the primary data collection process. The sample sizes for the study were:

- KNBG senior management (one) – interview: KNBG Events Manager
- KNBG visitors – 69 visitors participated in semi-structured interviews, conducted during the high season (March to April 2014) from Thursday to Wednesday, for the duration of one week.

KNBG visitors – 187 persons were observed at the KNBG. Findings

The observation data reveals that visitors at the KNBG are engaging in slow tourism activities. Visitors of all ages, genders, and nationalities, including small and large groups were observed, who seemingly relaxed, enjoying the open green spaces, and the slow tourism facilities in the beautifully landscaped natural setting. The findings of the visitor-interviews established that the majority of visitors at the KNBG are there to walk and explore the flora and fauna, and confirm that the greenery and open spaces, fresh air, the water elements, sounds of birds, and the relaxing natural beauty made them feel relaxed and rejuvenated, and are the main reasons for visiting the Gardens. A majority of the visitors agree that they find it hard to connect with nature in today's fast-paced life due to a lack of time, family and work

demands, and that they live far from natural spaces. Forty five percent of visitors said that they made time in their busy schedules to connect with nature, while 96% agree that if they had more time to engage in slow tourism activities, such as those at the KNBG, it would contribute to a less stressed lifestyle for them. The visitor interview data reveals that the visitors at KNBG gravitated towards slower-paced lifestyles on a recreational level. There is an assumption in some literature that the market segment interested in slow tourism activities is the mature-age and retired visitor; confirmed by some visitors who answered that slow tourism activities are for senior aged visitors, and that most people who take an interest in visiting botanical gardens are mature age groups. However, the interview data collected suggests that the 26 to 40 year age group is the majority group visiting the KNBG, and this group could be classified as the young family group with children. 72% of visitors confirm that they spend at least two hours in the Gardens, implying that visitors are staying for longer periods in the Gardens, and taking more time out than in previous years (Boekstein & Uken, 1992:47).

A model for slow tourism development

In developing a slow tourism model, organisations that have the necessary resources and facilities at their disposal could potentially increase the popularity of their destination. By introducing this alternative 'softer' form of tourism activity to a new market segment could display positively in keeping up with the growing tourism trends to satisfy visitors who are in search of an intensified authentic experience. For the future of tourism in the South African context, a slow tourism model could assist organisations to grow in a new direction in the 21st century, if it is considered that mass tourism has been described as tourism of 'yesteryear'. The town of Sedgefield, being at the forefront of the Slow Movement and Slow Cities within South Africa, is perhaps the beginning of the growth of a new tourism practise to implement slower rhythms in life and travel styles.

This model demonstrates that the slow tourism offering is driven by the demand aspect for the slow tourism product, which the slow tourism producers with the (necessary and available)

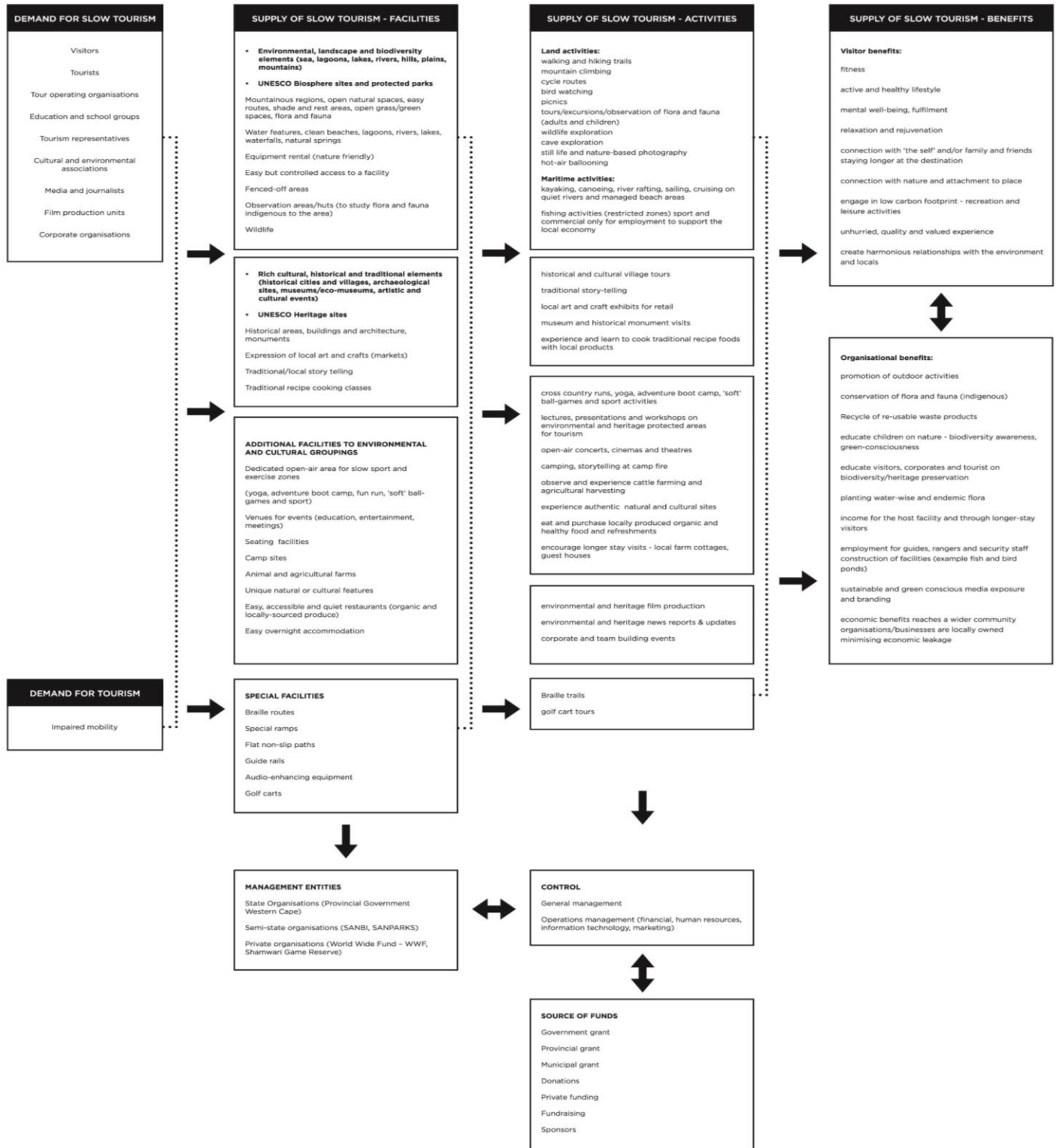
resources are willing to supply consumer demands, for example visitors, various organisational groups, and challenged visitors (impaired mobility). In order for the demand to be satisfied, the management entity needs to supply the necessary facilities to the slow tourism consumers. From the international slow tourism cases, the supply of slow tourism facilities was in areas that have environmental, landscape and biodiversity elements. These could be protected areas and at UNESCO Biosphere sites. The supply of slow tourism facilities are also consumed in areas that have a rich cultural and historical background. Traditional elements found in these areas such as historical villages, cultural regions, and archaeological locations which fall under UNESCO Heritage sites. Areas that are considered non-protected areas for example animal and agricultural farms, can have slow tourism facilities available, which are illustrated in the model as 'Additional facilities to environmental and cultural groupings'.

The necessary resources for slow tourism activities in such areas could be in the form of a dedicated open-air area for slow tourism sport/exercise zones, campsites, venues to host slow tourism events, easy overnight accommodation and quiet restaurants with unique natural or cultural features. Visitors who require special facilities (impaired mobility) to aid their visit whilst exploring slow tourism activities can be provided in the form of flat non-slip paths, ramps, guide rails, golf carts and the availability of audio-enhanced equipment. The supply of slow tourism facilities at a destination enables visitors to engage in slow tourism activities. In the model a few examples are provided to indicate possible slow tourism activities in this category. Even though these activities engaged in by visitors or various organisational groups, are at protected areas both the consumer and producer of the slow tourism product should be consistently mindful of the impacts on the environment. Locations that are not considered protected areas could include slow tourism activities which visitors engage in at protected sites and other slow visitor activities, for example camping, storytelling at campfires, residing at a local farm cottage, participating in slow tourism sport, attend an educational workshop, or enjoying open air performances and entertainment.

The media and film production units can make good use of these destinations in the form of broadcasting updates at slow destinations, the positive contribution of visitors on the local

destination and the environment, and nature and heritage documentaries and films can be produced in a unique natural setting.

A model for the development and promotion of slow tourism



Source: Researcher construct

The impaired mobility visitor group is able to enjoy for example a nature walk along the 'Braille Trail' or the use of golf cart tours such as those available at the KNBG. The slow tourism experience is an 'all-encompassing' experience and the use of all the senses to intensify the experience. Even visitors with impaired mobility are able to value the experience of having natural surroundings to connect with nature and the local culture.

Visiting groups who engage in slow tourism activities derive certain benefits from these activities. Moreover, the organisations supplying these facilities can gain which creates a mutually beneficial tourism transaction. People engaging in slow tourism activities at destinations can experience benefits such as improved fitness, relaxation and rejuvenation, relationship-connection with nature, 'the self' and others in an unhurried, quality tourism practise. These groups are encouraged to stay longer at the destination, taking time out, and exploring nature tourism at a slower rhythm in harmony with the environment and local people. Slow tourism organisations are able to gain benefits through the conservation of indigenous flora and fauna, promote recycling initiatives, and providing conservation and biodiversity education. Additional economic rewards for slow tourism organisations are received through visitors staying longer at the destinations and spending more money, this can minimise economic leakage and reach a wider community.

In order for the model to work effectively and generate the desired outcome for all the role-players involved, the management entity is required to control the facilities and activities by putting in place certain organisational and management infrastructure. General management will oversee and administer the slow tourism facilities, while other supporting operations will handle the recruitment and training of human resources needed to run the slow tourism facility. Other support is needed to manage the organisations financial matters, information technology systems (bookings and reservations), and branding of slow tourism offerings through an innovative and creative marketing team. Slow tourism organisations should gain funding from various sectors such

as government grants, sponsorships, private funding and donations. The source of funding feeds back into placing better controls, and assist management entities to grow the business portfolio of the slow tourism organisations.

Conclusions

The researcher investigated selected international and national tourism policies impacting on slow tourism in the literature study. South African policies, such as the White Paper of 1996 on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, the 2001 White Paper on Sustainable Tourism Development and Promotion in the Western Cape, and the Responsible Tourism Policy for the City of Cape Town 2009 were examined. The principles of responsible tourism and eco-tourism mentioned in the 1996 White Paper, closely resemble slow tourism but do not emphasise using lower carbon travel modes, and that tourism should be considered as an activity to be enjoyed at a slower and relaxed pace to fully value the experience of the environment and the local people. The 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, and the 2011 White Paper on Sustainable Tourism Development and Promotion in the Western Cape, lack the emphasis that mass tourism development should be investigated. The possible negative effects of mass tourism on a destination, such as the degradation of the natural environment and the decline stage of the tourism destination life cycle, were not strongly considered. None of the policies mentions the development of slow tourism or refers to slow tourism. Only the 2009 Responsible Tourism Policy for the City of Cape Town, provides a stronger link to slow tourism policy and the International Cittaslow Charter, the significance of which is that tourism is grown based on health, valuable experience and mutual goodwill.

Various authors and researchers had different opinions on the definition and interpretation of slow tourism, where some believe that carbon-counting and modal choice contribute to the environmental consciousness of the traveller and are core elements of slow travel and

tourism (Warren, 2011:916). Other authors, such as Sugiyama and Nobuoka (2007:3), suggest that limited use of cars and other more carbon-conscious motor transport be considered as one of the characteristics of slow travel or tourism. Dickinson et al. (2011:281) advocate that slow travel and tourism should exclude air and car travel as these carbon emissions are higher per passenger-kilometre when compared to bus/coach and rail travel.

Due to economic growth, globalisation and accelerated lifestyles (including travel and tourism lifestyles) within society, the consequences of speed have adverse effects on people's private and professional lives (Weiermair and Mathies, 2004:67). The research investigates whether this was visitors' perceptions at the KNBG, hence their engagement in slow tourism activities at the Gardens. Conway and Timms (2010:335) propose that the potential slow tourism market segment could perhaps be the trans-national family market, retirees, and returning migrants, due to them having more time available to engage in slow tourism activities, and these visitors were seen as giving something back to locals and their homeland. By interviewing visitors at the KNBG the research was able to establish the market segment that was interested in slow tourism activities and what benefits they received from visiting the KNBG, and places with natural landscapes, flora and fauna, and open green spaces. Matos (2004:102) suggests that mountainous regions should consider the slow tourism alternative for the shorter-stay holiday market and promote the concept of 'slowness'. In the visitor responses the majority of the visitors at the KNBG were the young family market, the 26 to 40 year age-group from Cape Town.

Recommendations for further research

In offering a new tourism product focussed on visitor quality and behavioural trends in leisure and recreational tourism, it is vital to place emphasis on research based on a qualitative methodology. Due to time constraints and the labour-intensiveness of qualitative studies, future researchers in the tourism, recreation and leisure industry need to conduct further qualitative studies in the area of slow tourism in

a South Africa context. It is important to understand what the visitor expectations are and how to satisfy their expectations and demands, in an ever-evolving tourism industry. This proves to be more effective through conducting a qualitative research. Niche and alternative tourism products are constantly emerging in the form of a more sustainable and creating a more green-conscious visitor. This study indicates that there seem to be a growing trend for people to move at slow rhythms in their personal, professional and travel styles, and to connect with their 'inner-tortoise'. It is suggested that the findings of this 'new tourism' study will form a basis for future responsible tourism studies in the subject of slow tourism and contribute knowledge to the tourism industry of Cape Town and within South Africa.

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