

## Going Out-There: A Literature Review on Drive Tourism Within the South African Context

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### Abstract

Drive tourism is cited to become a major part of the road map to recover the South African tourism industry in the post-Covid era. Even before the pandemic, the South African tourism industry was subjected to serious setbacks. The implementation of stricter visa requirements to curtail child trafficking had the unintended effect of an R886m loss in direct tourism spending. Xenophobic attacks and political turmoil also contributed to an ailing tourism industry. As the tourism industry started to recover at the beginning of 2020, the Covid pandemic caused economic havoc worldwide. The industry was hit hard by the lockdowns and shed more than 300 000 jobs in South Africa during this time. As the world vaccinated and started to adjust to living with the virus, a recovery plan for the South African tourism industry is urgently needed. A worldwide trend suggests that countries are jump-starting their tourism industries by focusing on the regeneration of their domestic tourism markets. While social distancing is still recommended, drive tourism has become the ideal vehicle of recovery that will enable tourists to travel freely and safely. In order to properly implement drive tourism as a dynamo of economic activity, this study aims to conduct a systematic literature review on international and domestic drive tourism research. Making use of a conceptual research design, this study further aims (1) to understand the focus of drive tourism research on an international level; (2) to identify studies on drive tourism already undertaken in South Africa; and (3) to identify the research gaps in drive tourism studies in South Africa. Establishing a theoretical framework of existing knowledge will reveal the extent of the lack of research in drive tourism and hopefully create a better understanding of the significant opportunities in the South African drive tourism market.

**Keywords:** Drive tourism, literature review, South African tourism market, post-Covid recovery

### Introduction

Tourists across the world have enjoyed the pleasure of self-drive tourism since the advent of the car (Du Cros & Ong, 2010). According to Walton (2022), tourism is predicated upon travel and its history is strongly identified with transport innovation. It can therefore be said that the different modes of travel, as they developed through decades of technological invention, had significant influences on how the tourism industry developed and the types of tourism that were generated. During the nineteenth century, steam trains and large passenger boats enabled groups of people to travel for migratory reasons as well as vacations. The twentieth century gave rise to the exponential growth in automobile travel, bringing unprecedented freedom of movement for individual travellers. Countries in Europe have received intrepid tourists in cars seeking unique experiences in the rural villages of France and Italy, thereby opening them for mass tourism (Richards, 2007).

Worldwide crises tend to contribute hugely to technological (transport) innovations. Both the First World War and the Second World War caused enormous advances in air and land transportation. After World War I, air travel was quite literally taking off. In the US, for instance, the number of passengers grew fivefold from 462 000 to 1 900 000 between 1934 and 1939. Still, aviation remained far beyond the means of most travellers, especially for long-haul

routes (Rodrigue, 2020). After the Second World War, the situation changed drastically and both air transport and land transport in the form of automobiles became accessible to ordinary citizens. Although the Americans coined the phrase “America’s love affair with the automobile”, it really was replicated by those with spare leisure time and money across the world, certainly in the Western world. The British embraced travelling by motor car to seaside resorts; the Europeans flocked to the Mediterranean Coast. At first, road networks were established on existing trails and people tended to simply follow the road signs to their destinations. The proliferation of different transport modes such as motorcycles and a variation of automobile models gave rise to people paying attention to the experience of the journey as part of the vacation. The automobile and the motorcycle became an extension of the driver’s identity and social class, and contributed to heightened driver experience. It was the birth of drive tourism. Ironically, although drive tourism was one of the first types of tourism to appear, it was only described as a form of tourism and researched under that term much later. Olsen (2002) described drive tourism as “a popular form of tourism activity that has significantly contributed to the development of tourism in many nations but has received relatively little attention in literature.” According to Du Cros and Ong (2010), more recent research on self-drive tourism has centred on creating a suitable framework of study (Prideaux & Carson, 2003), marketing profiling (Taylor & Prideaux, 2008), and motivating the role of heritage (Carson et al., 2009) and the role of scenic byways and cultural landscapes (Eby & Molnar, 2002; Waitt & Lane, 2007) and self-drive tourism in Asian countries (Liu, 2022).

The aim of this paper is to review which aspects of drive tourism have been researched both internationally as well as locally, to discover what drive tourism in South Africa entails, focusing on examples of drive tourism in South Africa. The author will make use of the concept analytical literature review method, which entails secondary source methods by reviewing local and international formal literature. The conceptual research design is most suited to this study as conceptual papers typically focus on proposing new relationships among constructs; the purpose is therefore to develop logical and complete arguments about these associations rather than testing them empirically (Gilson & Goldberg, 2015). Young (1995) states that an important defining parameter of conceptual research is its attempt to systematically clarify concepts. It is used to develop new concepts or to reinterpret existing ones. Jaakkola (2020) describes conceptual research as aiming to create “new knowledge by building on carefully selected source(s) of information and assimilating and combining the evidence in the form of new concepts or theories.” That means conceptual research makes the concepts themselves the objects of the research, investigating the origin, meaning and use of concepts as well as their evolution over time or within other contexts (Wallerstein, 2009). Dreher (2003) also suggests that conceptual research encourages a systematic review of relevant knowledge. Conceptual research can provide those imaginative, creative and innovative leaps that give research its life (Gray et al., 2007). Therefore, a conceptual research design offers the best opportunity to offer new insights based on existing research. To answer the primary research question of what drive tourism entails, definitions of various key concepts will be provided.

### **Background of the study**

Before drive tourism can be examined within the South African context, the definition must be considered within the international arena. Prideaux et al. (2001:209-219) created an often-cited definition of drive tourism, i.e. “tourism that centres on travelling from an origin point to a destination by car that is either privately owned or rented and engaging in tourism related activities during the journey.” Olsen (2002) added to the drive tourism definition by describing it as “Travelling away from home for at least one night, on holidays or visiting friends and relatives, in their own, a rented or borrowed vehicle as the primary mode of transport.” With

this definition of drive tourism, Olsen changed the word ‘car’, used in Prideaux’s definition, to the more all-encompassing term ‘vehicle’ to create a more inclusive definition. According to Prideaux and Carson (2011), drive tourism involves a mechanically-driven passenger-carrying mode of road transportation. Therefore, drive tourism includes automobiles, motorcycles, four-wheel drive vehicles, recreational vehicle travel and caravanning. The terms that refer to drive tourism include self-drive tourism as well as rubber tyre traffic: “Self-drive tourism (rubber tyre traffic) includes those people who hire or travel in their own vehicle, as well as those who hire or travel in their own recreational vehicle (including fifth wheels, motor homes, campers and camper trailers)” (Hardy, 2006). The terms drive tourism and self-drive tourism therefore can be used interchangeably. Sometimes, drive tourism is implied in research, but not named as such. The researcher will include studies that are about drive tourism although the term drive tourism is not directly quoted, especially within the South African context. The following section will make use of literature, to review major topics in tourism research on drive tourism.

### **International context**

The following aspects were focus points with regard to research on drive tourists as well as the field of drive tourism within the international context:

#### ***Drive tourist profile***

In countries such as Australia, the United States of America (USA) and increasingly China, research has been done on the profile of the drive tourist. An emerging trend in Australia is the growing number of older baby boomers or “grey nomads” who prefer to be self-drive tourists. Patterson et al. (2011) predict that the phenomenon of grey nomads is not only set to increase in Australia, but that it will also be the case for other developed countries as it has been forecasted that the number of people over 60 will more than double to about 22% of the world’s population by 2050 (Magnus 2012). Additionally, the grey nomad’s expenditure per trip exceeds a regular tourist as their average duration of stay is four times longer. Grey nomads differ from their North American counterparts, the so-called snowbirds, in that they dislike being regulated in organised long-stay resorts. Grey nomads embrace the freedom of movement and prefer uncommercialised bush stays or quiet coastal camping sites. Another factor that makes this group an important segment in the tourism market is the relative insensitivity for travel expenditure (Mahavedan, 2013). The grey nomads have potential as a very sustainable tourism market.

In contrast, research done on the Chinese drive tourism market proved that “Most drive tourists are young or middle-aged, with income above the intermediate level of all sorts of occupation.” (He et al., 2010). According to Luo and Shi (2021), the number of drive tourists in China has reached 3.5 billion, accounting for 63.2% of the total number of domestic tourists in China. The young drive tourist is of great importance to the tourism industry as it represents the future of this market segment. In Australia, Tkaczynskia and Rundle-Thieleb, (2019) also established that young European couples (younger than 35 years old), which formed the majority of the three groups as part of the drive tourism population travelling Fraser Coast in Australia. The other two groups identified were middle-aged families (35-44 years) and elderly domestic couples (55 years and older). The findings of Chatterjee et al. (2018) differ vastly from the burgeoning youthful drive market in China. Chatterjee et al. found that car licences in the United Kingdom peaked among young people in 1992/4, with 48% of 17- to 20-year-olds and 75% of 21- to 29-year-olds holding a driving licence. By 2014, driving licence holding had fallen to 29% of 17- to 20-year-olds and 63% of 21- to 29-year-olds. According to Chatterjee et al., changes in travel behaviour are caused by changes in young people’s socioeconomic situations such as increased higher education participation, rise of lower paid,

less secure jobs and a decline in disposable income. The concept of a delayed transition, or even non-transition, into a traditional form of ‘adulthood’, marked by completing a course of education/training, leaving the parental home to live independently, getting a job, getting married and then having children, serves as a useful basis for considering the combined set of societal changes because it has been shown that car use is strongly associated with these markers of adulthood. The falling percentages of driver’s licence holding for 17- to 20-year-olds from 48% in 1992/94 to 29% in 2014, could influence the future of the drive tourism market in the United Kingdom. From the above discussion, literature reflects “The diversity of self-drive tourism markets is apparent in the different experiences they seek, and the different types of people who undertake those experiences.” (Carson & Prideaux, 2010). Even though it appears that there might be broad trends within a specific region (China’s middle-income car owner group as well as a growing young car owner group; Australia the USA and UK’s older, retired travellers, Van Heerden’s (2011) family-based travellers camping in South Africa), it remains a dynamic market where the profile of the drive tourist should be researched per country if nor per region in order to understand this market’s huge potential.

### ***Motivation of the drive tourist***

One of the most often used theories to explain tourists’ motivation to travel is Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy-of-needs. Another useful model to illustrate travel motivation is Dann’s (1981) push and pull model. Iso-Ahola and Allen (1982) showed that push factors are often associated with intrinsic forces that motivate the tourist to visit a certain region as “they are driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself”. The drive tourist is often motivated by the intrinsic pleasure of the “task” of the journey for the sake of the journey rather than an efficient way to get from point A to B. Pull factors are extrinsic factors that motivate the tourist to visit the attraction or experience something new. Dann (1981) argues that the push and pull factors are complex and might switch roles as the push factors can become pull factors where, for example, the isolation of a destination becomes a push factor to fulfil a desire for freedom from daily routine. The pull factors included: attractions in a destination such as cultural heritage, natural sceneries, and shopping facilities (Cha et al., 1995; Zhang & Lam, 1999); and image, climate, and the comfort of a destination (Kim & Beck, 2009; Wu et al., 2009).

More recently, Wu and Pearce (2014) concluded that Chinese recreational vehicle (RV) drive tourists to Australia expressed “an interest in local people and building relationships and status” and that “broadly suggests that these pioneer travellers should be seen as more analogous to experienced western travellers in their motives rather than naïve or inexperienced tourists.” Wu and Pearce (2014) did a netnographic study on Chinese RV drive tourists based on the travel career pattern approach developed by Pearce and Lee (2005), where the patterns of travel motivation are linked to the travel experience of the tourist. The following table defines the different concepts involved:

Table 1: Key terms involving travel career pattern (Pearce, 2011)

<b>Key terms</b>	<b>Conceptual definitions</b>
Travel needs/motives	The biological and sociocultural forces that drive travel behaviour.
Motivation pattern	Travel motivation occurs in a pattern of multiple motives rather than in a single dominant force.
Travel career	A dynamic concept arguing that tourists have identifiable phases or stages in their holiday taking. A pattern of travel motives characterises or reflects one’s travel career. The state of one’s travel career, like a career at work, is influenced by previous travel experiences and life stage or contingency factors.
Travel career ladder (TCL)	A theoretical model describing travel motivation through five hierarchical levels of needs and motives in relation to travel career levels.
Travel career pattern (TCP)	This approach is a modification of the earlier TCL work. It emphasises the pattern of motivations and their structure rather than steps on a ladder or hierarchy

The travel career pattern is explained in Pearce (2011), where it is argued that patterns of motives depend on the travellers' experience. For all travellers, there is a core layer of motives that is important to all tourists. These motives include the need to escape and relax, to experience novelty, and to build relationships. These motives are relatively unaffected by how much travelling the participants have experienced. There is also the next layer of motives where the key items include seeking close contact with the host community and the local environment as well as striving to fulfil self-development and self-actualisation needs. Then a final and outer layer of motives (also corresponding with Maslow's self-actualisation needs on which the theory was based) included such directions as seeking romance, looking for isolation and returning to simpler times and places as represented in a nostalgic quest. For the most experienced travellers, the middle layer of motives tends to be more important than the outer layer. Interestingly, those with limited travel experience tended to see all motives as quite important. In the full travel career pattern approach, the phases or stages of the travellers' lifecycle were also linked to the travellers' motive patterns. The Chinese RV travellers have strong patterns reflecting the inner and middle layer of motives showing that the substantial Chinese tourist market has largely similar travel motivations than tourists from the traditional West. Role players in the drive tourism market should be able to integrate the Chinese drive tourists with an advertising campaign addressing similar needs than existing advertising (Wu & Pearce 2014).

### ***Decision-making***

Understanding how tourists acquire knowledge, develop vacation plans, and make travel decisions is one of the most critical tasks facing tourism businesses and destination marketing organisations in developing effective communication strategies (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). The planning and decision-making processes employed by tourists are complex, as a touring holiday involves assimilating information from many different sources and a continual assessment of options (Becken & Wilson, 2007). Before reviewing the different tourist profiles of planning behaviour, it is important to note that according to Stewart and Vogt (1999) as well as Zalatan (1996), some tourists avoid planning their trip on purpose to experience a degree of spontaneity and even risk. As can be expected, this behaviour can be linked to certain personality traits. In such a scenario, aspects such as length of stay, travel party and travel mode are still usually decided on beforehand, but accommodation and activities can be changed during the trip (Stewart & Vogt 1999).

In contrast, researchers who see the decision-making process as problem-solving behaviour, stress the importance of an information search prior to the journey as well as earlier experience, perceptions and mental images as important elements (Um & Crompton, 1990; Woodside & King, 2001; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989). These models assume that internal and external constructs are used in cognitive processes to derive the decision (Ross, 1994). Known as the positivist view of tourist decision-making, it has been criticised as a simplification of what can include emotional, opportunistic, and hedonic behaviour (Decrop 1999; Hyde 1999). In tourism studies, and in the wider field of consumer psychology, the lack of integration of cognitive and affective theories has been criticised (Holbrook & O'Shaughnessy, 1990). Becken and Wilson (2007) developed a model for trip planning and decision-making for self-drive tourists in New Zealand, which integrates both cognitive and affective processes.

Three levels of planning and decision-making by tourists to New Zealand could be distinguished (Table 2). Core decisions (e.g. length of stay) are made well in advance of a trip as part of the planning process and are unlikely to change. Secondary decisions reflect loose plans that are likely to change during the trip or where final choices had not been consolidated before the trip (e.g. sub-destinations), and en-route decisions are those that have not been

considered before the trip. The three-tiered planning and decision making can be partly explained with the theory of case-based planning, as it incorporates a dynamic element of changing and adapting plans continuously in reaction to new information and circumstances (Stewart & Vogt, 1999).

Table 2. Three-tiered planning and decision-making by rental vehicle tourists in New Zealand

	Core	Loosely	Unplanned
Content of planning	Destination, length of stay, North-South split and direction, transport mode, rough travel route, key attractions, special interests	Sub-destinations, activities, attractions, exact travel route, location for overnight stop and accommodation	Local activities and attractions, restaurants, shopping, side trips, accommodation
Timeframe	Months	Days to months	Minutes to hours
Information sources	Guidebooks, word-of-mouth, promotional brochures, internet	Guidebooks, word-of-mouth, visitor centres, leaflets, maps	Signage, word-of-mouth, coincidence and no real information source
Decision-making process	More rational cognitive, problem-solving	More situational, experiential cognitive	Affective, hedonic, opportunistic, impulsive

Source Becken and Wilson (2007)

More recently, the role of digital information and communication technology (ICT) has emerged as an important factor in marketing to and decision-making of drive tourists. Ali and Carson (2011) have argued that drive tourists are likely to be early adopters of consumer-oriented applications, because enhanced information flow facilitates greater independence. Technologies such as wireless technologies, location-based systems, geographical information systems, intelligent transport systems, virtual tourism and virtual communities present challenges and new opportunities to predict planning and decision-making patterns by the self-drive tourists.

### Modes of travel

Since the advent of the motor vehicle, self-drive tourism has been an important contributor to the growth of many tourist destinations. Access to a vehicle provides travellers with mobilities not afforded by other forms of travel (Hardy & Gretzel, 2010). In this article, similar to the approach in Prideaux and Carson (2011), drive tourism is used to describe travel by any form of mechanically powered, passenger-carrying road transport, with the exclusion of coaches and bicycles. Like Prideaux and Carson’s (2011) approach, coaches are excluded as they are regarded as a commercial operation that functions with fixed itineraries and schedules. They also excluded bicycles as they are not mechanically powered, but the growing trend of e-bikes that provide a drive experience comparable with a mechanically powered vehicle resulted in their inclusion in this article under the discussion of modes of travel. Drive tourism, therefore, includes day trips, overnight travel in a family or rental car, four-wheel-drive vehicles (4WD), caravanning, travel in recreational vehicles (RVs) and motorhomes as well as touring by motorcycle (Prideaux & Carson, 2011).

### Cars

The trend in Australia from a market dominated by tourists ‘in transit’ – using the vehicle simply as the most convenient mode of transport between the origin and the destination – to one where the use of the vehicle was more central to the enjoyment of the trip, is documented by Holyoak et al. (2009). In the USA, car ownership grew substantially since 1920 with more people able to afford their own car even before paved roads became the norm. People wanted to explore away from the scheduled destinations along the railway line or cruise line harbour stops (Timothy, 2011). The extensive road and highway network that followed, contributed

largely to a car-based tourism base, which also resulted in the most diverse touring landscapes in the world. The USA is home to, among others, coastal and mountain resorts, and vast natural wonders such as the Grand Canyon. The sheer size of the country promoted long haul journeys where the journey itself became the purpose of the vacation. Therefore, the USA is known for generating one of the highest numbers of domestic trips in the world.

The car is also a vehicle of expression of status and rank. Cars were bought not only to fulfil mobility needs, but also to signify freedom and a higher socio-economic status in the new, market-driven, competitive milieu (Pucher & Buehler, 2005; Pojani & Stead, 2017). A main finding of Pojani et al. (2018), among university students in Albania, Eastern Europe, is that most students intend to purchase cars and to drive in the future. Pro-car attitudes prevail, revealing that cars are still a strong status symbol.

Olsen (2002) found the self-drive market identifies themselves as travellers rather than tourists, with an emphasis on enjoyment in the freedom of movement and discovery. Prideaux (2018) argued the consumer choice of transportation mode is based upon perceived value, speed, cost, comfort, convenience, and destination choice. Various demographics have been investigated to better understand the drive tourism market within both general and specific contexts. For example, the mode of transportation preferred by seniors, when traveling from home origin to destination, was explored in Australia (Prideaux 2018). Findings revealed the car was most heavily relied upon, at approximately 62%, followed by public transportation (25%) (Fjelstul & Fyall, 2015).

The car rental industry has received surprisingly little attention from researchers, considering the size of the market within the drive tourism sector. Lohman and Zahra (2011) showed that 85% of prominent car rental companies in New Zealand's market share are represented by international tourists. Most visitors from North America, Australia and Europe preferred renting a car instead of opting for organised coach travel. Domestic tourists also prefer to drive their own cars while touring their country.

According to Carson and Schmallegger (2010), in countries where vehicle ownership is only now becoming widespread, whole new types of tourism experiences are being made possible, free from the constraints of scheduled mass transit. In China, the use of the private vehicle, as object of consumption, reflects the newfound wealth of rising middle classes who want to buy tourism as part of a confirmation of their new place in a wider world than they previously were able to access (Yu et al., 2011). The rapid growth suggests that self-drive tourism in the form of a private car has significant growth potential in China, although it is still in its first phase and the market is still small in relation to the Chinese population.

#### ***Four-wheel drive vehicles (4WD)***

Taylor and Carson (2009) remarked on the underlying marketing message from Australian state, regional and local governments to 4WD vehicle owners, of experiences of spiritualism, exploration, and discovery of both landscapes and of oneself through 4WD travel through Australian deserts. Separating the vehicle from the trip experience is often difficult when discussing self-drive tourism, which is especially true for 4WD owners. According to Scott (2002), 4WD tourism may be expected to have a particularly strong link between product and market because the vehicle is an essential component of accessing destinations and undertaking desired activities. Taylor and Prideaux (2008) defined a typology of 4WD travellers with the vehicle at its core. Travellers either use the 4WD to explore places they would otherwise be unable to access, or they undertook activities (for example, fossicking, fishing, bushwalking, or camping) that needed the storage and power capabilities of the 4WD vehicle as infrastructure. They may also travel with a 4WD to test the capabilities of the vehicle as well as the driver and navigator, to perform particular tasks (Taylor & Carson, 2011).

Although Australian research on 4WD vehicles dominates, 4WD travellers can be found on almost every continent. It is also the transport of choice around the world for self-drive as well as guided leisure trips.

For some 4WD enthusiasts, the drive experience of these vehicles borders on the mystical and spiritual. Thrift's (2000) non-representational theory enables us to probe the creative practices and co-performances involved in the relational process of four-wheel driving without relying on dualisms and without abandoning place or the emotional and sensual qualities of the human body. Four-wheel drivescapes are therefore understood as highly reflexive, reflecting ways of being in the world through the bodily touring practices of the four-wheel driver. Consequently, through four-wheel drive touring practices, people are actively involved in a highly complex process that mutually (re)constitutes their sense and memory of place (Waite & Lane, 2007). From the above, it is clear that 4WD tourists are both attracted to adventure as well as spiritual experiences in nature. Adventure, nature and slow tourism are relevant for the above mode of travel.

### ***Recreational vehicles (RVs) and caravanning***

Self-drive tourism is described as an independent and flexible form of travel that lends itself to the exploration of the environment. Pearce (1999) described the self-drive experience as "touring for pleasure", where the driving itself is often the central part of the travel experience. Urry (2002) proposed that the view through the windscreen of the vehicle and the highway are major components of the tourist gaze. He suggested that with the advent of the automobile, the tourist gaze became mobilised and a way of leaving the past behind. Urry brings the focus directly to the ways in which emotions are located in the constitution of places. Focusing on places consumed as tourist destinations, he shows how specific sites are constructed to be saturated with emotion, sometimes wild and frightening, sometimes aesthetically pleasing and relaxing, sometimes giving a feeling of rootedness. These emotions become integral to how places are imagined and portrayed, with profound implications for the embodied experiences of tourists. In focusing on emotions experienced by tourists and attaching them to places, Urry illustrates the inter-relatedness of people and their environments.

RV tourism is ideally suited to access the experiences described above. Hardy and Gretzel (2011) define the physical aspect of RV as entailing a camper trailer, van conversion, fifth wheel, slide-on camper, caravan, or motorhome that tourists take on holiday with them and becomes their primary mode of travel and accommodation.

It is significant that caravans are named as part of RV tourism, as caravan owners have largely similar motivations and travel patterns. Hardy and Gretzel (2011) have also shown that the broader RVing market in North America is made up of two behavioural groups – those who travel on a full-time basis (full-timers), and those who travel part-time. Among these, there appeared to be two further significant sub-groups – those who travel in groups called caravanners (in the USA and Canada), and those who travel as independent travellers. Both caravanners and independent RVers seek the same experience and value RVing in similar ways. They seek to self-fulfil and live out their dreams of travel through RVing. It gives them a sense of freedom and self-sufficiency and allows them to have the time that they have deserved through their working and family lives. Hardy and Gretzel (2011) further emphasise that social interaction forms a significant part of the RV experience for all RVers, as does the use of technology and the desire to travel safely. The differences between caravanners and independent RVers appear in terms of specific trip behaviours such as the type of RV parks they frequent and their tendency to join RV clubs and RV gatherings (so-called rallies), with independent RVers being less likely to take part in organised social clubs and events (Hardy et

al., 2012). This research by Hardy et al. (2012) motivates why caravanners and RVers are discussed as one group in this article.

To travel in some form of an RV enables tourists to undertake longer trips and tourists are often motivated by a desire to be free of constraints such as time schedules and advance reservations (Hardy & Gretzel, 2011). It is a more expensive form of travel and can be regarded as a natural progression from a lifetime of camping to more luxurious ways of still accessing all the advantages of camping. It enables travellers to take a significant number of possessions with them. Therefore, RVing is a form of self-drive tourism that is very popular with an international market of pensioners or older travellers. Hardy and Gretzel (2011) suggested that this group, within the drive tourism market, is under-researched, possibly as there is a perception that RVers are transient and therefore poor, cheap, and comparable to gypsies or trailer trash. Their nomadic travel habit also makes them a hard group to contact.

Hardy and Gretzel (2011) found that RVers prefer to sleep in their own beds, to travel with their pets and liked the familiarity of their own RV home even if they found themselves in unfamiliar surroundings. They also see RVing as a form of reward after a lifetime of work and raising children. Onyx and Leonard (2005) described American RVers, called snowbirds, as very positive towards attending rallies organised by RV clubs, but that Australian RVers, named grey nomads, were averse to it, preferring non-commercialised and more isolated areas. “The Grey Nomads interviewed in this study appear to be quite different from the North American snowbirds despite superficial similarities. The Grey Nomads interviewed, seldom stayed for more than a week in the same place and tended to avoid tourist resort areas on the coast. They were motivated by a complex set of motivations which included a desire for freedom and adventure, a reaching out for new experiences and learning, including meeting new people.” (Onyx & Leonard, 2005). It can be proposed that RV users with higher levels of experience appear to be adopting a ‘slow tourism’ pattern, but with a core group relationship focus (Fullager et al., 2012). RVing, therefore, has contact points with nature tourism and slow tourism.

### ***Motorcycle***

Riding a motorcycle is a very distinct category of drive tourism and quite unique in the experiences and rewards it offers. According to Walker (2011), motorcycles are rarely mentioned in literature. The research focus over the years has been predominantly on safety aspects (Nagayama et al., 1980, Huth et al., 2014) and more recently on the environmental impact of motorcycles. There was also research done on specific motorcycle groups such as the Hell’s Angels and Harley Davidson riders (Schouten & Alexander, 1995, Rostami & Mondani, 2019). Research by Broughton (2008) highlighted the affluent nature of most motorcycle riders and its relevance for the tourism industry. Walker (2011) states that motorcycle riders whose leisure pursuit is motorcycling, have a reasonable amount of disposable income and substantial amounts of money are spent on day trips, tourism, and motorcycle events. If there is a motorcycle rally in town, it will contribute substantially towards that destination’s revenue. Motorcycle riders are also quite social and move around in groups, despite the experience of riding being mainly a solo event. Money will be spent in the vicinity of the event on accommodation, food and rally activities and touring. Motorcycle riders are often middle-class, affluent people with a ready amount of disposable income. Cater (2017) put the question why destination marketers do not do more to attract groups of people with ready cash and the willingness to travel. The biggest problem seems to be a negative perceptions of bikers that have prevailed since the theme of motorcycles, violence, deviance and general anti-social behaviour has been drummed into the public psyche with Hollywood B-grade biker movies. Rubin (1994) has found that the biker lifestyle was portrayed in movies

as heavily based on violence, rape and poor grooming. Not the ideal picture for a prospective guesthouse owner. Television programmes such as *The Long Way Round* have made a difference in how bikers are perceived and made then socially more acceptable (Walker, 2011).

Blackman and Haworth (2013) note that there are links between motorcycle tourism and adventure tourism. Both adventure tourism and motorcycle tourism share an attraction of perceived risk. Fuller et al. (2008) showed that motorcycle riders are aware of the risk but mostly do not actively seek risk. Possibly as the biker has so many variables to contend with while driving, the riding inherently provides enough risk. According to Cater (2017), when motorcycle riders engage with the environment through which they travel, there is a much higher feeling of immersion in that environment due to a lack of a rigid structure around them. Wherever they ride, they feel, smell, and hear their environment first-hand. The engagement with the environment for a motorcyclist is skills-based, has a high degree of physical and mental challenge, and relies on constant risk assessment (Llum, 2011). In this sense, then, motorcyclists are adventure seekers, and it may be right for marketing organisations to cross-target this sector.

### ***E-bikes (EVs)***

Although bicycling is not normally included under drive tourism (Prideaux & Carson, 2011), the position should be re-evaluated as there has been such exponential growth and development in the technology that underpins e-biking, that it changes the argument in totality. Originally, bicycles were excluded from drive tourism as they were not mechanically powered, but with the advent of e-bikes, this is not true anymore.

According to Apostolou et al. (2018), the term electrical bike or ‘e-bike’ refers to all two-wheeled electric vehicles (EVs), more specifically bicycles, with different levels of aid to the user. A small electric motor and a rechargeable battery are used to assist the power that is provided by the rider. The battery can supply energy for high acceleration under hard biking conditions, such as climbing inclines and overcoming wind resistance, thereby extending the range of the trip. Other definitions given to the e-bikes include pedalled electric cycles – or pedelecs – and electric power-assisted cycles – or EPAC. Some high-powered e-bikes resemble scooters. The definition of the e-bike requires that the rider can pedal the e-bike. This is a characteristic that distinguishes e-bikes from e-scooters. Fishman and Cherry (2016) provide more clarity regarding e-bikes and pedelecs. They describe e-bikes as bicycles with electric assistance, incorporating chargeable batteries and an electric motor, but it still depends on the individual state or country legislation how e-bikes are classified. A fundamental distinction is based on the type of electrical support. So-called ‘pedelecs’ only assist the rider while actually pedalling. E-bikes, however, also support when not pedalling. A typical e-bike can travel up to 25 km/h, depending on the country’s regulations, with motor power up to 250 Watts, a battery of 24 V, 36 V or 48 V, and a capacity between 8.8 Ah and 15 Ah. However, there can be variations with regard to the e-bikes’ speed, but the fastest allowed are found in the Netherlands at 45km/h (Bike Europe, 2010).

The first commercial e-bikes were available in Japan in the 1980s (Rose, 2012), but they only started being massively marketed in the early 2000s, when the improved battery and motor technology simplified the manufacture and assembly of the e-bikes, thereby allowing component modularity and reduced cost. In 2016, regular bicycle sales in Europe reached around 19 million units, while in the same year, e-bike sales reached 1.6 million units, of which 36% were in Germany, 16% in the Netherlands, 10% in Belgium and 8% in France, followed by other European countries with lower shares (CONEBI, 2017). In 2016, 35 million units of e-bikes were sold worldwide, and in 2023, global sales of e-bikes are forecast to reach 40.3 million units. Today, e-bikes are considered one of the most promising sustainable alternatives

to automobile transportation and represent one of the fastest growing transport market segments. Statistics show that they are becoming more and more popular, and it is therefore important for them to be further investigated. At the moment, China and Japan are the most important markets for e-bikes, and they are also the largest manufacturers and exporters worldwide. Europe is emerging as a relevant market, with Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Denmark leading the production and sales of e-bikes. The primary use of the e-bike includes urban transportation, by replacing or complementing the use of conventional motorised transport options such as cars or buses, being a valid option for short travel distances and traffic hours (Fishman, 2017). E-bikes include all the benefits that conventional bicycles offer, while they are also an attractive alternative to recreational activities, increasing trips' ranges, offering faster and more comfortable trips, and diminishing the physical effort of the users. For that very reason, e-bikes are becoming more popular in day trips, sightseeing and even multi-day tours, giving access to different age groups previously excluded from bicycle tours.

Moesch and Stauber, (2015) showed that the development of e-bike tourism in Switzerland was not started by a tourism promoter, but by an innovative e-bike producer. This is a possible sign that the tourism industry has not yet caught up with the possibilities of e-biking in the tourism sphere. The first e-bike tours were offered in a demanding and rural region, in order that the experience of the place was able to promote a positive overall experience. Due to the success of the first touristic e-bike products, several tourism regions started to extend their portfolio with e-bike offers. To date, Switzerland has set up a nationwide network for signalised e-bike tours, rental stations and charging stations for rechargeable batteries. Interestingly, despite the attractive offer, the demand is only moderate. The obtained results of the consumer survey pointed at a certain barrier to using e-bikes for tourism activities. The most substantial barrier is the missing affinity for bike tourism in general. Another notable group considers themselves "fit enough for normal bike tourism". Nevertheless, 55% of the respondents are interested in touristic e-bike products. Looking only at people with e-bike tourism experience, 92% are interested in further activities.

The latest development in the field is solar e-bikes. Apostolou et al. (2018) state that solar e-bikes are electric bikes with integrated photovoltaic (PV) solar cells on their wheels or other parts of the e-bikes' skeleton, which can charge their batteries when parked and during trips. Additionally, there are also solar-charged e-bikes, the batteries of which are charged by a charging system, which is powered by photovoltaic (PV) solar modules. Solar-charged e-bikes are connected to solar-powered charging stations to charge their batteries when parked. Adhisuwignjo et al. (2017) state that the use of solar power for e-bike charging could be decisive for the improvement of the forthcoming bike-sharing systems. E-biking is a very exciting addition to the drive tourism field of study, opening a whole new world for the tourist interested in accessing new environments in an environmentally responsible way.

### ***South African context***

Arguably one of the most prominent pieces of research to come out of South Africa about drive tourism is Neels van Heerden's chapter 'Self-drive tourism in South Africa with specific emphasis on caravanning' in Prideaux and Carson's book *Drive Tourism: Trends and Emerging Markets* (2011).

Van Heerden (2011) distinguishes caravanning from RVing as a separate subset of tourism based on the outward physical differences between the caravan being towed behind the vehicle and the RV, which is a vehicle "that has been purpose-built or modified to provide accommodation to its occupants." (Van Heerden, 2011:85). He also states that both caravans and RVs utilise the facilities offered by caravan parks in South Africa and that the common

denominator in countries such as South Africa, the UK, the USA and Australia is “the enthusiasts who pack their tents, hitch their trailers or caravans, or start their motor homes (motorised caravan) to embark on an annual holiday, a short break or a touring trip; to attend a special event; or to go on a backpacking, hiking or sight-seeing trip” (Van Heerden, 2011:90). In light of the above, caravanning and RVing may be seen as a group with similar motivations to travel. Van Heerden (2011) concludes that the main motivations of caravanners are that they want to explore, they want to relax and get away from their daily routines, and they want to be independent in the camping experience sought. He distinguishes between ‘the relaxers’ and the ‘adventurers’, where the latter are motivated by ‘moving outside my comfort zone’.

Rogerson and Rogerson (2021b) also researched the history of caravanning in South Africa, and Achtzehn (1980) completed a PhD thesis on a marketing strategy for the Natal coastal caravan parks and holiday resorts’ off-season call rate. There was no mention in Achtzehn of the theoretical concept of drive tourism though. Brooker and Joppe (2013) also researched trends in camping and outdoor hospitality without specifically mentioning drive tourism.

Caravan travel has also been researched to explore the experience of camping (Van Heerden, 2010; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020a) and the role of municipal caravan parks in the South African tourism infrastructure (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020b) as well as the history of caravan parks in South Africa (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021b). Van Heerden (2008) studied the motorhome (RV) club of South Africa, comparing it to the RV clubs in America. Drive tourism was not a prominent focus in the above studies.

Regarding the automobile or car, the following studies have been done in South Africa: Pirie (2013) covered the role of automobile organisations in pre-independence Africa where references are made to self-drive holidaying in the past. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) tourism is named by Rogerson (2015) as the largest percentage of domestic tourism with predominantly black South Africans as participants, but drive tourism is only implied. Several studies have been completed about car rental companies in South Africa, but the attention was on aspects such as the impact of Covid 19 on the industry (Nhamo et al., 2020) and the role of information technology in the car rental industry (Bayram, 2018). A whole collection of studies was done to highlight self-driving at specific destinations utilising a private car or car rentals. The emphasis falls on aspects of the destination itself, and not on the drive tourism experience. Examples are Nemesetoni and Rogerson (2017) on township tourism; flower tourism in the Bokkeveld (Turpie & Joubert, 2004); whale watchers in Hermanus (Findlay, 1997); nature-based tourism (Spenceley, 2005); as well as self-driving in national or nature parks (Van der Merwe & Saayman, 2015; Mmopelwa et al., 2007; Morrison-Saunders et al., 2019). Finally, Rogerson and Rogerson (2021a) researched the possible enhanced role of car rental companies in a post-Covid era in the South African tourism industry.

Another major theme, where drive tourism is indirectly covered in the research, is studies on tourism routes in South Africa. The most recent studies were by Rogerson and Collins (2015) on beer tourism routes; Myles (2014) on coastal route tourism; and Marschall (2012) on heritage routes and the 2010 FIFA World Soccer Cup. Rogerson (2009), as well as Lourens (2007a) and Lourens (2007b) researched tourism routes as part of tourism development in South Africa.

The overarching research theme about 4WD in the South African tourism industry is the possible negative impact on the environment. Priskin (2003), as well as Lucrezi and Saayman (2014) investigated the impact of 4WD vehicles on certain elements of beach or coastal wildlife. Viljoen and Thabela (2007) did the same within the milieu of rural tourism, and Nortjé et al. (2012) researched the impact of game drive 4WD vehicles on the soils of the Kruger National Park.

Recently, there has been a growing interest in motorcycle tourism research. At least ten different articles have appeared since 2015. The North-West University has contributed to the bulk of this research with topics such as motorcycle event tourism (Kruger et al., 2015); the link between motorcycling, leisure and happiness (Kruger & Venter, 2020; Kruger, 2018); profiling motorcyclists at events (Pone et al., 2021; Kruger & Borstlap, 2019; Borstlap & Fourie, 2020) as well as gender profiling of motorcyclists (Borstlap & Saayman, 2018). As motorcycle tourism is all about the journey, drive tourism is strongly implied in the research, although not directly linked.

Research about e-bikes in South Africa is almost non-existent. There are two studies that refer to e-bikes, but within the framework of policy formulating. In Zuev et al. (2021), there is a brief reference to South Africa with regard to e-bikes. Both studies by Sovacool et al. (2022) and Wood (2020) refer to e-bikes and bike sharing within an African context with accompanying negative expectations on its sustainability. There is a large research gap in this exciting field.

Some of the most important research that has appeared on drive tourism in South Africa comes from Rogerson and Rogerson (2021). Their study about COVID-19 and changing tourism demand and the implications for policy making in South Africa brought vital aspects to the fore. In their study, they referred to COVID-19 causing a new tourism psyche, which will be reflected in a changed tourism demand pattern due to heightened travel risk perception. According to Rogerson and Rogerson (2021), risk perception is a key influence on travel behaviour. After the worst of the pandemic, the new tourism psyche will settle on a new equilibrium of what feels like safe travel behaviour. A few trends have appeared from recent research by Das and Tiwari (2021). Tourists prefer to travel in their own country as 'home' is perceived as safer than 'abroad'. People also want to avoid crowded areas and that viewpoint is also reflected in the modes of transport they prefer. Private cars, rented cars or RVs are preferred above cruise ships, air travel or coach or rail travel (Butler, 2020 in Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021). There is also a growing aversion to interacting by touching objects during travel or business interaction (Bae & Chang, 2021).

Social distancing has also accelerated 'untact' consumption together with the corresponding lifestyle it entails. Untact is a newly coined term in Korea with the negative prefix 'un' added to the word 'contact', referring to a behavioural disposition to minimise direct contact between people. Lee and Lee (2020) also named examples of untact consumption such as self-service counters, online purchasing and payment, and unattended kiosks based on technological innovation and the individualist tendency of modern people. The untact preference is another motivation for tourists to choose drive tourism in their own or rented vehicles in a domestic tourism environment. Many international scholars view domestic tourism and regional tourism (localism) as the most viable method of destination recovery (Kourgiantakis et al., 2021; Lueck & Seeler, 2021). Rogerson and Rogerson (2021a) shine a bright light on the importance of drive tourism for South Africa.

### ***Gaps in research***

Figure 1 illustrates the elements of the drive tourism sector that constitute the drive tourism experience. It also illustrates the aspects of drive tourism that have been researched internationally. The figure has been adapted by the author by using italics to illustrate research done within the South African context on drive tourism.

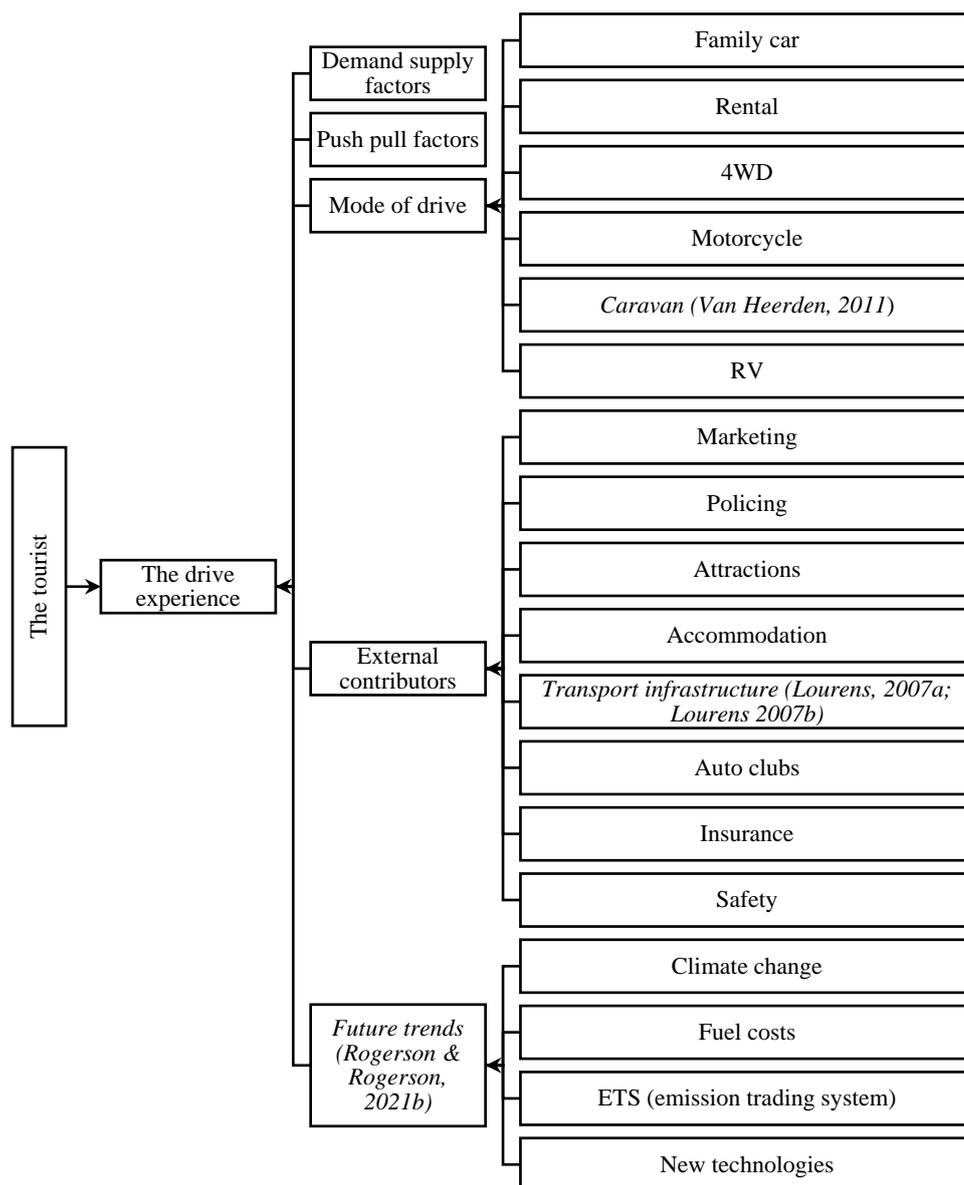


Figure 1. The drive tourism model adapted from Prideaux and Carson (2011). Components which have been researched in South Africa have been indicated in italics.

## Conclusion

According to Rogerson and Rogerson (2021), there is a vital window of opportunity that should not be missed by policymakers, local governments, and tourism businesses. Drive tourism is increasingly proposed as the way to heal tourism industries worldwide, and drive tourism is the most likely vehicle of recovery for South Africa’s hard-hit tourism industry. Wen et al.’s (2005) survey indicated that more Americans chose to drive cars when traveling after the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak. It is therefore predicted that tourists will regard drive tourism as a safe and attractive method of shaking off the shackles of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period. Drive tourism involves a vast range of tourism industry role players that will benefit hugely if it is promoted correctly. Drive tourism is also pro-poor tourism-friendly – encouraging tourists to venture off the beaten track to the open spaces of low-risk natural areas.

The paper has shown a substantial literature analysis of drive tourism to illustrate the potential of promoting drive tourism and the benefits it may offer a given country or region.

The major focus points in drive tourism research internationally have been discussed as well as the research available in corresponding areas within the South African context with examples. The examples from the South African context show a considerable lack of research on drive tourism in South Africa. The author proposes further research on all dimensions of the drive tourism sector possibly using Prideaux and Carson's 2011 drive tourism model as a guideline. It should be helpful if researchers start with modes of transport and types of tourism already firmly set up within the South African context, which relate to drive tourism. Established topics of research such as road trips, tourism routes, 4WD vehicles trips, motorcycle trips, and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) are relevant. These popular forms of drive tourism in South Africa should be further researched, but specifically referencing it as drive tourism, to help create a road map to further promote drive tourism. The way forward, though, is not only to address the gaps in the literature on drive tourism. It is vital that policymakers and decision-makers at the local government level get involved to repair and maintain badly damaged roads in South Africa. Road signs should be improved, and new tourism routes should be developed and communicated. The government should urgently launch international advertising campaigns focusing on open spaces and the dedication to high standards of hygiene and untact interactions. The domestic market should also be encouraged to engage in road trips and touring. South Africa is a unique country with a high number of vastly different ecosystems concentrated within a relatively compact area. It has a rich history of road tripping and drive tourism activities. There is a bright future waiting for South Africa if academics lead with drive tourism research and are followed with real action by policymakers and the private sector to get ourselves and everybody else out there.

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