



## Who is Visiting South African Beaches and Why?

### Abstract

South African beaches attract numerous tourists each year, forcing local municipalities to either mitigate or take advantage of the impact of increased tourism to these municipal areas. Knowledge of these tourists' motives and demographic profiles could improve beach marketing and management of tourism sites. However, few articles and information exist on the travel behaviour of visitors to South African beaches. Sustainability gained importance amongst beachgoers and managers. For destination management organisations (DMOs) to reach their goals and objectives related to sustainability, it is important to know who visits South African beaches and why. The research aimed to shed light on the demographic profiles and motives of travellers to South African beaches, which could indicate how beach tourism can effectively be utilised to attract tourists to beach destinations. Six beaches were identified for the study, and a sample of 1 138 structured questionnaires were distributed. Descriptive data analysis and exploratory factor- and cluster analysis were applied. The results presented the demographic profiles of the respondents and identified six factors (motives) i.e., swimming conditions, activities and events, beach quality, popularity of the beach, experience, and accessibility of the beach. Two clusters based on these motives were identified: the quality beach seekers and the escape seekers. Beach managers can utilise knowledge pertaining to these clusters to attract a certain type of tourist according to their motives and profiles. Developing new products and improved marketing can be the starting point for attracting and implementing revisitation to beach destinations.

**Keywords** Marine tourism, beach tourism, travel motives, marketing segmentation, South Africa

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### Introduction

Tourists travel to satisfy a need, which could include going on vacation or visiting a specific destination (Yousaf et al., 2018). This concept can be referred to as travel motivation. Certain authors (Patuelli & Nijkamp, 2016; Wong et al., 2017) determined that travel motivation comprises a need or want that drives a tourist to take action in order to meet that need or want, which forms part of the travel decision-making process (Bhatta et al., 2022). The travel decision-making process includes the why, when, how, and where aspects of traveling—the where can be referred to as travel intention (Dai et al., 2022). When searching for the destination of choice, travel intention takes place. Before travel intention can take place, Karl et al. (2020) suggest that tourists are mostly influenced by tourists' attributes (profile) and destination characteristics and amenities (motives). Hasan et al. (2019) indicated that over the last few decades, coastal and island destinations and activities have been identified as one of the top vacation destinations of tourists. South Africa, having the benefit of an extensive coastline area, has been recognised as a preferred holiday destination, unlocking great potential for the tourism industry especially. South Africa has a coastline stretching approximately 3 000 km, which includes blue flag, private and public beaches suitable to cater to the specific needs and wants of tourists (Saayman & Saayman, 2017). Exploring these needs and wants could exhibit great potential for effective marketing, management and new product development methods. Although this sector can be identified as one of the top-growing markets (Kaczynski, 2011; Smith-Godfrey, 2016), limited research has been conducted regarding beach tourism as a crucial part of the marine tourism industry. Along the South African coastline, marine tourism offers various activities such as snorkelling, swimming, surfing, scuba diving and whale watching. It further offers magnificent beach resorts, restaurants and hotels (van der Merwe et al., 2011). These activities and amenities are clustered into various sectors i.e., coastal tourism, marine tourism, cruise tourism, nature/wildlife tourism, recreational tourism, island tourism, aquatic tourism, marine events and beach tourism. Dimitrovski et al. (2021) identified coastal and marine tourism as segments in the tourism industry that grow exponentially, contributing significantly to the blue economy. In South Africa, the marine tourism sector is seen as one of the critically important areas with significant potential to grow economically and reduce unemployment (Government of South Africa, 2019). The marine and coastal tourism industries attract millions of tourists to coastlines and beaches all over the world where they participate in various activities that benefit these local economies (Liu et al., 2019).

Tourists' travel motives are changing continuously, requiring constant research (Yousaf et al., 2018). Even though, Hasan et al. (2020) state that understanding why tourists visit destinations has been thoroughly research, knowledge related to why tourists visit beaches is still lacking. By discerning the motivations of travellers and gaining insights into the demographics of beachgoers, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) can formulate innovative marketing strategies and decision-making frameworks tailored to distinct tourist segments and their preferences. (Dodds & Holmes, 2019; Hasan et al. 2020). This allows South African beaches to exhibit great potential for efficient marketing and management and improved products and service development once the motives of the beachgoers are known. Therefore, the study makes the following contributions: a) Contributing literature to improve the lack of theory in terms of the importance of beach tourism; b) Identifying travel motives and who these beachgoers are, which could allow DMOs to develop new marketing techniques and decision-making theories, directed to specific tourist segments and their preferences (Dodds & Holmes 2019; Hasan et al., 2020); c) Exploring the literature on South African beachgoers to exhibit the great potential for efficient marketing and management and improved

product and service development once the motives of the beachgoers are known. It is the goal of the study to determine the profile and motives of beachgoers in South Africa in order to capitalise on these segments.

### Literature review

Orams (1999) describes marine tourism as recreational activities where one travels from one's residence with the marine environment as a focus point (Basiron & Laut, 1991). Marine tourism is considered one of the top four contributors to South Africa's GDP, which contributed R126 billion in 2016 and has the potential to create approximately 116 000 job opportunities (Environmental Affairs, 2019; Nairobi Convention, 2018). Marine tourism can be divided into smaller tourism industries, as shown in Figure 1.

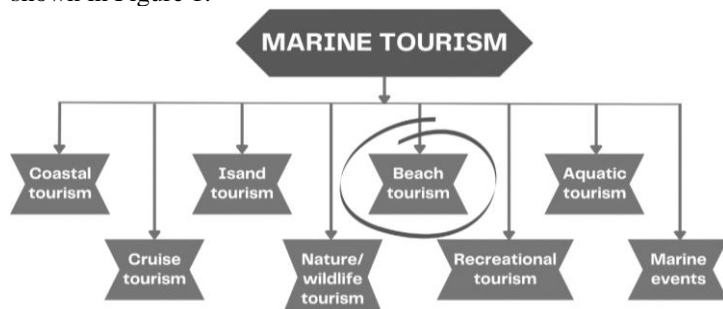


Figure 1: Marine tourism (Adapted from Eagleton, 2020)

Collectively, these industries contribute to the marine tourism industry's overall performance and growth. For this study, beach tourism will be the main focus. Beach tourism is described as tourism that occurs in a beach area and attracts tourists due to the physical factors, services, attractions, and facilities offered (Chen & Bau 2016; Amaluddin et al., 2019). Chen & Bau (2016) describe beaches as major economic contributors as beaches are a main attraction for domestic tourists, especially in South Africa (Friedrich et al., 2020). Houston (2018) confirms this statement. A study conducted by Expedia in 2016 concluded that beaches are travellers' most popular holiday destinations. Predicting travel motivations to beach destinations over a long period may be challenging as tourists' motivations change from time to time (Baniya & Paudel, 2016). Some theories can be identified to facilitate the understanding of travel motivations, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Chen & Chen, 2015; Hsu & Huang, 2008; Mohammad & Som, 2010; Scholtz et al., 2013; Yousefi & Marzuki, 2015). Maslow describes five needs (self-actualisation, esteem needs, belonging and love needs, safety needs and physiological needs) that form a hierarchical structure where the first level of needs are satisfied before moving to the next level of needs. Researchers further established that Dann's push and pull factors are major factors/motives in identifying the decision-making criteria of people when it comes to travel (Boo & Jones, 2009; Jeong, 2014; McCartney & Ge, 2016; Prayag, 2012; Yousefi & Marzuki, 2015). Push factors refer to the psychological internal desires and factors of the travellers in pursuing a travelling activity or travel intention and pull factors can be referred to as the destination's attributes and products that attract travellers (Baniya & Paudel, 2016; Suni & Pesonen, 2019; Wonget al., 2017). Tourism researchers were captivated by push and pull factors as they aid in designing products and services offered to ensure positive impressions and total visitor satisfaction (McCartney & Ge, 2016). Dann's travel motivation push and pull factors were the most suited for this study's outcomes.

More recent research has been conducted on this topic pertaining to marine tourism, beach tourism and sandy beach tourism travel motivations (Carvache-Franco et al., 2020; Jusoh, 2018; Naushin & Yuwanond, 2016; Swanepoel & van der Merwe, 2023; Zadel, 2016). Specifically focused on South Africa, studies (Geldenhuis et al., 2014; Lucrezi & Van der Walt, 2016; Munien et al., 2019; van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2012) showcased push and pull factors mostly focusing on visitors who want to rest and relax on the beach or participate in activities such as swimming or sunbathing. In addition to these findings, Prebensen et al. (2010) contribute by suggesting that tourists often seek to break free from their daily routines and are drawn to destinations with warmer climates. It is interesting to note that climate and weather are identified as pull factors even though destinations have no control over it. Setyowati & Antariksa (2015) explain that factors such as accommodation, accessibility and facilities can play an important role in tourists' decisions to travel to beach destinations. Knowledge of tourists' motivations can assist these destinations to be more competitive and grow financially (Chen & Bau, 2016; McKenna et al., 2011; Orams, 2003). For destination managers to better market their products it is important to segment tourists into groups called target markets. Tourist segmentation refers to identifying tourists that portray similar characteristics such as age, gender, family size and interests (Goryushkina et al., 2019; Johns & Gyimóthy, 2002; Levitt et al., 2019; Yao et al., 2021). In 1990, the earliest studies suggested that tourist segmentation be done according to demographics, geographics and psychographics (Johns & Gyimóthy, 2002). These segmentations can aid destinations in identifying the perfect target markets. Carvache-Franco et al. (2010) conducted research at an Ecuadorian beach destination. The authors identified three segments of beachgoers namely beach lover, coastal nature and coastal passive. The cluster analysis showed that beachgoers enjoy the sun and warmth the most at the beach destination. Onofri & Nunes (2013) analysed a global dataset of beachgoers, including domestic and international travellers, and recognised two beachgoer segments namely greens and beach lovers. The researchers identified international beachgoers as nature lovers who appreciate the marine biodiversity whereas domestic beachgoers enjoy the beach characteristics such as a clean beach or length of beach. The authors further emphasised that by knowing the profile and



motivations of beachgoers, beach managers can create proper attractions to beaches and support the demand and supply of the DMOs.

When investigating previous research on beach tourism and travel motives to beach destinations, it was found that these motives of beachgoers are not adequately researched in the South African tourism industry specifically. The motives of South African beachgoers should be known to provide an effective tourist product that will satisfy their needs. The results of this study aid in developing marketing strategies and product development for beach destinations that will promote sustainability and competitiveness. The researchers emphasised that these segments aid tourism service providers in producing well-tailored services and products for different types of beachgoers. It is a focus area of the South Africa Government to develop and sustain marine tourism and therefore it is imperative to gain knowledge on the changing environment of tourism as well as about the tourists and their behaviour. To remain competitive, DMO's must understand who tourists are and what they need. The results of the study could aid in the development of more suitable marketing strategies and product development for beach destinations in South Africa.

### Research methodology

For this study, an exploratory research design approach was followed. The data for this study were collected by means of a quantitative method. The quantity of the data was deemed important so that a wider range of opinions and profiles could be gathered from beachgoers across South Africa. A structured questionnaire, developed based on the research of Lucrezi & Van der Walt (2016), Saayman & Saayman (2009), van der Merwe et al. (2011) and Lucrezi, Saayman & Van der Merwe (2015), was distributed to beachgoers to collect problem-specific data. Two sections of the questionnaire (demographic and motivational statements) were utilised to answer the goal of this study. The questionnaire was constructed in English, therefore only the respondents that understood English were approached to complete the survey. The population for this study was tourists visiting different South African beaches. The researchers followed a non-probability convenience sampling method to identify the visitors at different beaches. Fieldworkers who were trained by TREES and NWU university, randomly identified beachgoers (aged 18 years and over) to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to beachgoers (considering the national and international visitors, sizes of the beaches, different provinces and locations and seasonality) from December 2016 to July 2018 at popular South African beach destinations, which included Mossel Bay, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Jeffreys Bay, and Muizenberg to gain overall insight into who visit South African beaches and why. As stated in previous literature, these destinations are identified as popular destinations (Collison, 2017). Table 1 showcases the number of questionnaires distributed at different South African beaches.

**Table 1: Questionnaire distribution at various South African beach destinations**

Destinations	Quantity of questionnaires/ sample size for data analysis
Port Elizabeth	156
Cape Town	460
Hartenbos	47
Jeffreys Bay	93
Durban	256
Muizenberg	126
<b>TOTAL QUESTIONNAIRES</b>	<b>1138</b>

A total of 1 200 questionnaires were distributed to beachgoers and 1 138 fully completed sets were returned and analysed. According to Krejcie & Morgan (1970), a sample size of 400 respondents is sufficient for a quantitative study for it to be a representative study. It is evident from Table 1 that certain beaches such as Cape Town received more responses than other beaches. These beach destinations can be classified as more popular and had a favourable climate when the surveys were conducted. The collected data was captured in Microsoft Excel for basic data analysis purposes. SPSS software version 24 was utilised to process the data of the demographic profiles and motives of the beachgoers. Descriptive factor analysis and cluster analysis formed part of the statistical analysis conducted on the data collected. To identify the clusters, t-tests, ANOVA's, Spearman's Rank Order correlation and cluster analysis are discussed in the results section. Only results that showcased significant differences are discussed, therefore the ANOVA's are not discussed as there were no significant differences present.

### Results

The results regarding the demographic profile of respondents and the clusters identified in the cluster analysis are analysed and discussed in the following section.

#### *Demographic profile of tourists visiting South African beaches*

Table 2 illustrates the demographic results of the respondents who visited South African beaches. The socio-demographic profile of the respondents was identified to be an English-speaking (55%) female (58%) at the age of 35 years, single (54%), employed (61%), and possessing a diploma or degree (35%). The respondents resided either in the Western Cape or outside South African borders (29%), mainly from Germany or the USA. It should be added that a large area covered by the survey was part of the Western Cape Province. The respondents travel in a group of an average of two tourists. During their stay, the tourists spend an average of R 11 950 on their trip and spend an average of 11 nights in the local area. The respondents prefer clean, safe, and quiet beaches as their threats for visiting beaches were identified as crime, sunburn, and shark attacks. Sunbathing, walking, and swimming were identified by respondents as the top three activities enjoyed at the beach destinations.



14% of the respondents could be classified as locals or excursionists based on their responses about not staying overnight in the area.

These results correlate with previous literature that stated that beachgoers are primarily female, on average in their thirties, English-speaking as a significant European-based visitor group was identified, obtained a diploma or a degree, and are mainly single. The number of respondents does not correlate with the results obtained by van der Merwe et al. (2011) who indicated that travel groups were mainly between four and five people. Lucrezi & Saayman (2014) agreed with the results regarding the average nights spent in the area, as beachgoers spend a high number of nights. The activity the respondents most enjoyed was sunbathing, which corresponded with the results concluded by Basterretxea-Iribar et al. (2019) who also identified sunbathing as a favourite amongst beachgoers.

**Table 2: Demographic results of respondents**

Aspect	Result
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	42%
Female	58%
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 years	47%
30-39 years	23%
40-49 years	14%
50-59 years	10%
60+ years	6%
<b>Home language</b>	
English	55%
Afrikaans	17%
Other (German, French)	28%
<b>Education level</b>	
No school	2%
Still in school	6%
Matric	26%
Diploma &/ degree	34%
Post-graduate	17%
Professional	15%
<b>Place of residence</b>	
Northern Cape	1%
Western Cape	29%
Eastern Cape	12%
KwaZulu-Natal	14%
Free State	1%
North-West	1%
Limpopo	1%
Mpumalanga	1%
Outside RSA	29%
Gauteng	11%
<b>Marital status</b>	
Single	54%
Married	36%
Divorced	4%
Widow/er	2%
Other (in a relationship, engaged)	4%
<b>Occupation</b>	
Student	22%
Paid worker	61%
Unpaid worker	2%
Unemployed	7%
Retired	8%
<b>Travelling group</b>	
1	12%
2	38%
3	14%
4	14%
5	6%
6	6%
7+	10%
<b>Number of nights stayed in the area</b>	
0	14%
1	5%
2	7%
3	8%
4	8%
5	8%
6	6%
7	11%
8	3%
9	2%
10+	28%
<b>Total average spending</b>	± R 11 946.43
<b>Activities participated at beach destinations</b>	
Sunbathe	60%
Swim	54%
Surf	17%
Walk	57%
Other	12%

### ***Motives for tourists visiting South African beaches***

This section of the questionnaire displayed different motivation statements that respondents can rate on a 5-point Likert scale. The factor analysis identified six factors namely *swimming conditions, activities and events, quality of beach, popularity,*



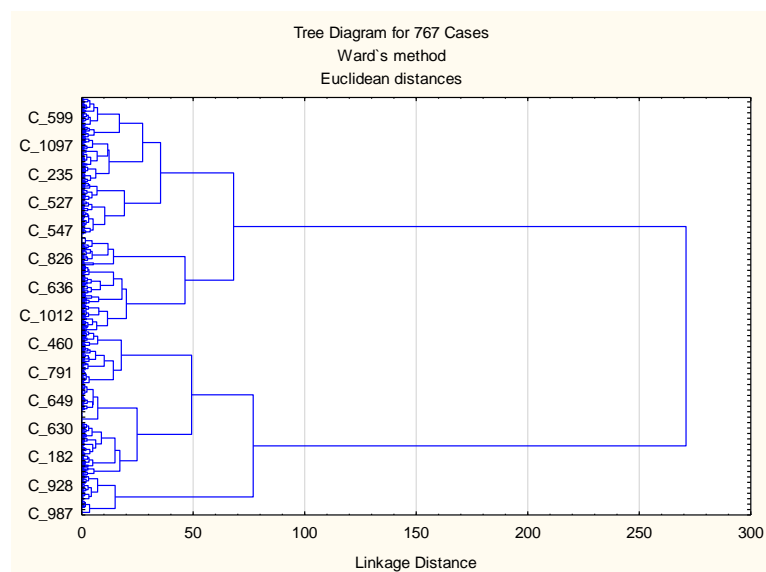
*experience, and accessibility* as shown in Table 3. These factors were labelled according to the motives that were identified within a factor. The characteristics of the motives were utilised to label the motivational factors. The mean values of the factors show that the quality of the beach (3.02) was the most important motive for visitors when travelling to the beach whereas activities (2.65) were seen as the least important motivational factor for tourists. To determine the factors of the motives for visiting the beach, a factor analysis was conducted with Principal Component Analysis using Cattell’s Scree test. A scree test can be described as a graphic method that consists of plotting the eigenvalues against the items, inspecting the shape of the results, and identifying the point at which the curve changes radically. These factors accounted for 60.68% of the total variance. Oblimin-Kaiser normalisation was also used to identify the various factors, but a total variance of 56.18% accounted for five factors which show that the scree test was more relevant in terms of the six factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was 0.895 which is highly significant and acceptable as Pallant (2016:187) states that a KMO value of <0.8 is highly acceptable. When investigating the identified six factors, the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficient ranges from 0.532 to 0.799. Kline (2013) indicates that 0.8 is appropriate for cognitive tests such as intelligence tests, but for ability tests, the cut-off point of 0.7 is more suitable. This indicates that these factors have high construct reliability between the factors ( $\alpha > 0.5$ ) (Field 2009). For scales with a small number of items (e.g. less than 10), it is sometimes difficult to get a decent Cronbach Alpha value, and you may wish to consider reporting the mean inter-item correlation.

**Table 3: Factor analysis for motives of respondents visiting South African beaches**

Motives	Factor 1: Swimming Conditions	Factor 2: Activities & Events	Factor 3: Quality Of Beach	Factor 4: Popularity	Factor 5: Experience	Factor 6: Accessibility
Beach has good swimming conditions	0.704					
Beach provides safe swimming conditions for children	0.642					
The sea produces good waves	0.477					
I wanted to explore new places		0.719				
There is a high number of water activities offered		0.672				
Various events (e.g. music, sport etc.) are hosted here		0.652				
The beach is clean			0.786			
I feel safe here			0.658			
The overall water quality is good			0.646			
The beach is well managed			0.602			
The beach has blue flag status				0.792		
The beach is popular/highly rated				0.580		
Many people come to this beach				0.479		
The types of people that come here				0.418		
To break away from my everyday routine					0.804	
I had good previous experiences					0.540	
It is not too crowded					0.533	
I feel a special connection to the beach					0.448	
The beach has a beautiful natural setting					0.432	
There is more than enough parking						0.514
The beach is in close proximity to where I stay						0.847
It is easily accessible						0.543
<b>Cronbach's alpha (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>	<b>0.763</b>	<b>0.645</b>	<b>0.799</b>	<b>0.626</b>	<b>0.765</b>	<b>0.532</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.74</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>3.02</b>	<b>2.79</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>2.89</b>
<b>Inter-correlation</b>	<b>0.518</b>	<b>0.378</b>	<b>0.500</b>	<b>0.299</b>	<b>0.397</b>	<b>0.285</b>
<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>0.811</b>	<b>0.820</b>	<b>0.665</b>	<b>0.723</b>	<b>0.666</b>	<b>0.746</b>

**Clusters identified from motives and demographic profiles of tourists visiting South African beaches**

The cluster analysis was conducted on the motivational factors identified in the factor analysis. This aids in segmenting visitors and provides a demographic profile for each group identified in the cluster analysis.



**Figure 2: Two-cluster solution: Ward's method**



For this research, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted using Ward's method with Euclidian distances. As seen in Figure 2, two clusters were preferred. According to the mean value and cross-tabulation results presented by the motivational factors, the clusters were identified as the following: The first cluster identified as *quality beach seeker* (N= 427) is interested in walking along the beach and sunbathing, which makes it appropriate for the classification enjoying activities in the sun. The second cluster, *beach escape seeker* (N= 340), indicated that experience was an important motivational factor for travelling to the beach and is therefore classified as tourists seeking memorable experiences. This cluster indicated that “To break away from my everyday routine” was an important aspect when visiting the beach therefore to escape from everyday life.

**Table 4: t-Test results for tourists travelling to South African beaches in terms of factors**

Factors	Mean			Standard deviation			Sig. level	Effect size
	Quality beach seeker N=427	beach	Beach escape seeker N= 340	Quality beach seeker N=427	beach	Beach escape seeker N= 340		
Swimming conditions	2,34		3,24	0,722		0,546	0,001*	1,24****
Activities	2,27		3,10	0,650		0,718	0,001*	1,16****
Quality of beach	<b>2,72</b>		<b>3,39</b>	0,597		0,494	0,001*	1,12****
Popularity	2,45		3,22	0,599		0,521	0,001*	1,27****
Experience	2,68		<b>3,39</b>	0,584		0,489	0,001*	1,22****
Accessibility	2,56		3,31	0,669		0,518	0,001*	1,13****

\*Statistically significant difference:  $p \leq 0.05$  (Pallant, 2016:246).

Effect sizes are categorised as small (0.2 – 0.4)\*\*, medium (0.5 – 0.8)\*\*\* and large (greater than 0.8)\*\*\*\* (Mok et al., 2017).

Beach quality can be seen as very important for clusters stating that beaches should be clean, quiet, safe and overall, well managed. This correlates with the literature (De Ruyck et al., 1995; Geldenhuys et al., 2014; McKenna et al., 2011; Naushin & Yuwanond, 2016; Rittichainuwat, 2008; Swanepoel & van der Merwe, 2023) as beach quality and cleanliness was often found as a motivation for beachgoers. *Quality beach seekers* want to participate in activities based on time in the sun and on the cleanliness and tranquillity of the beach. *Beach escape seekers* want to have a memorable experience to escape from everyday life. This motivation is well supported in the literature (Carvache-Franco et al., 2020; Geldenhuys et al., 2014; Jeong, 2014; Lucrezi & van der Walt, 2016; Saayman et al., 2009; Nicolaidis & Surujlal 2012; Prebensen et al., 2010; Tiedt, 2011; van der Merwe et al., 2011) as an important travel motivation for tourists visiting beach destinations. Thus, the literature supports the clusters identified. Table 5 shows the cross-tabulation with Ward's method results for tourists travelling to South African beaches.

**Table 5: Cross-tabulation with Ward's method results for tourists travelling to South African beaches**

	Quality beach seeker N=427	Beach escape seeker N= 340	Pearson's Chi-square	Sig p-value	Cramer's V
<b>Gender</b>	Male: 42,4% <b>Female: 57,6%</b>	Male 39,9% <b>Female: 60,1%</b>	.481	0,488	0,025
<b>Home language</b>	English: 53,7% Afrikaans: 13,6% Other: 32,7%	English: 53,7% Afrikaans: 24,9% Other: 21,4%	21.513	0,001*	0,169**
<b>Education</b>	No school: 2,0% Still in school: 5,8% Matric: 20,7% <b>Diploma, degree: 36,0%</b> Post-graduate: 19,9% Professional: 15,6%	No school: 0% Still in school: 4,6% Matric: 26,7% <b>Diploma, degree: 33,1%</b> Post-graduate: 18,8% Professional: 16,7%	10.676	0,058	0,121
<b>Province</b>	Western Cape: 28,0% Gauteng: 10,8% Eastern Cape: 9,2% Free State: 1,2% KwaZulu-Natal: 12,9% Mpumalanga: 0,5% Northern Cape: 0,7% North-West: 0,9% Limpopo: 0,2% <b>Outside RSA borders: 35,5%</b>	<b>Western Cape: 29,0%</b> Gauteng: 12,1% Eastern Cape: 13,6% Free State: 1,8% KwaZulu-Natal: 13,6% Mpumalanga: 1,5% Northern Cape: 1,5% North-West: 2,4% Limpopo: 1,2% Outside RSA borders: 23,4%	21.608	0,010*	0,168**
<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Single: 54,0%</b> Married: 36,0% Divorced: 3,6% Widow/er: 1,4% Other: 5,0%	<b>Single: 51,2%</b> Married: 40,3% Divorced: 4,4% Widow/er: 1,8% Other: 2,4%	5.095	0,278	0,082
<b>Occupation</b>	Student: 24,2% <b>Paid worker: 62,0%</b> Unpaid worker: 2,2% Unemployed: 6,5% Retired: 5,3%	Student: 23,3% <b>Paid worker: 60,3%</b> Unpaid worker: 2,1% Unemployed: 4,8% Retired: 9,6%	5.841	0,211	0,088
<b>Sunbathing</b>	<b>Yes: 70,2%</b> No: 29,8%	<b>Yes: 62,2%</b> No: 37,8%	5.380	0,020*	0,084
<b>Swimming</b>	<b>Yes: 52,1%</b> No: 47,9%	<b>Yes: 62,8%</b> No: 37,2%	8.809	0,003*	0,107**
<b>Surfing</b>	Yes: 15,3% <b>No: 84,7%</b>	Yes: 18,9% <b>No: 81,1%</b>	1.689	0,194	0,047
<b>Walking</b>	<b>Yes: 55,4%</b> No: 44,6%	<b>Yes: 64,1%</b> No: 35,9%	5.847	0,016*	0,088
<b>Other activities</b>	Yes: 13,5% <b>No: 86,5%</b>	Yes: 11,5% <b>No: 88,5%</b>	.684	0,408	0,030

\*Statistically significant difference:  $p \leq 0.05$  (Pallant, 2016:246).

Effect sizes are categorised as small (0.10)\*\*; medium (0.30)\*\*\*; large (0.50)\*\*\*\*. (Pallant, 2016)

The *quality beach seeker* can be identified as a single (54%) female (57,6%), 34 years old, English speaking (53,7%) and residing outside South Africa (35,5%). This cluster attained a diploma or degree (36%) and are paid workers (62%). The *sun*



*seekers* travel in a group of three people and stay an average of sixteen nights in the local area. This cluster can be classified as the highest spenders (R12 473,60). They participate in sunbathing (70,2%), swimming (52,1%) and walking (55,4%) but are not interested in taking part in surfing or other activities such as fishing. The *beach escape seeker* is a 36-year-old single (51,2%) female (60,1%). This cluster is English-speaking (53,7%) and resides in the Western Cape Province (29%). The *beach escape seeker* obtained a diploma or degree (33,1%) and are paid workers (60,3%). This cluster consists of four people in their travelling group and spends seventeen nights in the local area. The *beach escape seeker* spends an average of R12 058,41 during their stay. Sunbathing (62,2%), swimming (62,8%) and walking (64,1%) were identified as activities that *beach escape seekers* mostly participate in when visiting the beach.

### Findings and implications

The first finding confirms the literature of Lucrezi & van der Walt (2016) regarding the changing demographic profile of beachgoers stating more single females visiting beaches (Geldenhuys & van der Merwe, 2014). This finding may cause a safety concern for single females at beach destinations. Lucrezi et al., (2015) show that beachgoers' average age are also in their thirties (Geldenhuys & Van der Merwe, 2014). Beach destination managers should be able to guarantee the safety of these beachgoers throughout their visit. More security guards and cameras can be installed to improve security at certain beach locations. The second finding highlights the large percentage of Europeans visiting South African beaches. International visitors spend a significant number of nights and money at a destination and have an unarguable economic impact on the beach destination (Geldenhuys & van der Merwe, 2014; Lucrezi & Saayman, 2014). DMOs should be very sensitive to these visitors' motives to satisfy their needs and establish a loyal market for revisitation. Beach destination managers should attempt to add more funding to control the quality of the beach as this is a main motive for the European market. When revisitation occurs and efforts from beach destination managers are noticed, positive word-of-mouth information could be spread to different visitor markets. The third finding explains that visitors identified sunbathing and swimming as their main preferred activities. Basterretxea-Iribar et al. (2019) also identified sunbathing as one of the visitors' main leisure activities while visiting the beach. As sunbathing and swimming can be seen as activities that tourists are interested in when visiting the beach, the factor identified as most important (quality of the beach) in the factor analysis corresponds with this aspect. To create a memorable swimming experience, beach managers can make equipment i.e., surfboards, swimming goggles and body boards available for visitors to hire to ensure a different swimming experience. More sunbathing chairs and umbrellas can be booked online so that the sunbathers can enjoy the beach while performing their favourite activity. Therefore, marketing can be directed to visitors by stating the types of waves, swells and currents for the swimmers to evaluate the different beach locations. This will enhance not only their experience, but also create job opportunities for the local community.

The fourth finding indicates that although Carvache-Franco et al. (2010) and Onofri & Nunes (2013) segmented beachgoers, these studies were not conducted on South African beaches. Both studies identified beach characteristics and activities as the main motivator for tourists to visit beaches. Onofri & Nunes (2013) segmented international and domestic tourists which correlates with the findings of these studies as the two segments identified were also international and local visitors. The last finding describes that the two clusters identify different segments of tourists that should be studied when developing different beach products. These clusters do not indicate a large significant difference as shown in Table 5, but rather differ in terms of motivation to visit beaches. This is especially true after the COVID-19 pandemic, where beachgoers are truly more focussed on experiences that will have lasting memories. Beach managers should frequently investigate new technology that could be incorporated at beaches such as holographic videos of marine wildlife and silent disco parties hosted on the beach. As these can be classified as innovative and new in terms of beachgoers' experiences. Focussing on South African resorts, researchers (van Vuuren & Slabbert 2012; Viljoenet al., 2019) studied various resorts, gathering information about the travel motives of tourists and what attracts tourists to these destinations. The marketing of these resorts can also be more effectively targeted at the motives of visitors to these destinations (Brett, 2019; Rogerson et al., 2018; van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2012). Marketers can utilise these findings to market new products to the different segments identified. As tourists' motives and needs keep changing, managers should be up to date with the latest markets and segments. New products can be developed to attract more visitors to beaches that have fewer visitors and spending in the area.

### Conclusion

This research study aimed to determine the profile and motives of visitors to South African beaches. The results indicated the profile of a beachgoer who visits these beaches. This profile was supported by previous literature. The results showed the motives of beachgoers determined in two clusters *sun seekers* and *experience seekers*. Differences between the clusters were visible in the results in terms of age, place of residence and activities to participate in. The motives of these clusters also differed as *sun seekers* want to participate in sun activities and *experience seekers* thrive on the trip experience. From the results, visitors have different motives, needs and wants and beach managers and marketers should consider these changes over some time as they may change. These results can also be utilised to design new products based on the preferences of the different clusters. It is advised that additional research should be conducted on the motives of visitors to South African beaches to keep up with continuous changes, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The limitations of the study included the following: a) The study was based on secondary data; therefore, the researcher could not have contributed to the development of the measuring instrument; b) The research was conducted during off-peak seasons as well; therefore the results may differ if only focussed on peak seasons at the different beach destinations. For future research, this study should be conducted at various South African



beach destinations during holiday seasons, spreading the population for the study more evenly. This study contributed to future product development and marketing strategy modification by South African beach managers.

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