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Customer Service Satisfaction Levels of Domestic Tourists at Accommodation Establishments in South Africa

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DEFINITIONS

All the definitions were adapted from the original literature to adhere to the research objectives of this study.

Adherence to grading criteria: Graded accommodation establishments should maintain and exceed the levels as stipulated in the grading criteria (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17).

Accuracy and accessibility of information: An accommodation establishment should ensure that the messages it conveys in the various marketing media are in line with the promises that it makes to the guests. Information shall also be presented in a manner that is easily accessible to the guests (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 15).

Accuracy of information: An accommodation establishment should ensure that the information collected and evaluated is accurate, thorough and in line with the relevant methods (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Backpackers and hostels: "A backpacker and/or hostel accommodation establishment is a facility that provides communal facilities, including dormitories and alternative sleeping arrangements" (SABS, 2012, p. 7).

Business Travel: "A trip which is undertaken with the purpose to conduct commercial or formal transactions or activities that are related to your job e.g. visiting a client, signing deals, negotiating a contract (including import/export), as well as partaking in professional sports activities etc." (NDT, 2012a, p. vi).

Business Tourism: When a trip is undertaken with the purpose of attending a **c**onference, **m**eeting, **e**xhibition, **e**vent or as part of an **i**ncentive (MICE) (Adapted from NDT, 2012a, p. vi).

Caravan and camping: "A caravan and camping park is a facility that provides communal ablution and toilet facilities, as well as space for guests to provide for their own accommodation, such as tents, motor homes and/or caravans" (SABS, 2012, p. 7).

Capacity building: An accommodation establishment should put systems, resources and processes in place that have the capacity and capability to deliver on the promises made (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 8).

Commitment: An accommodation establishment, through all its structures, should be actively committed to continuously provide excellent service and exceed the expectations of their guests (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 8).

Constant updating of messages and material: The accommodation establishment should ensure that messages and materials published in the various media that it uses for marketing purposes are updated at regular intervals, in order to ensure that they create realistic expectations of the product and service offering. The accommodation establishment should update their marketing materials within one month after making changes to their product offerings (Adapted form SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Consistency of message: The messages accommodation establishments conveys by means of various marketing media should be consistent with the promises that it make to the guests (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 15).

Consistent collection and evaluation of information: Accommodation establishments should ensure that the information collected and evaluated is

consistent and addresses the needs and expectations of the guests. The accommodation establishment should also ensure that service delivery is constantly monitored and analysed (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Continual training: Accommodation establishments should ensure that all staff members are continually trained and skilled in product knowledge, as well as delivery and support services offered by the establishment. Training should be reviewed every three years and must involve all levels of staff (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17).

Constructive peer reviewing: Accommodation establishments should approach its peers in order to make arrangements for an independent evaluation of its services (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Domestic tourism: "The tourism of resident visitors within the economic territory of the country of reference" (STATS SA, 2007 as cited in NDT, 2012a, p. vii).

Domestic tourist: "A resident visitor who visits within the economic territory of the country of reference" (STATS SA, 2007 as cited in NDT, 2012a, p. vii).

Domestic visitor: "A visitor whose country of residence is the country visited. They may be nationals of this country or foreigners (STATS SA, 2007 as cited in NDT, 2012a, p. vii)

Environmentally friendly products: The accommodation establishment should ensure that it incorporates the requirements as stipulated in SANS 1162 (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17)

Facilities: Accommodation establishments should ensure that, taking into account available resources, sufficient facilities are available in order to meet or exceed the needs of guest (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Feedback systems: Accommodation establishments should utilise the services of internal/external research companies, or establish guest feedback systems (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Formal service accommodation (hotels, lodges):

- "A **hotel** provides formal accommodation to travelers, and has a reception area, dining facility, and minimum of 6 rooms.
- A **lodge** provides formal accommodation, and is located in natural surroundings beyond that of the immediate garden area" (SABS, 2012, p. 7).

Flexibility / choice: The accommodation establishment should ensure that guests have a choice of products and services that meet or exceed requirements (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Guest-focused attitude: Accommodation establishments should ensure that at all times the focus and attention is on fulfilling the needs and wants of the guests, whilst ensuring that this is done within the accommodation establishment's capacity to deliver relevant products and services (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Guest-centred processes: Accommodation establishments should ensure that set systems and processes are in place which will result in quality of service and will ensure consistency when dealing with guests (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Honest and truthful information: Accommodation establishments should ensure that the messages it conveys in the various marketing media are honest, truthful and can be achieved (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Information management: confidentiality and privacy: The accommodation establishment should ensure that the privacy of guests is respected and that

mechanisms are put in place to secure confidential information that is provided by guests (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17)

Marketing: The accommodation establishment shall consider the accuracy of information when marketing its products by paying attention to the consistency of the message, accuracy and accessibility of information, constant updating of message and material, research and evolve in order to meet guest needs, honest and truthful information, and market sensitive / inoffensive marketing (Adapted from SABS, 2012, pp. 15 - 16).

Market sensitive / inoffensive marketing: Accommodation establishments should ensure that the messages conveyed in the various media are inoffensive and do not infringe on the constitutional rights of others (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Meetings, exhibitions and special events venues (MESE):
- "A **meeting venue** is a specialised facility designed to meet the demands of groups of people convening for the purpose of a meeting or a function.
- An **exhibition venue** is a facility specifically built/adapted for the purpose of accommodating special events or exhibitions" (SABS, 2012, p. 8).

Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement: Accommodation establishments should consistently monitor, evaluate and continually improve the level of product and service provision against criteria such as consistent collection and evaluation of information, accuracy of information, revision and evaluation of monitoring tools, feedback systems, reporting medium of stakeholders as well as rewards and awards system (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Non-discriminatory access to products and services: Accommodation establishments should ensure that non-discriminatory and inclusive access is offered to products and services (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17).

Product: The accommodation establishment should ensure that the accommodation product that is offered to guests matches the planned arrangements and specifications of the accommodation product that was marketed, especially in respect to quality, state of repair, flexibility / choice, facilities, value for money, universal accessibility as well as safety and security (Adapted from SABS, 2012, pp. 16 - 17).

Professional interaction: The management of the accommodation establishment should ensure that all interaction with the guests is conducted on a professional basis (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17)

Professionalism/up-skilling/training: Accommodation establishments should ensure that all staff members are continually trained and upskilled in a variety of service proficiencies, which will result in quality service offering (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17).

Quality: Accommodation establishments should ensure that the products it provides are of an acceptable quality and match or exceed expectations (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Rewards and awards system: Accommodation establishments are encouraged to implement an internal rewards and awards system which promotes the growth and development of service excellence in the industry (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Reporting medium of stakeholders: Accommodation establishments should utilise the reporting media and processes as indicated in the tool that is provided (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Research and evolve in order to meet guest needs: Accommodation establishments should ensure that it researches and refines its marketing strategies in order to meet the evolving needs and requirements of guests (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Revision and evaluation of monitoring tools: Accommodation establishments should ensure that monitoring and evaluation policies, procedures and processes are updated at regular intervals (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

Safety and security: Accommodation establishments should ensure that the products and services are delivered in a safe and secure environment (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 9).

Self-catering accommodation:

- "A **self-catering** establishment is ones home away from home. Usually providing guests single-occupancy units consisting of one or more bedrooms. A self-catering establishment also has a dining area with cooking facilities. Examples of self-catering accommodation include apartments, holiday units, houses, cottages, chalets, villas and cabins" (SABS, 2012, p. 7).

Service delivery: Accommodation establishments should ensure consistent delivery of service in line with the prescribed processes and outcomes and that does not depend on individual staff members. Important aspects include professionalism / up skilling / training, value for money, professional interaction, guest-focused attitude, guest-centred processes, efficient service recovery, service excellence-orientated organisational behaviour as well as constructive peer reviewing (Adapted from SABS, 2012, pp. 17 - 18).

Service excellence: "The entire tourism industry, including the non-tourism service providers such as retail and Home Affairs, shall continually strive for service excellence towards all our tourists" (NDT, 2011b, p. 12).

Service excellence-orientated organisational behaviour: Accommodation establishments should adopt operational behaviour that focuses on delivering acceptable service and value to guests (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 18).

State of repair: Accommodation establishments should ensure that all products are in an acceptable condition and are consistently maintained (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 16).

Tourism: "The activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited" (STATS SA, 2007 as cited in NDT, 2012a, p. viii)

Tourism Industry: "All establishments whose principal productive activity is a tourism characteristic activity, i.e. the sum of all tourism characteristic activities (STATS SA), e.g. accommodation establishments, tour operators, travel agencies. In respect of GDP contribution, the tourism industry accounts for the DIRECT impact" (NDT, 2012a, p. viii).

Tourism Sector: "Consists of a set of institutional units whose principal economic activity is tourism characteristic activity, (STATS SA) e.g. transports, retail, laundry, security, etc. It is the sum of the value added generated by all industries in response to tourism consumption. In respect of GDP contribution, the tourism sector accounts for the INDIRECT impact" (NDT, 2012a, p. viii)

Tourism Value Chain: "… the full range of activities required to bring a product or service through the various production phases (including physical transformation, and the input of various providers and services), in response to consumer demand" (NDT, 2011b, p. 10).

Tourist: "… a person who travels away from home, for at least one night. A tourist can be a domestic tourist …, a regional tourist …, or an overseas tourist…. A tourist travels for various reasons, including business, leisure, conferences, etc." (NDT, 2011b).

Tourist Accommodation: Any facility that regularly (or occasionally) provides 'paid' or 'unpaid' overnight accommodation for tourists (STATS SA 2007, as cited in NDT, 2012a).

Tourist Service Experience: "… a tourists' experience at all the touch points when visiting the country" (NDT, 2011b).

Universal accessibility: The accommodation establishment should ensure that guests have easy access to the facility and should provide alternative means of access (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 17).

Value for money: An accommodation establishment should ensure that products and services delivered leave the guest with the satisfaction that they have received value for money (Adapted from SABS, 2012, p. 9).

Visiting friends and relatives (VFR): "A trip which is undertaken to see, socialise with, or to spend time with relatives and/or friends. The person need not have stayed at the relatives' house. The purpose of visit includes weddings and funerals or other family events" (NDT, 2012a, p. vi).

Executive Summary

This study investigated the customer service satisfaction levels of domestic tourists at accommodation establishments in South Africa. Service excellence is acknowledged as a key driver of bottom-line results and will enable South African accommodation service providers to deliver an unforgettable customer service experience to tourists. However, challenges highlighted in the NTSS include the poor culture of service, lack of service ethos and skills, inconsistent customer service delivery, exacerbated by poor leadership in these areas. Benchmarking against international service standards to provide tourists with excellent service is recommended.

Therefore the problem statement for this study is:

The accommodation sector in South Africa lacks an in-country approach to the development of customer service excellence as a result of a poor service delivery culture. This deficit results in the need to address the development of a service excellence culture that will improve on customer service level satisfaction.

In addressing the problem statement and subsequent research questions, secondary literature from accredited conference proceedings, journals and textbooks, were consulted. The development of a service satisfaction measurement instrument was proposed. A quantitative research approach was followed in this explanatory study. Primary data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire and therefore a communication study was used in a field setting. Data analyses was done using a computer statistical software programme; IBM SPSS 20.0. Descriptive statistics describes the general characteristics of the obtained data. All the service excellence initiatives

investigated in this study were rated as highly important by the respondents, e.g. "Service EXCELLENCE starts with ME".

A factor analyses was conducted to investigate the data in more detail. It was found that the four service excellence pillars, as proposed in the TSEI, can be applied in the measurement of service satisfaction. Two separate measurements, namely *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and *Experience of Service Satisfaction* were statistically validated. By following a one-way ANOVA test on the new factors, it was found that the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* can be applied in the measurement of service satisfaction for the different accommodation establishment, but not the *Experience of Service Satisfaction*. Based in these results, it is recommended to include only three value chain phases, namely *prior to the visit*, *during the visit* and *after the stay*, in the assessment of service satisfaction amongst domestic tourists. It is also recommended to conduct separate tests of these measurements in the different graded accommodation categories for further refinement.

Some limitations to this study include the tight timelines, shortage of for human talent to be part of a research team and obtaining a complete database of graded and non-graded accommodation establishments from TGCSA. Furthermore many accommodation establishments refused the fieldworkers permission to collect data from their guests and made the domestic guest inaccessible.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest growing and largest industries in the world (NDT, 2011b). In the last decade, tourism has become an important social and economic activity in national and global economies. Tourism effects all communities and is formed by the people of the country, who are closely linked to their society, culture and environment (DEAT, 2008b). Therefore, the South African Government has invested in tourism with the aim of creating jobs, to sustain growth in the **G**ross **D**omestic **P**roduct (GDP)[1] and to contribute to the redistribution and transformation process (DEAT, 2008b). Furthermore, the growth in the tourism industry must be about sustained investment with clear differentiation in essential markets (DEAT, 2008b) such as the domestic tourism market. The New Growth Path emphasise tourism as one of six focal points for improving job creation in economic sectors (Editor, 2011; NDT, 2011b, 2012a). However, practical measures such as tourism infrastructure and services have to be extended, while attending to quality assurance and the improvement of training as highlighted in the **N**ational **T**ourism **S**ector **S**trategy (NTSS) (South African Government Online, 2011). Furthermore, South Africa does not have an integrated approach to service excellence, especially a strategy that is aimed at the domestic tourism market (NDT and TSEI, 2011).

South Africa aims to be one of the top 20 global tourism destinations and to create 225000 jobs (Editor, 2011; NDT, 2012a; SAT, 2012b) by 2015 (Els, 2010). It is known that for every 16 tourist arrivals in South Africa one direct job is created (Reinstein, 2010). In order to reach this goal, the NTSS development was launched in 2011 after a consultation process with the tourism industry (NDT, 2011a). The NTSS set out what needs to be achieved by 2020 (NDT, 2012a) and to reach up to 15 million international tourist arrivals (SAT, 2012c) . One of the long term strategic

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[1] Tourism gross domestic product: Tourism GDP is the GDP generated in the economy by the tourism and other industries in relation to the internal tourism consumption (STATS SA, 2009)

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goals of the NTSS is to transform the South African tourism industry into a globally competitive destination of choice and to instil a service culture. The importance of an annual customer survey and the introduction of a web-based self-assessment tool for service excellence are also priorities (NDT, 2011b).

In support of the national governments' mandate, this study investigated the customer service satisfaction levels of domestic tourists at accommodation establishments in South Africa. The study is presented with reference to the background and context of the study, theoretical background and literature review, research methodology, pilot study, data collection, research findings and conclusion. The background and context of the study are discussed under the rationale for the study, problem statement, research questions, the purpose of the study and finally the objectives of the study.

1.2.   Rationale for the study

The **W**orld **E**conomic **F**orum (WEF) has recently published the 2011 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index which rank 139 countries in terms of 14 pillars, e.g. tourism infrastructure, human resources. According to this report, South Africa's competitiveness declined from 61st in 2009 to 66th in 2010 and 2011 (Blake & Chiesa, 2011, 2012; Lewitton, 2011). In this study only the relevant competitive indicators are highlighted based on the 2011 results. South Africa has good rankings in the following categories:

1) *price competitiveness* in the travel and tourism industry (37th);

2) *government prioritisation* of the travel and tourism industry (24th);

3) effectiveness of *marketing and branding* (26th);

4) extent of *staff trading* (26th); and

5) local availability of *research and training services* (49th).

Challenging areas related to the accommodation sector include the *hotel price index* (63rd) as well as *hotel room infrastructure* (98th) (Blake & Chiesa, 2012). In

2009, the *attractive price competitiveness for hotel rooms and a favourable tax regime* rated 38th (World Economic Forum, 2009), while these same criteria rated as 37th in 2011 (Blake & Chiesa, 2012).

The **I**nternational **S**tandard **I**ndustrial **C**lassification (ISIC) of all economic activities acknowledges the tourism sector as an amalgamation of the transportation, accommodation, recreation and entertainment sectors, as well as the food and beverage service industries. This amalgamation creates challenges for the accurate measurement of the different tourism sector statistics. Tourism consumption is classified by tourism characteristics as well as non-tourism related goods and services (STATS SA, 2009), which are embedded in all these economic activities. It is within all tourism related goods and service that South Africa needs to implement a tourism product development strategy that will provide a competitive advantage for the country. These products should provide tourists (especially domestic tourists) with a memorable experience that relates to the uniqueness of the country (DEAT, 2008b).

Service excellence is acknowledged as a key driver of bottom-line results and will enable South Africans to deliver an unforgettable customer service experience to tourists (DEAT, 2008a). However, Murtuza (2009 as cited in Oosthuizen, 2009) warns that "… we need to take a serious look at our standards and service, before we make comments about service excellence. Our service standards lack badly and need urgent attention. If we don't attend to it now we [may] regret the missed opportunities". South Africa is challenged, particularly in the hospitality sector, to match changing market skill requirements (DEAT, 2008a) as well as on sustainable service standards for the tourism industry.

In 2009, the Disney Institute was contracted to conduct the first phase of the **T**ourism **S**ervice **E**xcellence **I**nitiative (TSEI)[2] (Mosue & Singh, 2009; NDT, 2009). Focus areas of this TSEI included attitude, a culture of service excellence, having the right people in the right jobs, empowerment of front-line employees, understanding customers and not only focusing on the 2010 Soccer World Cup Legacy (NDT, 2009). This initiative were rolled out in June 2012 (Editor, 2012; SAT, 2012a). It was further announced that this TSEI will focus on four pillars, namely *marketing*, *products*, *delivery of services* as well as *monitoring and evaluation*. Against the background of this TSEI pillars, this research project aimed to investigate possible indicators to the four pillars. These indicators may inform the service excellence requirements which are experienced by tourists during the tourist life cycle (also referred to as the value chain). It will further aid the TSEI with important criteria in the monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of tourism related services in South Africa.

1.3. Problem statement

Challenges highlighted in the NTSS include the poor culture of service, lack of service ethos and skills, inconsistent customer service delivery which is supported by poor leadership. Furthermore the **G**lobal **C**ompetitiveness **P**rogramme (GCP) found that dissatisfied tourists (mostly business travellers) indicated poor service levels as an issue (NDT, 2011b).

It is critical to assess the current level of service provided by South African tourism suppliers, i.e. accommodation establishments, in order to assist these suppliers in identifying their internal strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, as South Africans we need to benchmark ourselves against international service standards to provide tourists with excellent service (Ask Africa, 2009). According to an article published by Sue Lewitton (2010b), poor levels of services are the result of poor leadership.

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[2] This initiative is done in partnership between the Department of Tourism and the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA). The TBCSA, also known as the "voice of the industry", is the umbrella body for the private sector role players in the tourism industry, with the mandate to grow and develop the industry (Mosue & Singh, 2009).

The Disney Institute research results also indicated that South African customer services were "abysmal to poor". The Disney Institute in America held a number of national seminars in 2010, known as the "Tourism Service Excellence Initiative" which cost millions of Rands. These seminars reached about 7000 as oppose to the 250 000 people it was meant for. This initiative was criticised by many South Africans as being too "Americanised". Dawn Harrison (soft skills training expert and independent facilitator for THSBS) emphasised that, "We do not want to hear from the US…on how they have achieved a culture of service. We need to write our own story…." Lisa Gordon-Davis (MD of Kundiza Training and Consulting) is of the opinion that South Africans are used to receiving bad service and that we lack a service culture (Lewitton, 2010b).

The aim of the NTSS is to inspire and accelerate the responsible growth of the South African tourism industry from 2010 to 2020 (NDT, 2011b). This is an initiative driven by **N**ational **D**epartment of **T**ourism (NDT) and **T**ourism **B**usiness **C**ouncil of **S**outh **A**frica (TBCSA) with the aim to establish a cohesive approach to service excellence, which will guide the tourism sector to create a positive customer service culture (Molele, 2012). In this study the important need and service satisfaction aspects in the domestic accommodation market was investigated in the different categories[3] of accommodation establishments in South Africa.

Therefore the problem statement for this study is:

The accommodation sector in South Africa lacks an in-country approach to the development of customer service excellence as a result of a poor service delivery culture. This deficit results in the need to address the development of a service excellence culture that will improve on customer service level satisfaction.

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[3] Formal service accommodation, guest accommodation, self-catering accommodation, back packers and hostelling accommodation as well as caravan and camping accommodation (TGCSA, 2012).

1.4. Research question

The research question addresses "…the research problem and can be seen as the main focus or main goal of the study" (Cooper & Schindler, 2011, p. 654). The main **research question** is for this study was:

How can customer service satisfaction levels of domestic tourists in the different categories of accommodation establishments across South Africa be measured?

The main research objective of the study is therefore:

To determine customer service satisfaction levels of domestic tourists in the different categories of accommodation establishments across South Africa

Literature related to the conceptualisation of this measurement is discussed in Section 2.

1.5. The purpose of the study

The NDT has acknowledged that an increase in visitor satisfaction is needed to achieve the outcomes set in the Tourism Growth Strategy (DEAT, 2008b). Therefore the findings of this study can inform tourism practitioners which indicators are important in the measurement of the four TSEI pillars. Furthermore it can guide tourism managers to build talent capacity by identifying staff to undertake effective management training programmes (DEAT, 2008b) in tourist satisfaction which are in line with the indicators of the TSEI pillars . It can further equip tourism employees to be flexible, loyal, friendly, tolerant and responsive to facilitate the migration of service standards to high value domestic tourists by adapting the TSEI pillars. It can guide a domestic tourism destination to become more competitive through service excellence initiatives in support of their commitment to local,

national and international service levels (DEAT, 2008a; Oosthuizen, 2009). This research can inform the Tourism Human Resource Development strategy as to where education is needed and how to formulate the labour and training policies (DEAT, 2008b) related to tourism service excellence. Finally, this study can assist in the identification of key attributes that influence service satisfaction in the domestic accommodation sector.

1.6. The objectives of the study

Following the research question in paragraph 1.4 and the guidelines in the "Terms of Reference"(NDT, 2012b), the following research objectives are formulated.

The research objectives for this study are thus to:

- Review the literature and identify key attributes that influence customer service satisfaction in the accommodation sector;
- Determine service satisfaction for the different categories of accommodation establishments in South Africa (hotels, guest houses, self-catering, etc.); and
- Make recommendations to improve customer service satisfaction in the accommodation sector that will influence the growth of the domestic market in South Africa.

The objectives of this research project are benchmarked against the National Tourism Service Excellence Strategy (NDT, 2011b) which aims:

To become a unique destination where all South Africans deliver on the brand promise by creating personal experience to each tourist during each service encounter;

To create South African best practices and word-class solutions for all tourism partners, especially accommodation, in the tourism service value chain on service excellence;

To co-ordinate some of the proposed pillars of service excellence interventions which are further refined to:

- do **research** and develop a comprehensive baseline for customer service satisfaction, which will create an understanding of service levels and the related gaps. These will serve as guidelines to monitor service improvements from the time when the booking was made at a domestic accommodation establishment until all the information is provided to create an experience;

- to investigate **public awareness** on the expected service standards amongst employees and customers of the accommodation industry through the "EXCELLENCE in SERVICE stars with ME" initiative;

- to assist in the development of integrated **standards and norms** of customer services. These norms and standards were developed by the **S**outh **A**frican **B**ureau of **S**tandards (SABS) and used a reference for the satisfaction measurement instrument;

- to investigate the need for the development of an inclusive **customer feedback system.** Only an investigation on the importance of a customer feedback system is done as NDT will work closely with the National Consumer Commission (NDT, 2011b; NDT and TSEI, 2011).

SECTION 2:   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.   Theoretical background

In the assessment of accommodation satisfaction, the NDT advises that research should focus on areas such as price sensitivity, tourist expectations, market segmentation and product differentiation. A need was also identified to explore the perceptions and experiences form a community perspective (DEAT, 2008b). For this reason the domestic tourist is used for testing the four identified pillars in the

TSEI, namely marketing, product / quality assurance, service delivery / excellence, as well as monitoring and evaluation (NDT, 2011b, 2012c; SABS, 2012). It is also necessary to establish what the most important expectation and experience indicators are, in the assessment of satisfaction according to the four pillars. The investigation of the expectation and experience indicators are guided by the research theories by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988).

2.2. Literature review

Since 1994, the tourism industry in South Africa has grown significantly. Some of the reasons are the increase in number of hotels as well as the growth in occupancy rates and average room rates in key locations such as Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Bloemfontein, Nelspruit and Mmabatho (NDT, 2011b). In 2010 the hospitality industry experienced an increase in infrastructure development (NDT, 2011b). Despite some achievements, the hospitality industry experiences some challenges such as (1) the inconsistencies in service levels (NDT, 2012c; NDT, TBCSA, & TSEI, 2012) and the fact that it is generally a very low paying industry which results in the loss of skills (NDT et al., 2012).

The literature review is further discussed under domestic tourism, tourist satisfaction and a summary of some scholarly research.

2.2.1 Domestic tourism

"Domestic tourism is an essential contributor to the growth of the tourism economy" (NDT, 2012a, p. xi). A country's domestic market forms the backbone of the tourism industry, however many South Africans do not have a significant travel culture. South Africa has a growing middle class market (also known as the "new" travellers), who contribute to the growth in the domestic holiday travel market as well as a growth in the domestic tourist industry (NDT, 2011b). More provinces are visited by domestic tourist than their international tourist counterparts, but a concern

was raised that this market is on the decline and that the average spend per trip lags behind the identified benchmark competitors (NDT, 2011b). In 2009, the average spent per trip for a domestic leisure traveller was on average R730, and R710 in 2010. Although it was stated that the domestic market were declining and increased to R780 was reported in 2011 (SAT, 2012c).

The Minister of Tourism, Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk, highlights the importance for the development of a domestic tourism growth strategy (NDT, 2012a) for the overall contribution of a sustainable tourism economy as mentioned in the NTSS. It was further re-iterated that this domestic tourism strategy aims to build a culture that will "result in increased awareness of tourism and its value for country" (NDT, 2012a, p. iii).

In 2011, domestic tourism contributed 76% (ZAR 20 billion to the country's economy through 26.4 million domestic trips) of South Africa's total tourism volume and is regarded as the "lifeblood of the tourism industry" as well as the largest contributor to tourist volume. This is an increase from the 52% of total tourism consumption in 2008 as identified in the NTSS (NDT, 2011b; SAT, 2012c). Goals emphasised in the NTSS aims to reach 54 million domestic trips (accounting for 18 million domestic business and leisure travellers) by 2020 with an overall contribution of 60% to the GDP (SAT, 2012c). In order to reach these goals the NDT aims to increase domestic tourism by 10% by 2015 and 15% by 2020 based on the 5.3% baseline growth set in 2009 (D'Angelo, 2012; South African Government Information, 2012). In 2009 and 2010 the domestic-tourism percentage-share contribution was recorded at 54.8% and 58.8% respectively (NDT, 2012a). Based on these figures, there is potential of domestic tourism to increase the local consumption of the tourism product (NDT, 2011b).

2.2.2 Tourist satisfaction

The need to address the culture of poor service was addressed in the 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism. However, actions to address this poor service culture was only addressed in the NTSS, with specific reference to the service excellence values, the platforms for service delivery, themes, and the strategic clusters (NDT, 2011a).

The NTSS highlights **eight service excellence values**, namely *cause-and-effect relationship*; *customer insight*; *organisational culture*; *information and access*; *service delivery*; *timelines and quality service*; *norms and standards* as well as *consistency* (NDT, 2011a, 2012c). However, **three platforms** for service delivery has also been identified, namely **P**roduct, **I**nfrastructure, **E**nvironment (PIE); **P**rocess, **E**fficiency, **S**ystems (PES) as well as **P**eople, **A**ttitude, **B**ehaviour (PAB) (DEAT, 2009; NDT, 2011b). It is therefore important to consider these values and platforms in the development of service satisfaction indicators (or attributes) for the accommodation industry.

The NTSS is divided into **three themes**, namely 1) tourism growth and the economy; 2) an enhanced visitor; as well as 3) sustainability and good governance. These themes are further divided into 11 objectives. With reference to the outcomes required from this study are the objectives related to theme 1 and 3, with a specific focus on objective 3 ("To increase domestic tourism's contribution to the tourism economy") as well as objective 5 ("To deliver a world-class visitor experience"). Therefore relevant detail in the context of this study will include the creation of a "national visitor satisfaction index across a number of key dimensions for domestic tourists" as well as an "amalgamated indicator across visitor feedback and quality assurance systems" (NDT, 2011b, p. 12).

Four **strategic clusters** were identified of which Cluster 3, known as "People development", consists of four thrusts of which the third refers to "service

excellence". It is important to note that the NTSS acknowledges that one strategic thrust may activate the implementation of another - specifically in the development of new markets and the marketing of tourism products. Cluster 2.1 serves as an example in this study, as the need was identified to review the existing domestic marketing approach to accommodate all market segments (NDT, 2011a).

Therefore these service excellence values, the platforms for service delivery, themes, and the strategic clusters were used a foundation in the development of the National Tourism Service Excellence Strategy. The baseline for this strategy includes:

1) the development of an inclusive visitor satisfaction tracking tool for domestic tourists,

2) the development of a comprehensive indicator of quality across the different grading and customer feedback system, as well as

3) the research done by the Disney Institute (NDT, 2011b).

Recently the *2009 Research Report on Customer Service Delivery* in South Africa highlighted the inconsistency in service levels, while the 2011 National Tourism Service Excellence Strategy indicated the need for an integrated approach to service excellence (Molele, 2012). This report was launched as the **N**ational **S**ervice **E**xcellence **R**equirements (NSER) (also known as SANS 1197) in 2012 (Editor, 2012; NDT, 2012c; SAT, 2012b). This NSER (SANS 1197) is "... a set of minimum standards of service excellence.... and can be used as a benchmarking tool" (NDT, 2012c, p. 1). After a broad consultation process, a *Service Excellence Standard* was proposed with the following purposes:

1) to introduce generic standards related to planning, development, implementation and the improvement of service excellence;

2) the setting of minimum requirements for the performance of organisations in the tourism value chain;

3) to create credible service standards; and

(4) to introduce a performance system.

Based on these standards, four focus areas were identified namely *marketing*, *product development, service delivery* as well as *monitoring and evaluation*, which is the same as included in the TSEI. These focus areas are aimed to address the tourist service experience 1) when the tourist leaves their home country, 2) arrives in South Africa, 3) during their stay, 4) when they leave South Africa and 5) arrive back in their home country. These focus areas are also referred to as the *tourism value chain* and seem to relevant to the international tourist market. A refinement of this value chain is proposed for the domestic tourist towards the end of this section.

The need was established to develop service excellence requirements in the sectors within the tourism value chain. The focus of this research was only on tourist service excellence in the accommodation (hospitality) sector and its related touch points in the tourism value chain. As this study only focuses on the domestic tourism market, this tourist service satisfaction study adopts the following focus areas (as explained in the previous paragraph): 1) leave residence – booking accommodation (prior to the visit); 2) during the tourist's stay at the accommodation establishment – assessment of the service excellence; as well as 3) leaving the accommodation establishment – check out (after the stay) (NDT, 2011b).

Future plans related to tourism service excellence include suggestions of:
1) the standard to the **I**nternal **S**tandard **O**rganisation (ISO) to the SABS,
2) the designing of criteria and indicators for the standard;
3) consolidation of the criteria as part of the TGCSA' grading criteria;
4) whether a service excellence mark–of–quality is needed; and
5) to create public awareness through the Service Excellence-Welcome campaign known as "Excellent service Start with ME" (Editor, 2012; Molele, 2012). Five strategic pillars highlight the proposed interventions regarding service excellence such as 1) research and information; 2) up skilling service delivery; 3) public awareness; 4) service standards and norms, and 5) a customer feedback system

(NDT, 2012c; NDT and TSEI, 2011), which were also discussed under the objectives of this study (paragraph 1.6).

In addressing the research question, the relevant pillars suggested in the SANS 1197:2012 (SABS, 2012), the tourism service excellence requirements (NDT, 2012c), the National Tourism Service Excellence Strategy (NDT, 2011b) as well as the TGCSA grading criteria (TGCSA, 2012) were adapted for this study. In addressing the objective to identify the expectation and experience indicators related to the customer service satisfaction, Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Bitner (1988) was be used as theoretical foundation.

It is also important to note that the fundamental reason behind this study was to identify the aspects that have an influence on the service satisfaction of domestic tourists. Through an empirical investigation, the aspects related to tourist satisfaction during the three phases of the tourism product consumption (value chain) was investigated (refer to Appendix A).

2.2.3 Scholarly research

Secondary literature, from accredited conference proceedings, journals and textbooks, has been consulted to refine and develop a satisfaction measurement. A summary of literature is discussed below.

Many scholars have investigated factors related satisfaction in the tourism industry (Chang & Polonsky, 2012; Coghlan & Pearce, 2010; Huang & Hsu, 2010; Taplin, 2012) and more specifically the accommodation sector (Cho, 2005; Chun-Fang, Soo-Cheong, Canter, & Prince, 2008; Han, Kim, & Hyun, 2011; Loureiro & Kastenholz, 2010; Matzler, Renzl, & Rothenberger, 2006). Literature is also rich in research related to marketing in the tourism and hospitality industry (Dev, Buschman, & Bowen, 2010; Panda, 2008; Sangkaworn & Mujtaba, 2010), which make reference to promotion (Mateljic, 2010) and product (Xu, 2010). The

relationship between product and promotion is also acknowledged (Ivkov & Stamenkovic, 2008). Research related to tourism and hotel service delivery has been reported (Yoshida & James, 2011; Yu & Lee, 2009) as well as the performance evaluation of hotels (Hsieh & Lin, 2010; Nicoletta & Servidio, 2012; Sparks & Browning, 2011). Empirical studies in tourism further supports the relationship between satisfaction and service quality (Yoon, Lee, & Lee, 2010; Zabkar, Brencic, & Dmitrovic, 2010). Although evidence exist to support the measurement of marketing, product, service delivery as well as monitoring and evaluation, could no evidence be found to support the relationships between unique combinations of these key focus areas, as proposed by the TSEI pillars and service excellence requirements.

The use of multi-dimensional satisfaction models are a very popular method to give meaning to complex constructs and the inter relationships between these constructs (Noe & Uysal, 2003; Wang, Zhang, Gu, & Zhen, 2009), and are applied in this study. It is further important to establish how the four key focus areas[4] (known as the constructs) measure in terms of guest expectation and experience. Therefore, this proposed measurement is imbedded in the service quality theories developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988).

Based on this discussion, the dimensions (key focus areas or pillars) with supporting academic references[5], are listed below:

- **Marketing** (Aksoy, Atılgan, & Akıncı, 2003; Bigné, Sánchez, & Sánchez, 2001; Card, Cole, & Humphrey, 2006; Dev et al., 2010; Eichhorn, Miller, Michopoulou, & Buhalis, 2008; Filo, Funk, & Hornby, 2009; Grönroos, 2007; Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2009; Jumyong, Love, & Han, 2008; Mateljic, 2010; Panda, 2008; Sangkaworn & Mujtaba, 2010);

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[4] Service excellence requirements

[5] Unique combinations of dimensions were proposed by for these key focus areas (constructs) and therefore were different consumer and tourism related studies identified to support these unique combinations.

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- **Products / Quality assurance** (Anderson, Thomson, & Wynstra, 2000; Bitner, 1992; Chang & Polonsky, 2012; Ezeh & Harris, 2008; Ivkov & Stamenkovic, 2008; Kim, Chung, & Lee, 2011; Swart, 2007; Swart & Roodt, 2008; Swart & Roodt, 2009, 2011a; Swart & Roodt, 2011b; Swart & Roodt, 2012; Xu, 2010; Yoon et al., 2010);

- **Service delivery / Excellence** (Coghlan & Pearce, 2010; Jennings, Lee, Ayling, Lunny, Cater, & Ollenburg, 2009; Loureiro & Kastenholz, 2010; Perrett, 2009; Swart, 2007; Swart & Roodt, 2008; Swart & Roodt, 2009, 2011a; Swart & Roodt, 2011b; Swart & Roodt, 2012; Yoon et al., 2010; Yoshida & James, 2011; Yu & Lee, 2009; Zabkar et al., 2010); and

- **Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement** (Bigné et al., 2001; Bitner, 1990; Graham, 2009; Hsieh & Lin, 2010; Hui, Wan, & Ho, 2007; Nicoletta & Servidio, 2012; Sparks & Browning, 2011).

Reference to all the publications are made in Appendix A. Next, the research design and methodology are discussed.

SECTION 3:   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Research design

A quantitative research approach was used for this explanatory study. Primary data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire and therefore a communication study was used in a field setting. A correlational approach was followed in the data analysis. An *ex-post facto* design approach was followed as the researcher had no control over the various constructs (known as pillars or key focus areas in the literature review). From the relevant literature a domestic tourist satisfaction measurement was drafted. Generalisations about the findings are reported based on the validity of the design and the sample representativeness of this correlational study. After the data analysis and evaluation of the results a

domestic tourism satisfaction measurement is presented (Cooper & Schindler, 2011; Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010). Sampling errors, high non-response and refusal rates, data capturing errors and the selection of unsuitable statistical techniques are synonymous with this research design and were acknowledged in this study (Mouton, 2001).

3.2   Research approach

The research approach captures the empirical nature of this study which is situated in a positivist epistemology. The researcher attempted to test the subjective expectations of domestic tourists against the objective experiences at different accommodation establishments in South Africa. A survey instrument was developed comprising Likert type items to operationalise all the theoretical variables in this study. Items were formulated in question format. Data were analysed by the application of factor and reliability analyses, followed by a test for normality, correlational analyses[6], and a one-way **an**alysis **o**f **va**riance (ANOVA) test.

3.3   Research method

The participants and sampling, measuring instruments, research procedure; and statistical analyses are discussed under the research method.

3.3.1 Participants and sampling

A target population were compiled based on two geographical types namely: urban formal[7] and urban informal (STATS SA, 2011). The target market was selected based on the recommendations by the **S**outh **A**frican **T**ourism (SAT) (NDT, 2011b) as well as the Domestic Tourism Growth Strategy (NDT, 2012a). The SAT

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[6] Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the different constructs (Pallant, 2007).
[7] Four settlements types, namely *formal urban areas* (cities, towns, suburbs), *informal urban areas* (informal settlements, hostels, institutions, industrial and recreational areas), *commercial farms* as well as *tribal areas and rural informal settlements* (STATS SA, 2001).

Domestic Tourism campaign devised this market into five key consumer segments, namely (1) spontaneous budget explorers; (2) new-horizon families; (3) high life enthusiasts; (4) seasoned leisure travellers as well as (5) wealthy Mzansi families (South African Government Information, 2012). Market segmentation questions, such as gender, age and purpose for travel, were asked to cluster the service satisfaction needs of these different segments in this study[8]. Marketing strategies aims to improve awareness and access to information for the different market segments. It was suggested that the following aspects in the domestic tourism strategy should inform this study: (1) limited growth, (2) limited geographical spread, (3) travel affordability, (4) creation of a holiday culture, (5) limited diversity of products and services, (6) access to travel information as well as (7) the creation of a social tourism programme to make travel affordable for most South Africans (NDT, 2011b). Respondents were representative of all nine Provinces (Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo) (STATS SA, 2011).

A non-probability sampling technique, namely convenience sampling, was used (Cooper & Schindler, 2011) due to short time frame for data collection and the challenge of obtaining a database from the TGCSA (refer to the letters in Appendix F and G). It was impossible to track every domestic tourist in South Africa and therefore a time frame was selected as criteria for respondents to complete the survey. Due to the empirical nature of the study it was decided to select domestic tourists, who stayed at accommodation establishments from June to early December 2012. The potential sampling frame consisted of graded and non-graded accommodation establishments in South Africa (23 726 establishments) (SAT, 2012c, p. 90). Data was collected from October to early December 2012. Various tourism organisations and associations were approached to participate in this study (refer to an example of such a letter in Appendix H). Data was collected through an electronic survey (refer to the e-mail invitation in Appendix E) and the

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[8] The purpose of this study was not to conduct a detailed market segmentation analysis of the respondents and therefore the key consumer segments were only used to assist with the demographic details of this study.

assistance of fieldworkers in the different provinces. The population and sample was literate and able to complete the questionnaire.

3.3.2 Measuring instrument

This Measuring instrument consisted of three sections, namely:

- **Section A: Screening questions** to ensure that respondents meet the criteria to participate in this study. It also elicited responses on the main activities the domestic tourist participated in, such as recreation / entertainment; business / professional, sports, nature based, social activity, religious activity and/or medical / health (STATS SA, 2011). On 1 October 2010 the new grading criteria was introduced according to six grading categories (Lewitton, 2010a). These categories include (1) formal service accommodation (hotel, Lodge), (2) guest accommodation (B&B, country house, guest house), (3) self-catering accommodation, (4) backpackers and hostel accommodation, (5) caravan and camping accommodation, as well as (6) Meetings, exhibitions and special events venues (TGCSA, 2012). Five of these categories (excluding meetings, exhibitions and special events venues) were included in this section of the measuring instrument.

- **Section B: Market segmentation details** which included demographic information such as gender, age, population (ethnic) group, home language, as well as geographic information, such as the province most frequently visited (STATS SA, 2011).

- **Section C: Service Excellence** aimed to measure the service expectation and experience prior, during and after the respondent visited the accommodation establishment.

The reliability of this domestic tourist satisfaction measurement instrument is embedded in the reliability of Del Bosque and Martin (2008), Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) as well as Swart and Roodt (2011a) service quality and satisfaction

dimensions. These studies are also used in to support the development of the service satisfaction constructs for accommodation establishments.

The Faculty of Management Ethic Committee at the **U**niversity of **J**ohannesburg (UJ) approved the inclusion of an incentive, namely the possibility to win a next generation iPad, by respondents who fully completed the questionnaire. Respondents also received a small chocolate for their effort to complete the questionnaire. The winner of the iPad was Ms Shandran Pillay from the **N**elson **M**andela **M**etropolitan **U**niversity (NMMU) who was notified on 15 December 2012 about her winning the iPad.

3.3.3 Research procedure

Accommodation establishments and tourism related organisations, meeting the selection criteria for this study, were approached for permission to distribute the electronic questionnaires. Letters of invitation were sent to each accommodation establishment and tourism organisation, highlighting the purpose of the study, the possible value of the study and the procedures to be followed (refer to Appendix B and Appendix H). A number of accommodation establishments decided not to participate in this study or did not respond to the e-mail invitation or telephone call.

3.3.4 Editing of the data

The completed questionnaires went through a process of data verification to control the quality of the data that influences the precision of the empirical results. A total of 411 questionnaires were returned, from the more than 1000 distributed. All questionnaires where respondents did not indicate whether they were a domestic tourist or where they selected the 'international tourist' option were excluded from the data capturing. This yielded a total of 389 fully completed questionnaires suitable for analysis.

3.3.5 Statistical analyses

Data analyses were done using a computer statistical software programme; IBM SPSS 20.0 with the assistance of Mr Richard Devey, Head of the **S**tatistical **C**onsultation **S**ervices (STATKON) at the UJ, and the researcher, Ms Nellie Swart. The use of this statistical package enabled the researcher to produce quantitative data that is reliable and enhancing the validity of this study. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics are the two main categories of the statistical analyses procedures used in this study (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

SECTION 4: PILOT STUDY AND DATA COLLECTION

4.1   Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted before the roll-out of the data collection process to ensure the reliability and the content validity of the measures. Accommodation stakeholders and tourism associations were invited to participate in this pilot study. Five respondents agreed to participate and gave feedback via e-mail and/or personal discussion. Feedback received from the respondents was used to modify the questionnaire (Refer to Appendix C for the original questionnaire and the modifications). The questionnaire was also sent to STATKON at UJ for comment. The statistician proposed amendments and finally approved the questionnaire for distribution through a dedicated website addresses. The researcher also completed an electronic version questionnaire to ensure the internal validity of this field survey before the survey went live. The final instrument is shown in Appendix D. The same instrument was also duplicated in hard copy for the field survey.

4.2   Data collection

Key locations such as Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, eMalahleni (Witbank), Johannesburg, Kimberley, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth, as discussed in paragraph 2.2 (NDT, 2011b) were included as key markets for the data collection in the identified accommodation establishments. Only accommodation stakeholders and associations who gave permission to conduct fieldwork amongst their members or at their premises were included in this study. Data was collected with the use of an electronic questionnaire as well as through the use of fieldworkers. The electronic questionnaire was distributed through accommodation associations and the database of the **S**chool of **T**ourism and **H**ospitality (STH) at the UJ, and administered by STATCON.

Fieldwork was conducted from October to early December 2012. A Research Assistant, Ms Nonthlanthla Tshabalala, was appointed to facilitate the fieldwork process. The following fieldworkers assisted Ms Tshabalala with the fieldwork, namely Mr Junayne Baatjes and Ms Sai-Risha Gareeb (Port Elizabeth), Ms Alvena Crouch (Kimberley), Ms Thembeka Masondo (Johanneburg), Ms Zikho Qwatekana (Durban), Ms Amogelang Masodi (North West). Ms Tshabalala has also travelled to Bloemfontein, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Kimberley to conduct fieldwork and to facilitate the fieldwork in the different provinces. As the initial fieldwork trip did not result in a representative response from all the provinces, Ms Lizette and Ms Nono Monare again travelled to Kimberley, Polokwane and eMalahleni (formerly known as Witbank) to conduct more fieldwork early in December 2012. Each fieldworker was asked to complete a "fieldworker form" (refer to Appendix I) for internal control and auditing purposes.

The fieldworkers were faced with a number of challenges, such as finding many accommodation establishments "unwelcoming" to the idea of collection data at the establishments. In some instances the fieldworkers were asked to leave the questionnaires at the establishment for guest to complete in their rooms. This

resulted in many questionnaires not being returned. Guests also didn't want to be disturbed while they were at the various accommodation establishments. Some respondents mentioned that the questionnaire was too long. Although it was a challenging experience, most fieldworkers commented on the wonderful opportunity to be involved in this project. Two examples of the reports from the fieldworkers and the accommodation establishments contacted were included in Appendix L.

Next, the research findings are discussed. The purpose of these findings is to provide statistical evidence in answering the research question, as well as the guide the recommendations and directions for future research (section 6).

SECTION 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Detailed statistical analyses were conducted on the data. However, in the report the emphasis is on the results and not the different statistical analyses procedures that were followed. Where necessary, reference is made to some of the technical analyses to support the reliability and validity of the results. Results are not discussed in detail and only the main findings are highlighted in this section. The research findings are presented in three sections according to the sections in the questionnaire (measurement instrument).

5.1 Screening questions

The first question required respondents to indicate whether they were domestic or international tourists. These results were explained in paragraph 3.3.4 where a total number of 389 responses were used for this study.

The second question asked respondents to indicate the accommodation establishment they stayed in. Criteria for selection was based on the

accommodation categories specified by the TGCSA (TGCSA, 2012). Figure 1 illustrates the results.
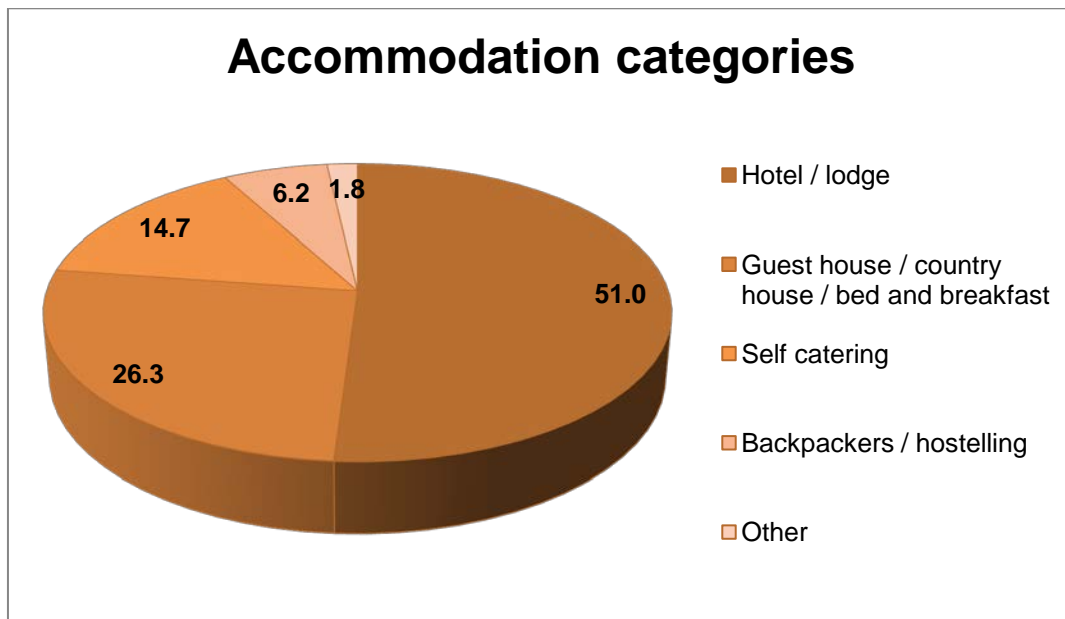
Figure 1. Representation of the different accommodation categories

Figure 1 indicates that hotels and lodges were the most represented (51%), followed by guesthouses, country houses and the bed & breakfast group (26.3%). The other group was presented by a student house, holiday resort or a combination of from the listed categories.

Respondents were asked to indicate in which town or city they have stayed during the time of the fieldwork. Each respondent had to write the name of the town or city. Figure 2 indicates all the towns and cities represented in this study.
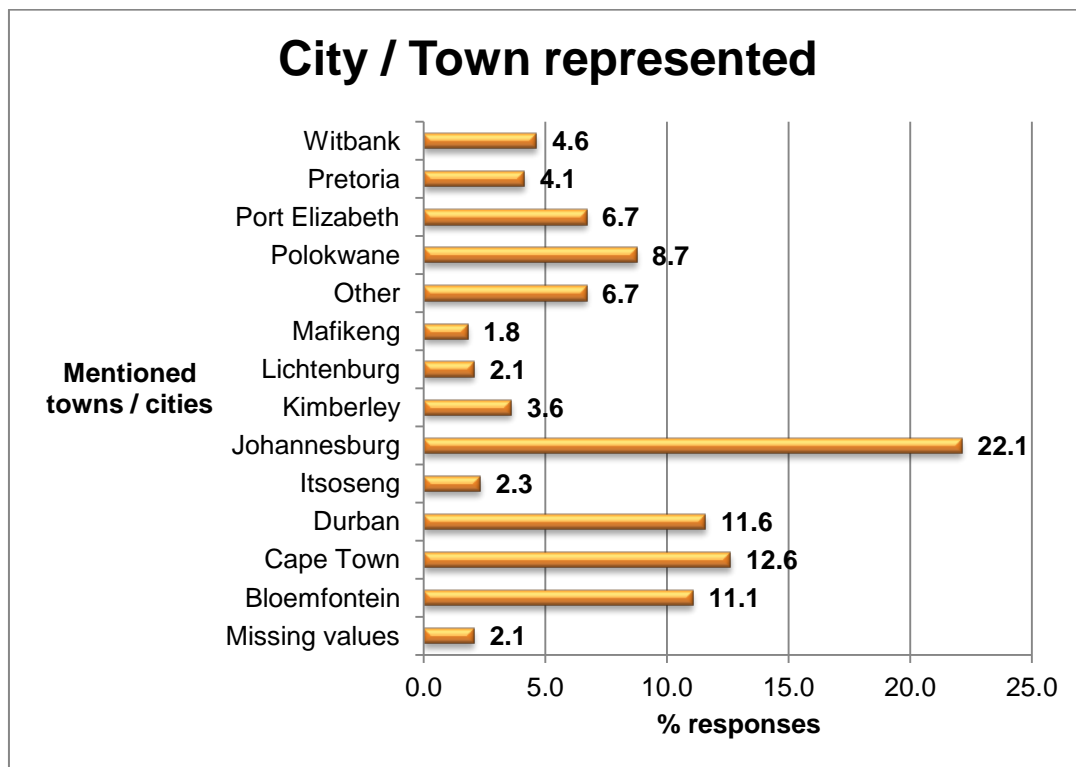
Figure 2. Town and cities represented

Johannesburg (22.1%) was the most represented city, followed by Cape Town (12.6%) in Figure 2. Mafikeng received the lowest presentation. The "other" grouping includes cities such as East London, Mmabatho, Nelspruit, Pietermaritzburg and Rustenburg. Most respondents still refer to eMalahleni as Witbank, and therefore the reference to Witbank.

Domestic tourists travel for different purposes, therefore it was necessary to investigate what the main purpose of travel is. Figure 3 illustrates the main purpose for travel as indicated by respondents in this study.

Travel purpose

Travel options

Category	Value
Other	1.8
Medical / Wellness	1.3
Education / training / business study	9.8
Sport	2.6
VFR	2.1
Life event such as a wedding / funeral	4.1
Shopping	2.8
Business	25.3
Holiday	50.1

% responses
(0.0 10.0 20.0 30.0 40.0 50.0 60.0)
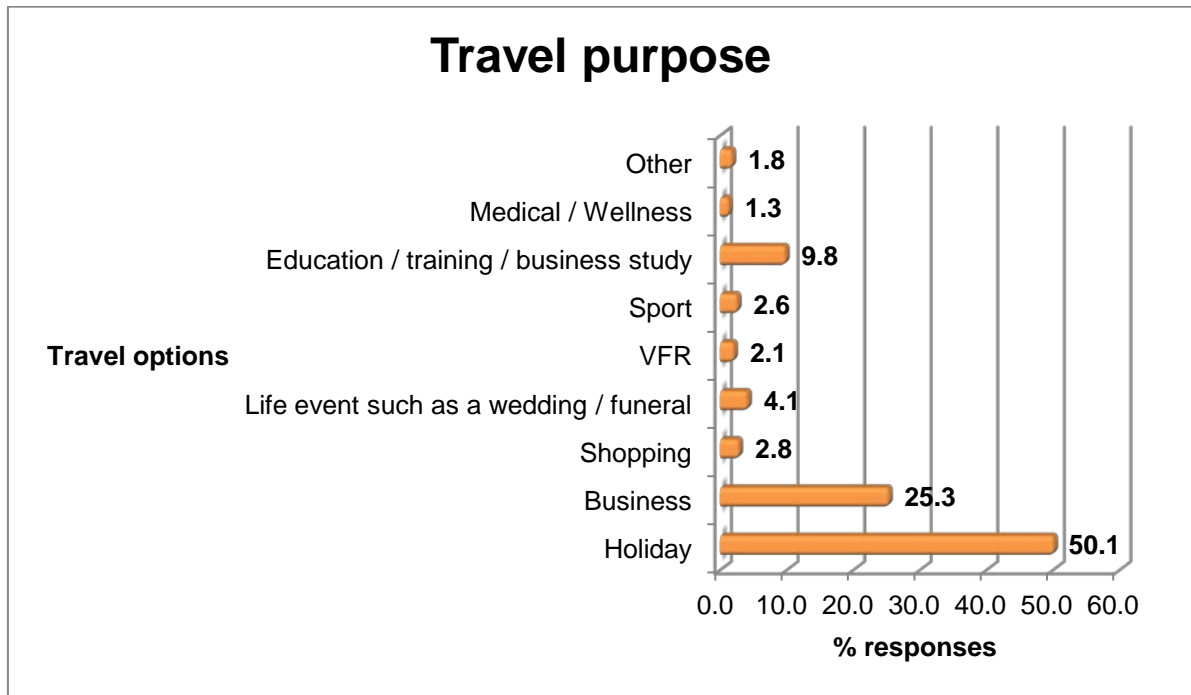
Figure 3. The main purpose of the guest's travel

Holiday (50.1%) is the most popular purpose for travel followed by travel for business purposes (25.3%). Medical / Wellness was the least representative reason for domestic travel. The "other" group was represented by the attending of festivals, camping, church conference or a combination of the listed options, as illustrated in Figure 3.

The last question in this section focused on how many nights the respondents stayed at a specific accommodation establishment. Figure 4 indicates the results.

Nights at accommodation establishment

Night categories

Category	%
Longer than a month	8.1
Longer than a week (One to four...	7.3
Four to Seven nights	18.5
Three nights	25.3
Two nights	31.3
One night	9.4

0.0 5.0 10.0 15.0 20.0 25.0 30.0 35.0

% responses
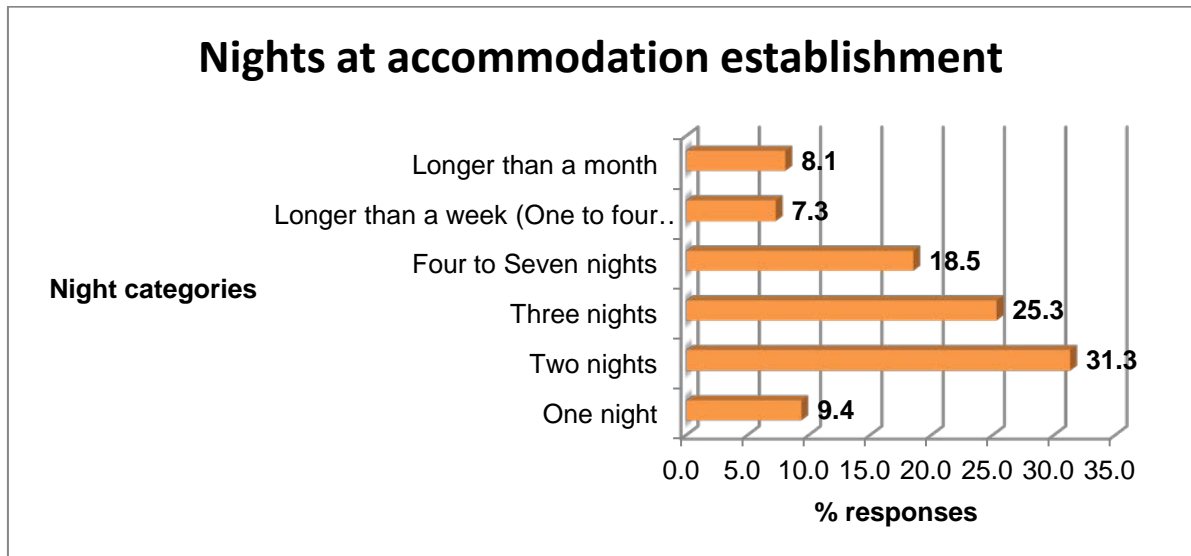
Figure 4. The number of nights stayed at the accommodation establishment

Figure 4 indicates that two nights (31.3%) was the most selected option followed by three nights (25.3%). Expectedly, the longer than a week option (7.3%) was the least selected option.

5.2   Market segmentation details

This section consisted of six questions. The first question required respondents to indicate their gender, which is indicated in Figure 5.

Gender

40.4

59.6
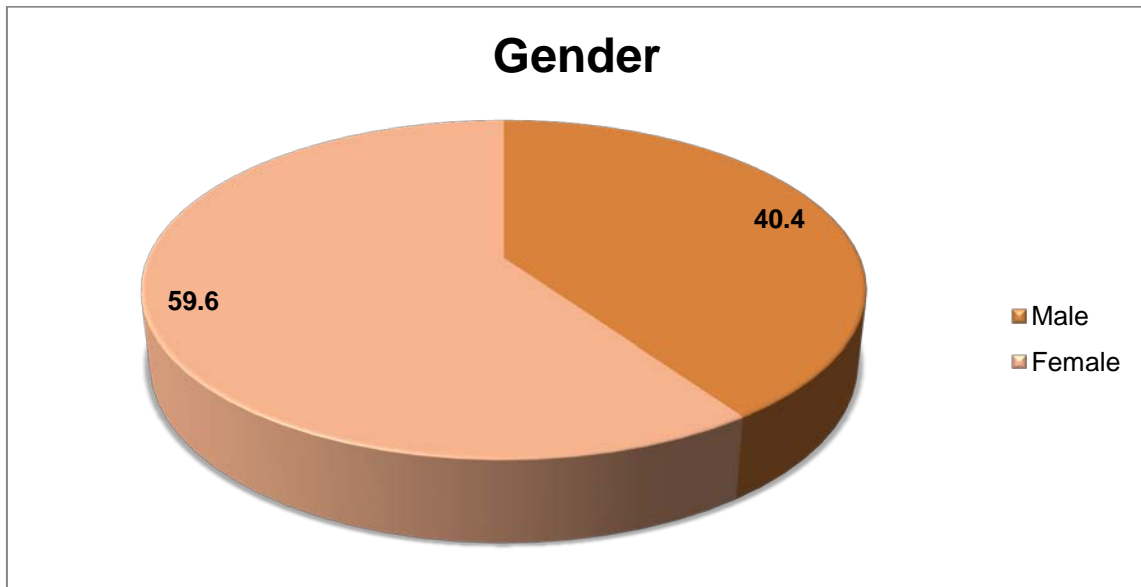
■ Male
■ Female

Figure 5. Gender representation

Females (59.6%) were the most represented in this study, followed by the Male group (40.4%), as illustrated in Figure 5.

The second question required respondents to indicate their age group. Figure 6 indicates the results.

Age

5.3

13.2

23.0

25.7

32.8

■ Younger than 25
■ 25-34
■ 35-44
■ 45-54
■ 55 or older
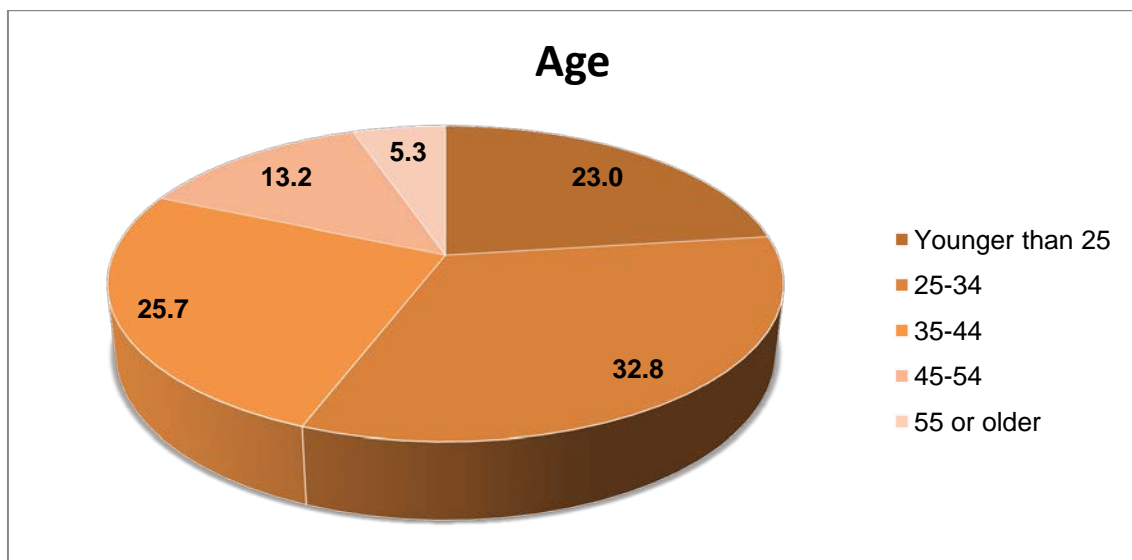
Figure 6. Age representation

According to the results in Figure 6, the younger than 25 years group (32.8%) was the most represented in this study, followed by the between 25 and 34 years group (25.7%). The least represented group was the group of 55 years and older (5.3%).

South Africa is home to many ethnic groups. The third question required respondents to indicate the ethnic group they belong to, to ensure a representative sample of all domestic tourists, as discussed in paragraph 3.3.1. Figure 7 illustrates the different ethnic group representation of the respondents in this study.
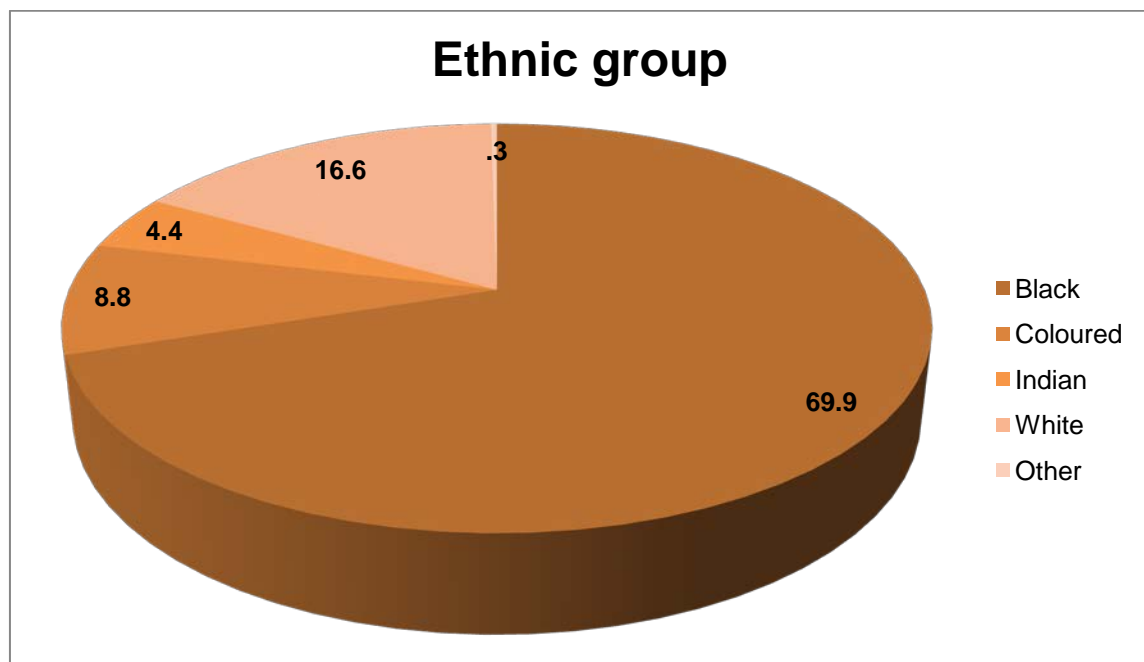
Figure 7. Ethnic group representation

As indicated in Figure 7, the Black or African group (69.9%) was represented the most, while the Indian group (4.4%) was the least represented. The other group represented by e.g. Pakistani respondents.

South Africa has eleven official languages (Botha, 2008). In question four, respondents were asked to indicate their home language. Figure 8 indicates the language representativeness of the respondents to this study.
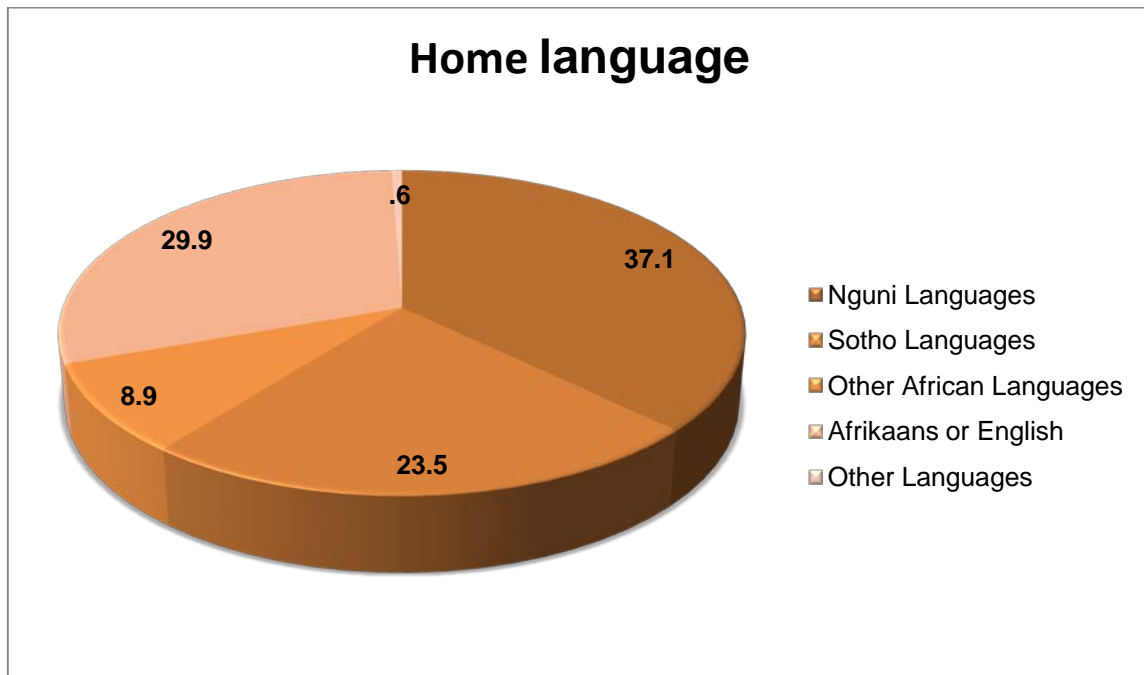
Home language

Figure 8. Home language of the respondents

Different language groups were clustered into specific language sub-groups, namely the *Nguni* language group consisting of i*siZulu*, *isiXhosa*, *isiNdebele* and *Siswati;* the *Sotho* language group consisting of *Sesotho*, *Sesotho Sa Leboa* and *Setswane*, while the other *African* languages includes *Xisonga*, *Tshivenda* and *Sepedi*. *Afrikaans* and *English* were grouped together, while the other language group represented *French* and *Hebrew*. Results in Figure 8 illustrated that the *Nguni* languages (37.1%) were the most represented language group, followed by the *Sotho* languages (23.5%).

In question five respondents were asked to indicate the province they visit most frequently. The results from this study are highlighted in Figure 9.

Province

Northern Cape — 1.0
Free State — 6.0
North West Province — 3.9
Limpopo — 7.5
Province categories Mpumalanga — 6.2
Eastern Cape — 7.3
Western Cape — 14.0
KwaZulu-Natal — 22.8
Gauteng — 31.3

% responses
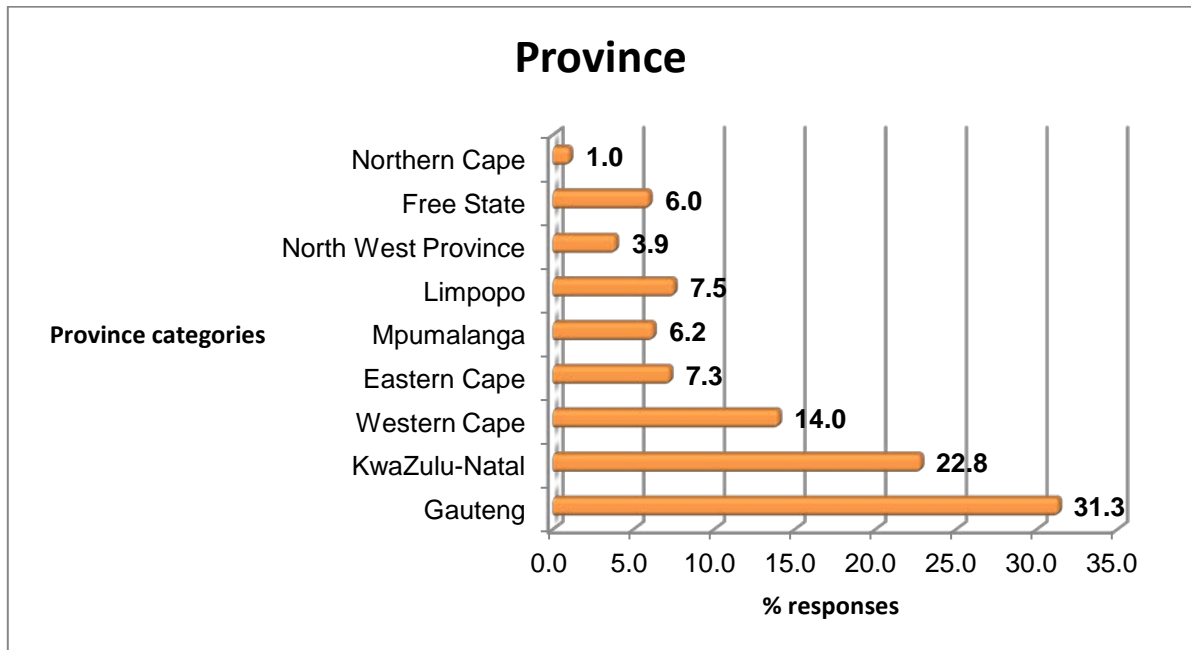
Figure 9. Provinces most frequently visited

Gauteng (31,3%) was indicated as the most visited province, followed by KwaZulu Natal (22.8%). The Northern Cape (1.0%) was not well represented as a visited province, based on the results in Figure 9.

The last question in this section required respondents to indicate how much money they are prepared to spend on accommodation per night. Figure 10 indicates the results from this study.

Money spend on accommodation

Category	%
R3001 and more	1.0
R2001 – R3000	3.6
R1501 – R2000	4.4
R1001 – R1500	12.4
R501 – R1000	22.8
R401 – R500	18.9
R301 – R400	14.5
R201– R300	11.1
R101 –R200	8.8
Less than R100	2.3
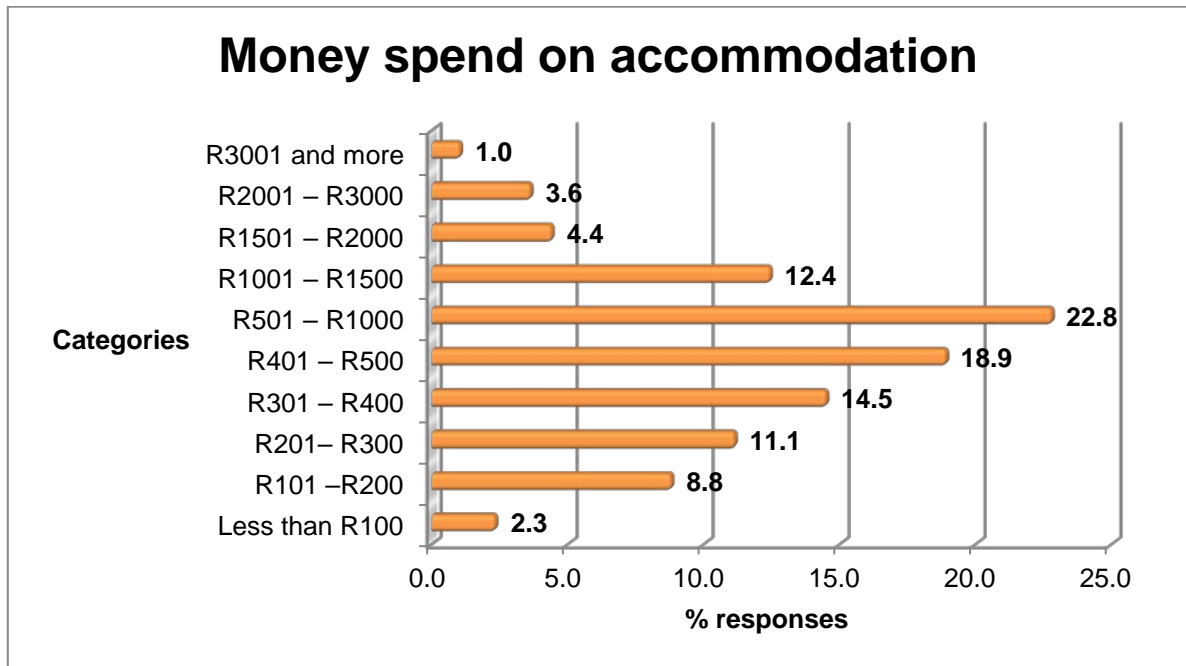
Figure 10. Money prepared to spend on accommodation per night

Figure 10 illustrates that respondents favour the price range between *R501 to R1000* (22.8%) as the most popular to spend on accommodation per night. The two extreme price groups, namely *R3001 and more* (1.0%) as well as *Less than R100* (2.3%) were the least popular.

5.3 Service excellence results

5.3.1 Descriptive statistics

Techniques used to describe the general characteristics or to display the obtained data is known as descriptive statistics (Zikmund et al., 2010). It is based on the three measures of central tendency, namely the mean, the median and the mode, as well as the dispersion, namely the kurtosis and skewness coefficients of the item scores (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Pallant, 2007).

Descriptive statistics aim to grow sufficient knowledge in explaining the composition of the data and to understanding the data levels for the chosen measurement, the distributions, and characteristics of location, spread and shape of the distributions. This technique is used to discover problems in the body of data such as miscoded values and missing data as well as to clean the data (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). The item, valid number, minimum score, maximum score, mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis are illustrated in the tables below. Reference is made to the descriptive statistics for the items prior to the visit, during the visit and after the stay. It is also important to note that the items are ranked according to the highest to the lowest mean[9] score. The reason for this ranking is to illustrate which items are regarded as the most important for each construct. Table 1 illustrates the descriptive statistics for the "expectation" items prior to the visit to the accommodation establishment.

Table 1: *Descriptive statistics on responses for the "expectation" items prior to the visit*

Items (With regard to…)	N	Mini-mum	Maxi-mum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
… how easy it was to obtain information about the facilities.	347	1	5	**4.42**	.758	-1.402	2.283
… the importance of real time feedback when you are making a reservation.	349	1	5	**4.41**	.796	-1.483	2.508
… the delivery of the right message the first time.	347	1	5	**4.40**	.759	-1.096	.751
…how up to date the directions to the accommodation facility are?	356	1	5	**4.38**	.852	-1.659	3.194
… the recent of the information about the accommodation establishment.	344	1	5	**4.34**	.825	-1.331	1.882
… the variety of accommodation products to choose from.	347	1	5	**4.33**	.800	-1.119	.934
…how likely the reviews influenced me to visit the accommodation establishment.	342	1	5	**4.32**	.910	-1.614	2.805
… what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment?	334	1	5	**4.31**	.841	-1.128	.909
… the variety of pricing options offered to you.	347	1	5	**4.23**	.875	-1.033	.746

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[9] The measurement instrument consists of a 5-point Likert scale and therefore must all mean scores be interpreted out of 5.

Items (With regard to…)	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
… how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards cultural diversity.	298	1	5	**4.06**	1.158	-1.226	.740
… non-sexist advertisements about the accommodation establishment.	287	1	5	**3.86**	1.474	-1.023	-.463
… whether you were asked to participate in a customer service survey.	343	1	5	**3.85**	1.333	-1.015	-.124
…any discrimination in the advertising campaigns.	278	1	5	**3.65**	1.635	-.734	-1.168

Table 1 depicts that the "easiness to obtain information" about the accommodation establishment has the highest mean score (4.42), while reference to "any discrimination in the adverting campaigns" has the lowest mean score (3.65). Based on these results it is proposed that the "easiness to obtain information" is the most important indicator in the measurement of a guest's "expectation" prior to visiting the accommodation establishment.

Table 2 illustrates the descriptive statistics for the "experience" items prior to the visit to the accommodation establishment.

Table 2: *Descriptive statistics on responses for the "experience" items prior to the visit*

Items (With regard to…)	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
… what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment?	267	2	5	**3.99**	.874	-.490	-.531
… how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards cultural diversity.	230	1	5	**3.99**	.982	-.782	.234
… how easy it was to obtain information about the facilities.	289	1	5	**3.96**	.948	-.738	.141
… the delivery of the right message the first time.	291	1	5	**3.95**	.899	-.645	.269
… the recent of the information about the accommodation establishment.	292	1	5	**3.95**	.940	-.740	.413
… the importance of real time feedback when you are making a reservation.	292	1	5	**3.93**	.943	-.705	.228
…how up to date the directions to the accommodation facility are?	297	1	5	**3.91**	.970	-.666	.092

Items (With regard to…)	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
… the variety of accommodation products to choose from.	284	1	5	**3.88**	.966	-.611	-.031
… the variety of pricing options offered to you.	287	1	5	**3.85**	.999	-.706	.188
…how likely the reviews influenced me to visit the accommodation establishment.	289	1	5	**3.81**	1.095	-.904	.293
… non-sexist advertisements about the accommodation establishment.	224	1	5	**3.62**	1.354	-.706	-.640
…any discrimination in the advertising campaigns.	215	1	5	**3.45**	1.543	-.547	-1.203
… whether you were asked to participate in a customer service survey.	281	1	5	**3.17**	1.475	-.312	-1.280

Results from Table 2 indicate that the concepts of "what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment" as well as "how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards cultural diversity" have the highest mean score (3.99), while the option on "whether you were asked to participate in a customer service survey" has the lowest mean score (3.17). It is interesting to note that the ranking of the "experience" items differ from the "expectation" items.

Table 3 illustrates the descriptive statistics on the "expectation" responses to the items during the respondent's stay at the accommodation establishment.

Table 3: *Descriptive statistics on the responses for the "expectation" items during the visit*

Items (With regard to..)	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
… the cleanliness of the facilities.	354	1	5	**4.64**	.710	-2.221	5.293
… how quiet sleeping conditions are at the establishment.	353	2	5	**4.62**	.677	-1.731	2.310
… whether the facilities offer good bedding.	351	1	5	**4.61**	.716	-2.080	4.725

Items (With regard to..)	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
… how willing staff are to help you?[10]	355	1	5	4.58	.753	-2.164	5.496
… how courteous the staff are towards you?	351	2	5	4.58	.680	-1.483	1.429
… the response time in resolving your complaints.	345	1	5	4.55	.702	-1.603	2.580
… the provision of an overall value for money experience.	342	1	5	4.54	.740	-1.788	3.469
… how safe the location of the facility is.	338	2	5	4.54	.789	-1.733	2.211
… how safe you feel during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	351	1	5	4.52	.781	-1.825	3.547
… the fairness of the price asked in comparison to what you have received.	348	1	5	4.47	.775	-1.396	1.504
… the affordability of the establishment.	347	2	5	4.48	.754	-1.322	1.029
… how sufficient the parking facilities are.	328	1	5	4.47	.845	-1.789	3.366
… how convenient the distance between the different facilities are.	356	1	5	4.36	.898	-1.577	2.428
… the provision of special facilities for people with all types of disabilities.	334	1	5	4.38	.908	-1.551	2.108
…whether the staff treats every guest equally and with respect.	324	1	5	4.52	.792	-1.829	3.255
…the promptness of the staff in responding to your requests.	344	1	5	4.52	.740	-1.579	2.279
… how well trained the front-line staff are in using technology (e.g. computer systems) to do their work?	338	1	5	4.51	.827	-1.903	3.551
… how safe your belongings are in your room during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	345	1	5	4.50	.832	-1.840	3.337
… a service culture amongst the staff.	327	2	5	4.50	.755	-1.469	1.531
…how competent staff appear in the work they do[11].	345	1	5	4.49	.793	-1.648	2.382

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[10] This question was asked twice in the questionnaire for internal control purposes, but only one item is reported as the mean scores were close.
[11] This question was also asked twice in the questionnaire for internal control purposes, but only one item is reported as the mean scores were close.

Items (With regard to..)	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
…how much can you trust the staff working at the accommodation establishment?	338	1	5	**4.45**	.868	-1.951	4.144
… the customisation of services for you.	333	1	5	**4.44**	.764	-1.248	1.151
… the visibility of the grading plaque at the accommodation establishment.	325	1	5	**4.43**	.874	-1.730	2.988
… being a graded accommodation establishment, through the South African Tourism Grading Council.	329	1	5	**4.41**	.858	-1.539	2.261
… the offering of services as required by the grading status of the establishment.	331	1	5	**4.39**	.815	-1.275	1.141
… the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	344	1	5	**4.39**	.822	-1.463	2.229
… the recognition given to staff when they provide excellent service (e.g. the employee of the month).	278	1	5	**4.39**	.969	-1.924	3.615

"The cleanliness of the facilities" has the highest mean score for the expectation items during the guest's visit to the accommodation establishment (4.64). Three expectation items have the lowest mean score, namely "the offering of services as required by the grading status of the establishment", "the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment" as well as "the recognition given to staff when they provide excellent service (e.g. the employee of the month)" (4.39). From these results in Table 3 it is evident that "the cleanliness of the facilities" is the most important expectation item during a guest's visit.

Table 4 illustrates the descriptive statistics on the "experience" responses to the items after the respondent's stay at the accommodation establishment.

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Table 4: *Descriptive statistics on the responses for the "experience" items during the visit*

Items (With regard to..)	N	Mini-mum	Maxi-mum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skew-ness	Kurtosis
… the cleanliness of the facilities.	302	1	5	**4.21**	.875	-1.055	1.067
… how safe you feel during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	297	1	5	**4.18**	.864	-.821	.226
… how safe your belongings are in your room during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	290	1	5	**4.16**	.915	-1.022	.925
… how safe the location of the facility is.	285	2	5	**4.15**	.847	-.601	-.574
… how quiet sleeping conditions are at the establishment.	294	1	5	**4.14**	.925	-.900	.307
… how courteous the staff are towards you?	297	2	5	**4.13**	.795	-.558	-.342
… how willing staff are to help you?	303	1	5	**4.11**	.825	-.847	.945
… whether the facilities offer good bedding.	294	1	5	**4.11**	.985	-1.147	1.087
… how well trained the front-line staff are in using technology (e.g. computer systems) to do their work?	277	1	5	**4.10**	.879	-.876	.796
… the offering of services as required by the grading status of the establishment.	270	1	5	**4.07**	1.036	-1.242	1.347
… being a graded accommodation establishment, through the South African Tourism Grading Council.	269	1	5	**4.06**	1.143	-1.258	.936
… the visibility of the grading plaque at the accommodation establishment.	266	1	5	**4.06**	1.106	-1.276	1.117
…whether the staff treats every guest equally and with respect.	263	1	5	**4.05**	.940	-.842	.379
…how competent staff appear in the work they do.	293	1	5	**4.05**	.822	-.610	.077
… the provision of an overall value for money experience.	296	1	5	**4.04**	.829	-.789	.878
… how sufficient the parking facilities are.	268	1	5	**4.03**	.949	-.993	1.008
… the affordability of the establishment.	294	1	5	**4.01**	.882	-.597	-.232
…how much can you trust the staff working at the accommodation establishment?	291	1	5	**4.00**	.904	-.811	.672

Items (With regard to..)	N	Mini-mum	Maxi-mum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skew-ness	Kurtosis
… a service culture amongst the staff.	280	1	5	**4.00**	.868	-.796	.652
… how convenient the distance between the different facilities are.	298	1	5	**3.99**	.973	-.974	.817
… the recognition given to staff when they provide excellent service (e.g. the employee of the month).	195	1	5	**3.99**	1.084	-1.132	.882
… the fairness of the price asked in comparison to what you have received.	293	1	5	**3.97**	.868	-.834	1.028
…the promptness of the staff in responding to your requests.	296	1	5	**3.94**	.921	-.830	.718
… the response time in resolving your complaints.	282	1	5	**3.88**	.949	-.695	.205
… the customisation of services for you.	285	1	5	**3.84**	.972	-.736	.212
… the provision of special facilities for people with all types of disabilities.	264	1	5	**3.83**	1.111	-.873	.144
… the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	299	1	5	**3.82**	1.000	-.704	.055

Results from Table 4 illustrates that "the cleanliness of the facilities" (4.21) remain the highest mean score, while "the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment" (3.82) has the lowest mean score. The ranking of the "expectation" and "experience" items during the visit at the accommodation establishment also differ from each other.

Table 5 illustrates the descriptive statistics on the responses to the "expectation" items after the respondent's stay at the accommodation establishment.

Table 5: *Descriptive statistics on the responses for the "expectation" items after the stay*

Items (With regard to…)	N	Mini-mum	Maxi-mum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skew-ness	Kurtosis
… how likely is it that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it.	278	1	5	**4.08**	1.220	-1.390	1.015
…the option for guests to assess service delivery via a web-based self-assessment tool.	248	1	5	**3.94**	1.227	-1.116	.368
… the feedback systems in place to reward or discipline employees	244	1	5	**3.88**	1.243	-1.094	.287
… the tailoring of feedback systems through the integration of information technology or social media.	246	1	5	**3.88**	1.262	-1.057	.165

Results in Table 5 depict that the likelihood "that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it" has the highest mean score (4.08), while "the tailoring of feedback systems through the integration of information technology or social media" (3.88) has the lowest mean score. Therefore is the importance of loyalty programmes highlighted as an important expectation item after a guest has stayed at an accommodation establishment.

Table 6 illustrates the descriptive statistics on the responses to the "experience" items after the respondent's stay at the accommodation establishment.

Table 6: *Descriptive statistics on responses to the "experience" items after the stay*

Items (With regard to…)	N	Mini-mum	Maxi-mum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skew-ness	Kurtosis
… how likely is it that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it.	225	1	5	**3.86**	1.220	-1.034	.262
…the option for guests to assess service delivery via a web-based self-assessment tool.	192	1	5	**3.56**	1.285	-.682	-.490

Items (With regard to…)	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
… the tailoring of feedback systems through the integration of information technology or social media.	183	1	5	**3.55**	1.239	-.695	-.358
… the feedback systems in place to reward or discipline employees	177	1	5	**3.50**	1.271	-.746	-.370

The likelihood "that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it" remains to has the highest mean score (3.86), while "the feedback systems in place to reward or discipline employees" has the lowest mean score (3.50). From these results it is evident that loyalty programmes are an important item in "expectation" and "experience" after the guest has visited the accommodation establishment.

5.4 Importance of service excellence

Frequencies on all the data from Section C of the questionnaire were calculated. Although a 5-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire, responses were grouped into three groups of "high", "neutral" and "low" for easier observation and interpretation. Responses "5" and "4" were grouped together under "high", response "3" became "neutral", while "low" is represented by responses "1" and "2". All the "level of importance" responses are illustrated in Figures 11 to 18 below.

Annual National Tourist Service Index

5.1
15.4
79.5

- Low
- Neutral
- High
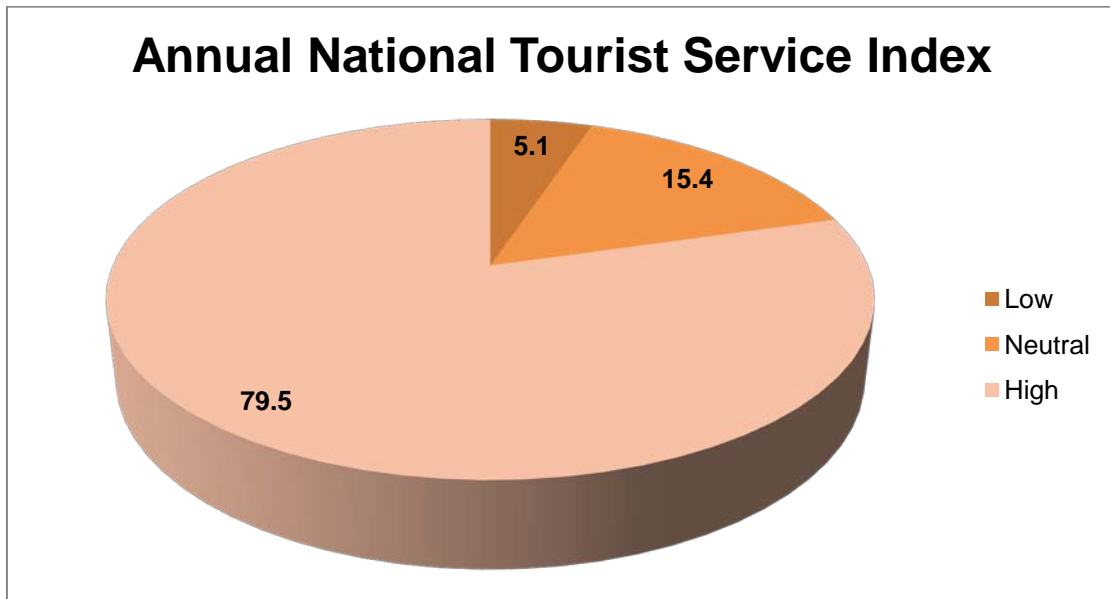
Figure 11. Importance to introduce an "Annual National Tourist Service Index"

Figure 11 indicates that most (79.5%) respondents think the introduction of an "Annual National Tourist Service Index" is important.

Use of up-to-date technology

4.2
9.6
86.1

- Low
- Neutral
- High
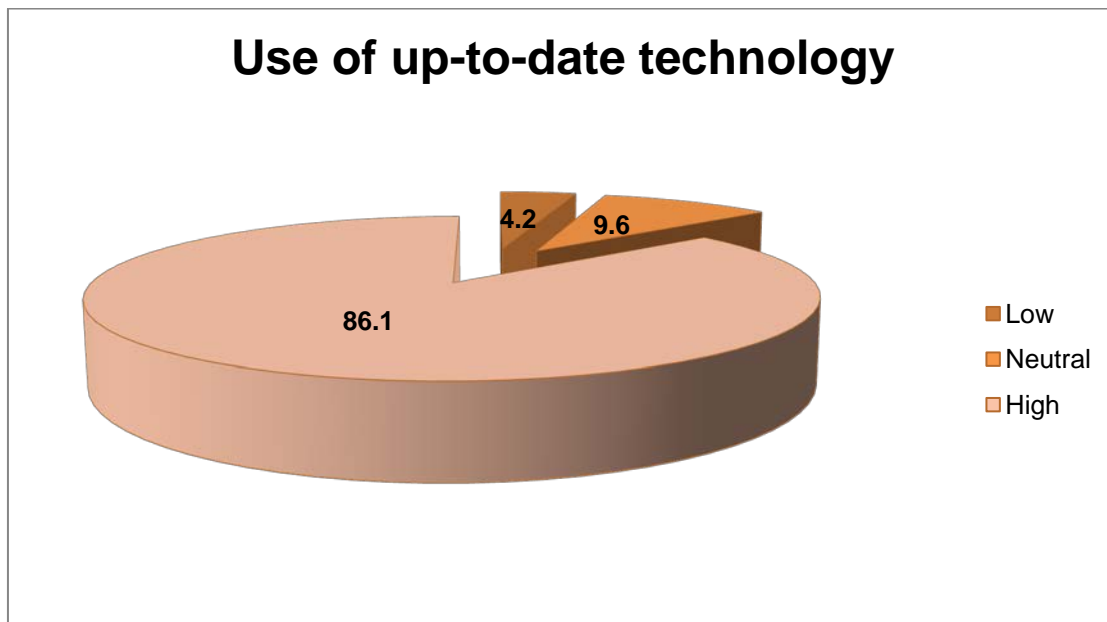
Figure 12. The use of up-to-date technology

The use of up-to-date technology received a high importance score of 86.1% (Figure 12), indicating that most respondents feel this is important.

Performance appraisal system

4.0	Low
13.4	Neutral
82.6	High
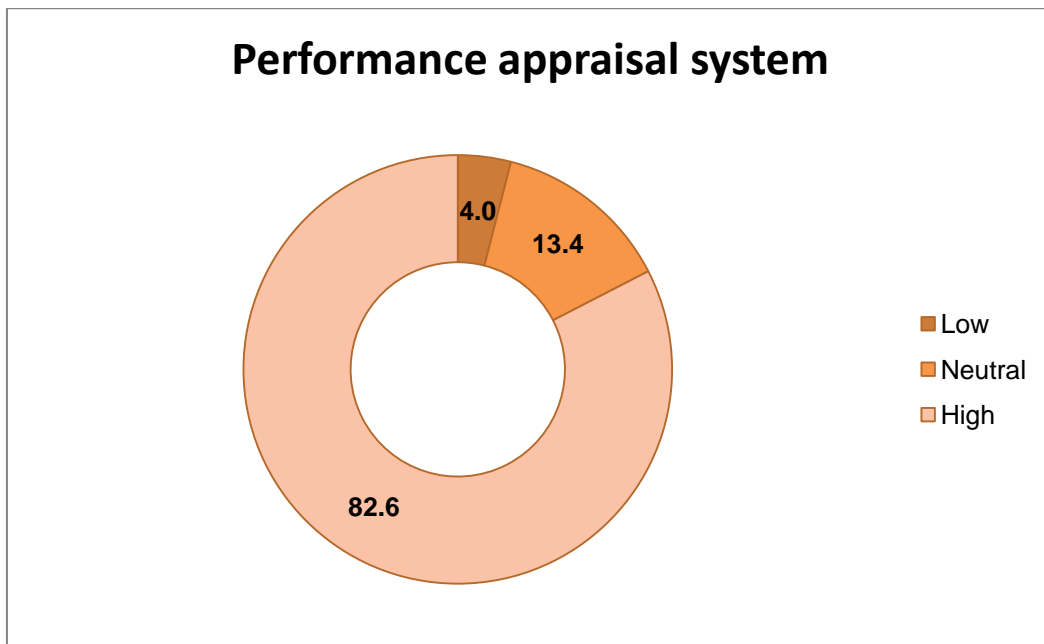
Figure 13. Importance of an effective performance appraisal system

The majority of the responders indicated a high importance (82.6%) for the use of an effective performance appraisal system as illustrated in Figure 13.

"Excellence in SERVICE starts with ME"

3.2	Low
12.2	Neutral
84.6	High
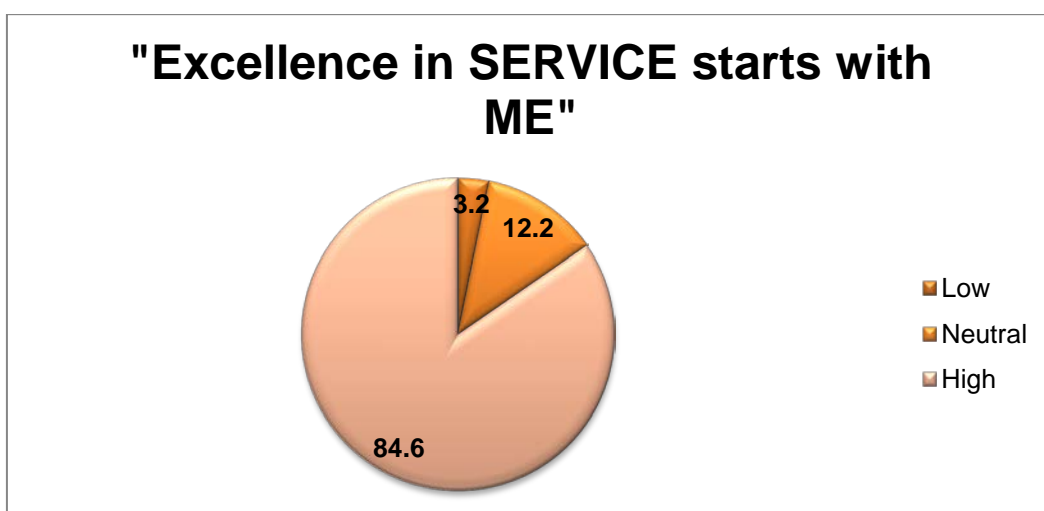
Figure 14. Importance of an "Excellence in SERVICE starts with ME" initiative

Respondents indicated support (84.6%) for an initiative entitled "Excellence in SERVICE starts with ME" (Figure 14).

"National Service Excellence Requirements"

Low
Neutral
High

3.5
11.1
85.4
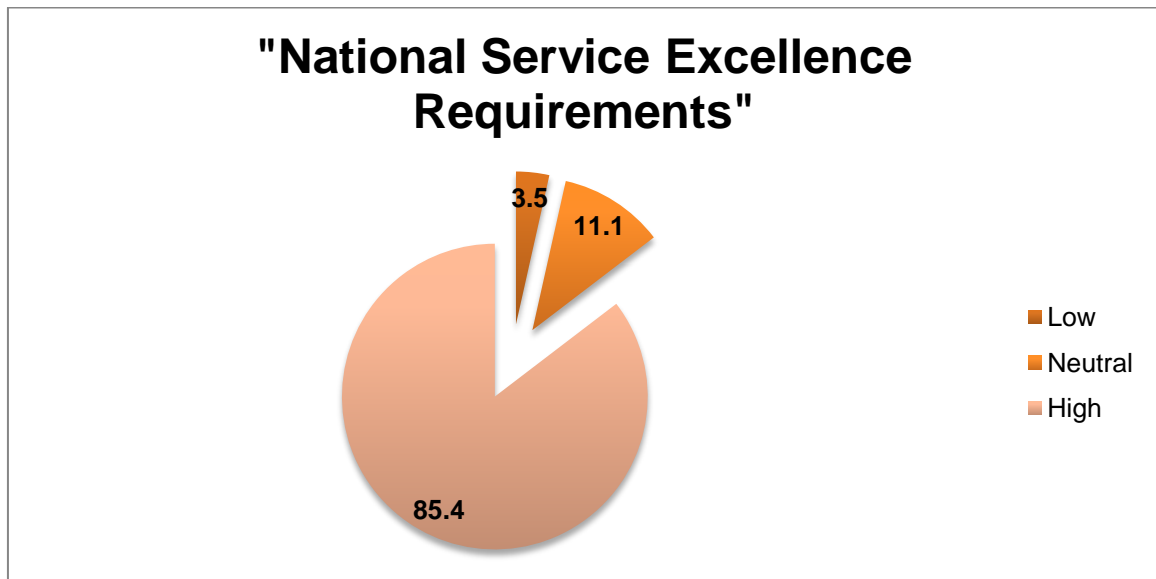
Figure 15. Importance of the establishment of the "National Service Excellence Requirements"

A high importance (85.4%), indicated in Figure 15, for the establishment of the "National Service Excellence Requirements".

Figure 16. The importance of a service excellence brand

Most respondents indicated a high importance (83.8%) for the establishment of a service excellence brand (Figure 16).
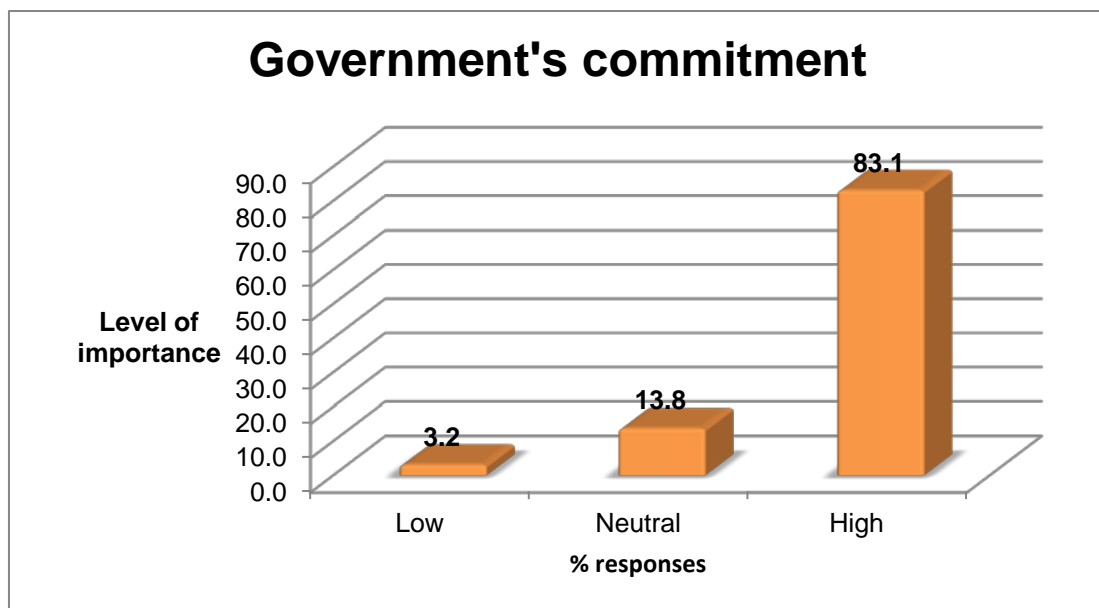
Figure 17. The importance of government's commitment to instil a service culture amongst staff

Figure 17 indicates that most respondents scored a high importance (83.1%) for government to steer programmes to instil a service culture amongst staff.

National Tourism Awareness campaign

2.6 11.7

85.7

- Low
- Neutral
- High
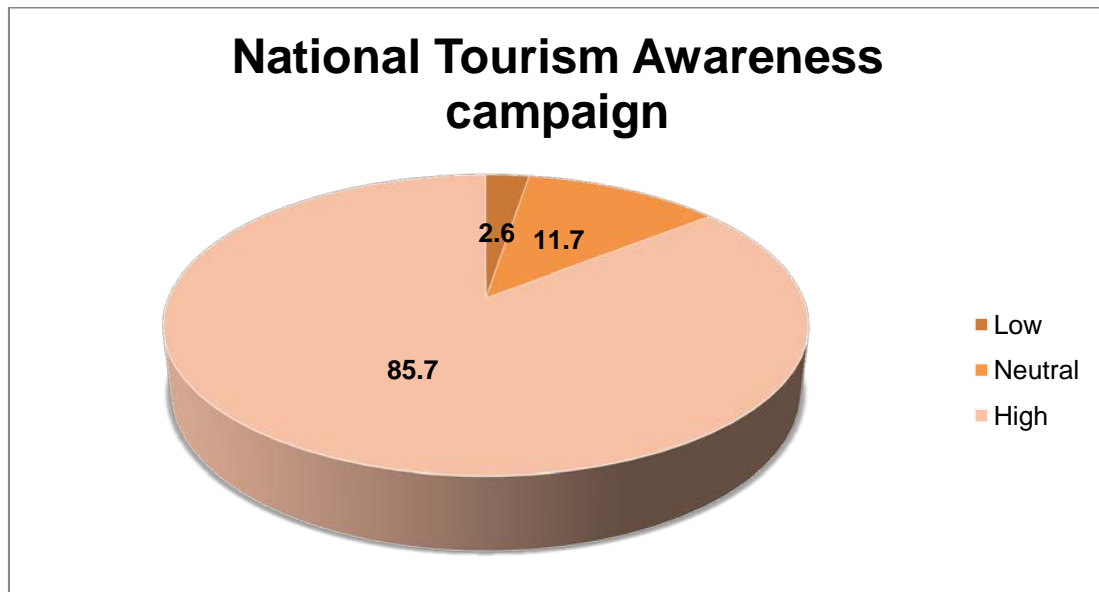
Figure 18. The importance of the implementation of a "National Tourism Awareness" campaign

Lastly, Figure 18 illustrates that most respondents gave a high rating to the importance of the implementation of a "National Tourism Awareness campaign".

5.5   Results from the cross tabulations

It was necessary to explore the relationship between "expectation" and "experience" of service satisfaction to determine any significant relationship between the two variables. "Expectation" and "experience" of service satisfaction were treated as categorical variables as each variable had two or more categories.   A cross tabulation analyses was performed on all the cases measuring "expectation" and "experience" of service satisfaction. This is a non-parametric test which compared the observed frequencies of each case that occur in each of the categories. The p-value must be .05 or smaller to be significant, meaning that one variable is not

significant different from the other variable. All the p-values were smaller than .05, indicating that the "expectation of service satisfaction" variable is not significantly different from the "experience of service satisfaction" variable (Pallant, 2007). It was then decided to conduct a factor analyses to explore the relationships between the "expectation of service satisfaction" and "experience of service satisfaction" variables in more detail.

5.6   Results from the factor analyses

A factor analyses is a data reduction technique to make the variables more manageable prior to multiple regression or multivariate analyses of variance (Pallant, 2007). For the purpose of this study, only the key findings form the data analyses are discussed without a detailed explanation of the methodology. The purpose of this analysis was also to establish the reliability of the different factors. Table 7 below summarise the key results from the factor analyses on the "expectation of service satisfaction" instrument.

Table 7: *Bartlett's test of sphericity, KMO MSA and initial eigenvalues for the expectation factors*

Value Chain	New Factors	Bartlett's test of sphericity			KMO MSA[12]	Initial Eigenvalues	Cronbach alpha coefficient (α)
		x^2	df	ρ		Cumulative%	
Prior to visit (1st order FA)	Message and information	1551.368	66	≤ .001	.892	69.717	.911
	Market sensitivity						.843
During visit (1st order FA)	Product offering and quality assurance	6965.653	406	≤ .001	.947	74.931	.965
	Service excellence						.945
	Grading and accessibility						.919
During visit (2nd order FA)		476.341	3	≤ .001	.701	76.724	.833
After stay (1st order FA)	Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement	827.885	6	≤ .001	.851	83.722	.935

All perspectives are significant at the ρ < .0001 level
X^2, chi-square; *df*, degrees of freedom; *ρ*, probability value

The most important conclusion form this table is that the results were significant (ρ ≤ .001) and allowed for further analyses. It is also important to note for the *During visit* factor in the value chain, a second order factor analyses was conducted, which resulted into one factor, namely *Expectation during visit*. Refer to Appendix J for an outline of the new proposed expectation measurement instrument and the items loaded on each factor.

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[12] **K**aiser-**M**eyer-**O**lkin **M**easure of **S**ampling **A**dequacy (KMO MSA)

Table 8 below summarise the main results from the factor analyses on the "experience" instrument.

Table 8: *Bartlett's test of sphericity, KMO MSA and initial eigenvalues for the experience factors*

Value Chain	New Factors	Bartlett's test of sphericity			KMO MSA	Initial Eigenvalues	Cronbach alpha coefficient (α)
		x^2	df	ρ		Cumulative%	
Prior to visit (1st order FA)	Message and information	996.741	66	≤ .001	851	58.741	.906
	Market sensitivity						.789
	Quality assurance						.932
During visit (1st order FA)	Product offering						.857
	Service excellence	3015.007	406	≤ .001	.875	69.449	.879
	Product and quality assurance						.874
During visit (2nd order FA)		601.381	6	≤ .001	.804	71.550	.862
After stay (1st order FA)	Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement	561.709	6	≤ .001	.820	78.135	.904

All perspectives are significant at the ρ < .0001 level
X^2, chi-square; df, degrees of freedom; ρ, probability value

The most important conclusion form this table is that the results were significant (ρ ≤ .001) and allowed for further analyses. It is also important to note for the *During visit* factor in the value chain, a second order factor analyses was conducted, which resulted into one factor, namely *Experience during visit*. Refer to Appendix K for an

outline of the new proposed experience measurement instrument and the how the items loaded on each factor.

5.7   Test for normality

Following the factor analyses a test for normality was conducted on all the new factors.   A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted on all the new factors to determine the level of significance for the differences from a normal distribution (Hair et al., 2010).   Table 9 summarises the results from the test of normality conducted on all the new factors for *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and *Experience of Service Satisfaction*.

Table 9: *Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normal distribution for the new factors*

Factor	N	Descriptives						Kolmogo-rov-Smirnov[a]
		M	5% trimmed M	Mdn	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	
Expectation								
Prior to the visit – Message and information	389	4.087	4.178	4.222	.928	-1.304	1.665	≤ .001
Prior to the visit – Market sensitivity	389	3.550	3.626	4.000	1.440	-.539	-1.087	≤ .001
During visit	389	4.130	4.244	4.396	.9690	-1.660	3.015	≤ .001
After stay	389	3.482	3.550	4.000	1.426	-.613	-.955	≤ .001
Experience								
Prior to the visit – Message and information	389	3.605	3.6819	3.889	1.058	-1.036	.760	≤ .001

	N	M	Mdn		SD			
Prior to the visit – Market sensitivity	389	3.402	3.4590	3.333	1.270	-.353	-.899	≤ .001
During visit	389	3.165	3.2228	3.637	1.452	-.959	-.370	≤ .001
After stay	389	2.975	3.0080	3.000	1.427	-.272	-1.122	≤ .001

a. = Test distribution is < .05
b. = Calculated from the data
N, Sample size; *M*, Mean; *Mdn*, Median; *SD*, Standard deviation

Table 9 indicates that the *ρ*-value was smaller than .05, meaning that the data from the factors were not normally distributed. However, the sample size was bigger than 200 (*N* = 389) and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is sensitive to larger samples (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Furthermore, the test for normality is not critical in larger samples. Based on these results the researcher could continue with the data analyses.

5.8   The creation of an interaction term

Results from Tables 8 and 9 indicates two factors related "prior to the visit", namely "Prior to the visit – Message and information" and "Prior to the visit – Market sensitivity". Both of these factors are predators (or independent variables) of the proposed *Expectation of service satisfaction* as well as *Experience of service satisfaction* measurements. It is also expected that the effect of the one factor, i.e. "Prior to the visit – Message and information" depends on the other factor, i.e. "Prior to the visit – Market sensitivity". Therefore was a new "Prior to the visit" interaction term created for each measurement, namely *Expectation Prior to the visit* and *Experience prior to the visit*. These new interaction terms were created to refine each construct.

5.9   Inter correlation of the new factors

Results on the new factors for the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and *Experience of Service Satisfaction* scales are discussed.   It is necessary to investigate the inter correlations between the factors to establish the correlations between them.   After considering the factors for the interpretation of the inter correlation matrix, the results can be interpreted based on the suggestion by Cohen (1988, pp. 79 - 81), namely large effect (r = .50 - 1.00), medium effect (r = .30 - .49), and small effect (r = .10 - .29).   The inter correlations for the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* are indicated by the correlation matrix[13] in Table 10.

Table 10: *Correlation matrix of the four identified factors for the Expectation of Service Satisfaction (N = 369)*

Factors		Prior to the visit	During visit	After stay
Prior to the visit	Pearson Correlation	1	.569[**]	.419[**]
During visit	Pearson Correlation	.569[**]	1	.438[**]
After stay	Pearson Correlation	.419[**]	.438[**]	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

There is a large effect between the *Prior to visit* and *During visit factors*, while there is a medium effect between the rest of the factors in the correlation matrix (Table 10).   Furthermore the direction of all the correlations is positive.   The closer the correlation is to 1, the more perfect the correlation, making it possible to establish the value of one variable by knowing the value of the other variable (Hair *et al.,* 2010; Pallant, 2007).

The inter correlations for the *Experience of Service Satisfaction* are indicated by the correlation matrix in Table 11.

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[13] The intercorrelation amongst all variables is indicted in table format (Hair *et al.,* 2010).

Table 11: *Correlation matrix of the four identified factors for the Expectation of service satisfaction (N = 389)*

Factors		Prior to the visit	During visit	After stay
Prior to the visit	Pearson Correlation	**1**	.463[**]	.404[**]
During visit	Pearson Correlation	.463[**]	**1**	.375[**]
After stay	Pearson Correlation	.404[**]	.375[**]	**1**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

After considering the factors for the interpretation of the inter correlation matrix, the results illustrated in Table 8 show a medium effect between all the factors. There was a Furthermore the direction of all the correlations is positive. The closer the correlation is to 1, the more perfect the correlation, making it possible to establish the value of one variable by knowing the value of the other variable (Hair *et al.,* 2010; Pallant, 2007).

5.10   One-way ANOVA

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to identify if the new factors in the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* or *Experience of Service Satisfaction* can be used to test for the service satisfaction for the different categories of accommodation establishments. The *F* ratio is the test statistics for ANOVA which represents the variance between the groups, divided by the variance within the group and should be greater than 1. It determines the ratio size necessary to reject the null hypothesis (population means are equal) for the sample size and the level of statistical significance (Cooper & Schindler, 2011; Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2007).

A one-way ANOVA tests were conducted to explore the impact of the different accommodation categories on the new *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and the new *Experience of Service Satisfaction* factors. Subjects were divided into five

groups namely (1) hotel / lodge, (2) guesthouse / country house / bed and breakfast, (3) self-catering, (4) backpackers / hostelling, and (5) other.

Looking at *Expectation of Service Satisfaction,* there was a statistically significant difference at the $\rho < .05$ level for the *Prior to the visit* group: $F(4, 362) = 5.747$, $\rho \le .007$; *During visit*: $F(4, 360) = 4.580$, $\rho = .001$ as well as for the *After stay*: $F(4, 282) = 3.894$, $\rho = .004$. Thus these results indicate that there is a significant difference in the guest's expectations related to service satisfaction for accommodation establishments.

On the other hand, in *Experience of Service Satisfaction,* all the ρ-values for the new factors were bigger than .05, indicating that there is not a significant difference in the guest's experiences related to service satisfaction for accommodation establishments.

Section 6: Conclusion

6.1   Conclusion

Service excellence research was conducted in an attempt to identify the most important accommodation service levels indicators for domestic tourists. These indicators were investigated during three phases of the value chain. Each of these phases were represented by service excellence pillars (marketing, products, delivery of services as well as monitoring and evaluation) as proposed by the TSEI, attempting to identify the factors that influence service excellence in the domestic tourism market. Guided by the TSEI pillars, literature was reviewed to identify key attributes that influence domestic service satisfaction in the accommodation sector.

The results indicate that "easiness to obtain information" about the accommodation establishment" has the highest mean score (4.42) under the expectation items prior

to the guest's visit. "The cleanliness of the facilities" has the highest mean score for the expectation items during the guest's visit to the accommodation establishment (4.64), while the likelihood "that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it" has the highest mean score (4.08) for the expectation items after the guest's stay.

Two items are identified with the highest mean score under the experience items prior to the guest's visit, namely "what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment" as well as "how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards cultural diversity" (3.99). The "cleanliness of the facilities" (4.21) remains the highest mean score for the items scores during the guest's stay, but this time for experience. The likelihood "that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it" also has the highest mean score (3.86) for items measuring after the guest's stay.

After a cross tabulation analyses, there was no significant difference between the items measuring "expectation of service satisfaction" and "experience of service satisfaction". In conducting the factor analyses, it was found that the four service excellence pillars can be applied in the measurement of service satisfaction. Two separate measurements, namely *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and *Experience of Service Satisfaction* were statistically validated. A one-way ANOVA test on the new factors confirmed that the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* can be applied in the measurement of service satisfaction for the different type of accommodation establishments, but not the *Experience of Service Satisfaction*.

This study confirms validity in applying the four pillars in measuring service satisfaction. An additional contribution is made by dividing the marketing pillar into two factors, namely *message and information* as well as *market sensitivity*, can cab be applied as an interaction factor. Employees are vital in the delivering of excellent services and it is essential to train and empower them to guarantee tourist satisfaction. Factors identified in this study can assist managers in the identification

of critical skills required by employees to deliver excellent service and the development of a service culture. The outcomes of this study can inform the Tourism Human Resource Development strategy as to where education is needed and assist in the formulation in labour and training policies on service excellence.

The assessment of service excellence was done amongst South African domestic tourists. Results are therefore tailored for the South African domestic market's service needs and wants, but need to be applied with caution. The importance of a few service excellence campaigns and initiatives were also investigated, e.g. "Excellent service Start with ME". Respondents indicated that these initiatives were important.

6.2   Recommendations

In designing the questionnaire two items were repeated, namely *the willingness of staff to help* as well as *how competent the staff appear in the work they do.* These items were repeated to control if respondents read the statements. However one of the items, namely *the willingness of staff to help,* loaded on different factors during the first order factor analyses. It is suggested to explore this item in more detail.

Two service satisfaction measurements are proposed, namely one to measure the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and another to measure the *Experience the Service Satisfaction* of domestic tourists. These measurements with the respective factors and items are outlined in Appendix K and L. It is recommended to include only three value chain phases, namely *prior to the visit*, *during the visit* and *after the stay*, in the assessment of the service satisfaction amongst domestic tourists. Conducting separate tests of these measurements in the different accommodation categories is also recommended for further refinement. It is also suggested to investigate the modelling of these *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* or *Experience of Service Satisfaction* measurements.

Although only one item was extracted from all the items in the measurement instrument for both the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and *Experience of Service Satisfaction*, more refinement of the items is proposed to make the measurement instrument shorter. The most common complain form respondents were that the questionnaire was too long, possibly leading to questionnaire fatigue and missing values. A detailed assessment on the inclusion of all the items in future studies is suggested.

6.3   Directions for future research

The following suggestions are made to guide future studies:

- Factors such as *information management: confidentiality and privacy*, *environmentally friendly products* and *professional interaction* were not included in this study and it is suggested to include these factors.

- The *Experience of Service Satisfaction* measurement could not be applied in the measurement of service satisfaction for the different accommodation categories. It is suggested to investigate the items and factors in more detail in future studies.

- It is suggested to further explore the different factors with qualitative techniques.

- It is suggested to use other sampling techniques such as quota, cluster or stratified sampling.

- As this study was only conducted amongst domestic tourists it is suggested to conduct this research amongst international tourists as well. This would further support the notion of international benchmarking.

- Future research should use the longitudinal research method instead of the cross section method to monitor domestic tourist service satisfaction over a period of time.

- The predictive nature of both the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and *Experience of Service Satisfaction* measurements needs to investigated.

- It is also necessary to investigate why the mean score ranking of the expectation and experience items differ.
- The tailoring of the *Expectation of Service Satisfaction* and *Experience of Service Satisfaction* measurements is needed according the different star grading of the types of accommodation categories.

6.4   Limitations of the study

Some limitations to this study include the tight timelines, shortage of for human talent to be part of a research team and obtaining a complete database of graded and non-graded accommodation establishments from TGCSA. Furthermore many accommodation establishments refused the fieldworkers permission to collect data from their guests and made the domestic guest inaccessible. Generalisations in the application of these results in other sectors of the tourism industry should be approached with caution as a single respondent (domestic tourist) were used to obtain the results. Data was collected in the same way, namely through an electronic surveys and fieldworkers, which might have increased the common method of data interpretation.

6.5   Concluding remarks

The purpose of this study was to investigate the customer service satisfaction levels of domestic tourists at accommodation establishments. Three objectives were proposed and achieved. The problem statement was addressed and delivered two service satisfaction measurements. Recommendations, limitations and suggestions for future research were proposed.

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APPENDIX A: INITIAL PROPOSED CONSTRUCTS AND DIMENSIONS FOR THIS SERVICE EXCELLENCE STUDY TO MEASURE DOMESTIC TOURIST SATISFACTION

Construct	Dimensions	Value Chain	Expectation	Experience	References	Academic References
MARKETING	**Consistency of message**	Leave residence	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale	(NDT, 2011b, 2012c; SABS, 2012; TGCSA, 2012)	(Aksoy, Atılgan, & Akıncı, 2003; Bigné, Sánchez, & Sánchez, 2001; Card, Cole, & Humphrey, 2006; Dev et al., 2010; Eichhorn, Miller, Michopoulou, & Buhalis, 2008; Filo, Funk, & Hornby, 2009; Grönroos, 2007; Hartmann &
	Accuracy and accessibility of information	Leave residence	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Constant updating of message and material	Leave residence	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Research and evolve in order to meet guest needs	Leave residence	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Honest and truthful information	Leave residence	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Market sensitive / inoffensive marketing	Leave residence	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		

						Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2009; Jumyong, Love, & Han, 2008; Mateljic, 2010; Panda, 2008; Sangkaworn & Mujtaba, 2010)
PRODUCTS / QUALITY ASSURANCE	**Quality**	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale	(NDT, 2011b, 2012c; SABS, 2012; TGCSA, 2012)	(Anderson, Thomson, & Wynstra, 2000; Bitner, 1992; Chang & Polonsky, 2012; Ezeh & Harris, 2008; Ivkov & Stamenkovic, 2008; Kim, Chung, & Lee, 2011; Swart, 2007; Swart & Roodt, 2008;
	State of repair		5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Flexibility/ choice	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Facilities	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Value for money	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Universal accessibility	During the tourist's	5 point Likert	5 point Likert		

		stay	Scale	Scale		Swart & Roodt,
	Safety and security	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		2009, 2011a; Swart & Roodt,
	Continual training	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		2011b; Swart & Roodt, 2012;
	Information management: confidentiality and privacy	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		Xu, 2010; Yoon et al., 2010)
	Environmentally friendly products	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Non-discriminatory access to products and services	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Adherence to grading criteria	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
SERVICE DELIVERY / EXCELLENCE	**Professionalism/up skilling/training**	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale	(NDT, 2011b, 2012c; SABS, 2012; TGCSA, 2012)	(Coghlan & Pearce, 2010; Jennings, Lee, Ayling, Lunny, Cater, &
	Professional interaction	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		

	Guest-focused attitude	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		Ollenburg, 2009; Loureiro & Kastenholz, 2010; Perrett, 2009; Swart, 2007; Swart & Roodt, 2008; Swart & Roodt, 2009, 2011a; Swart & Roodt, 2011b; Swart & Roodt, 2012; Yoon et al., 2010; Yoshida & James, 2011; Yu & Lee, 2009; Zabkar et al., 2010)
	Guest-centred processes	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Efficient service recovery	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Service excellence-orientated organisational behaviour	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
	Constructive peer reviewing	During the tourist's stay	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale		
MONITORING, EVALUATION AND	**Consistent collection and evaluation of information**	Leaving the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale	5 point Likert Scale	(NDT, 2011b, 2012c; SABS, 2012; TGCSA, 2012)	(Bigné et al., 2001; Bitner, 1990; Graham, 2009; Hsieh &
	Accuracy of information	Leaving the	5 point Likert	5 point Likert		

CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT		accommodation establishment	Scale		Scale		Lin, 2010; Hui, Wan, & Ho, 2007; Nicoletta & Servidio, 2012; Sparks & Browning, 2011)
	Revision and evaluation of monitoring tools	Leaving the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale		5 point Likert Scale		
	Feedback systems	Leaving the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale		5 point Likert Scale		
	Reporting medium of stakeholders	Leaving the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale		5 point Likert Scale		
	Rewards and awards system	Leaving the accommodation establishment	5 point Likert Scale		5 point Likert Scale		

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PILOT STUDY AND SURVEY

Dear Sir / Madam,

NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM SERVICE SATISFACTION RESEARCH

The School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) was task by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) to conduct research on the service satisfaction of domestic tourism at accommodation establishments. Based on our sampling method we have selected your accommodation establishment to participate in the project. Therefore, we would like to invite you to become part of this study and also want to ask your assistance to make this project a success.

We firstly want to ask you to participate in the pilot study. After the finalisation of the pilot study and alteration to the questionnaire we will need your support in the handing out and collecting ten (10) questionnaires from domestic tourist who stayed at your establishment. Your participation will be rewarded as we are willing to share the results from this study with you once it has been approved by the National Department of Tourism.

Kindly inform us if you would be interested to participate in this service satisfaction study by contacting me on e-mail: tourism1@uj.ac.za or tel: (011) 242 4000. If you are interested in participating, please advise if you would like the questionnaires to be sent to you by email or post. The fieldwork will be conducted towards the end of September/ beginning of October 2012.

Your feedback would be appreciated before or on **Wednesday, 24 September 2012**.

If you have further questions for clarity, you may also contact the University of Johannesburg Academic HoD Tourism - Dr. Llewellyn Leonard on 011 5591036 or e-mail: lleonard@uj.ac.za

We indeed look forward to a continued mutually beneficial relationship.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Llewellyn Leonard

APPENDIX C: PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE WITH PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

Service Excellence Questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam,

The provision of service excellence to the tourism industry is a national priority. The purpose of this survey is therefore to determine how domestic tourists feel about the quality of service delivery they received at an accommodation establishment. It further aims to establish what the criteria are to inform the assessment of tourism service excellence in South Africa.

If you have not completed this 30 minute survey previously, I kindly would appreciate your participation.

Should you have any enquiries or comments regarding this survey, you are welcome to contact the fieldworker, Miss NonthlanthlaTshabalala, at mobile number 071 3514458 or tourism1@uj.ac.za.

Sincerely

School of Tourism and Hospitality
University of Johannesburg
South Africa

Instructions for completion:

The survey is anonymous. Responses cannot be tracked back to any person. Your free and honest expression of your experiences will be most helpful. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the statements in this questionnaire. Your opinion on each of the statements is what matters.

This questionnaire contains a number of statements about your service experience at an accommodation establishment. You are requested to cross (**X**) or circle (**O**) the number of your choice which most correctly fits the level to which you evaluate your service experience. After you have read each question, please use the scale below to describe your own service experience and expectations.

With regard to…	My EXPECTATION of service excellence …						My EXPERIENCE of service excellence …				
… how satisfied you are with the level of service quality you have received	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

Example: If you feel that **you are always satisfied with the level of service quality received**, mark 5 with a cross (X). Alternatively, if you feel that **you are always dissatisfied with the level of service quality received**, mark 1 with a cross (X). If you feel **that you are satisfied with the level of service quality received, but not always**, mark 3 with a cross (X) or mark to the side that reflect your experience / expectations the best. Please select an option in both scales (the "my expectation of service excellence" scale as well as the "my experience of service excellence" scale).

Please read each statement carefully and complete all the questions in this questionnaire. When you have completed all the statements please return the questionnaire to the fieldworkers. The questionnaire consists of the following sections:

SECTION A: SCREENING QUESTIONS
SECTION B: MARKET SEGMENTATION DETAILS
SECTION C: SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. We really appreciate it.

SECTION A: SCREENING QUESTIONS

(mark with an **X** or fill in your answer)

1.   **Please indicate whether you are a domestic or international tourist.**

1. Domestic tourist	
2. International tourist	

Please return the questionnaire to the fieldworker if you have selected the "international tourist" option.

2. Please indicate the category of accommodation establishment you are staying in.

1. Hotel / Lodge	
2. Guest house / Country house / Bed and Breakfast	
3. Self-Catering	
4. Backpackers / Hostelling	
5. Other	

If you have selected "other", please specify.

_____

3. What is the name of the city / town you are staying in?

_____

4. What is the main purpose for your travel?

1. Holiday	
2. Business	
3. Shopping	
4. Life event such as a wedding / funeral	
5. Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)	
6. Sport	
7. Education / training / business study	
8. Medical / Wellness	
9. Other	

If you have selected "other", please specify.

_____

5. How many nights will you stay at this accommodation establishment?

1. One night	
2. Two nights	
3. Three nights	
4. Four to Seven nights	
5. Longer than a week (One to four weeks)	
6. Longer than a month	

Please continue with **Section B**.

SECTION B: MARKET SEGMENTATION DETAILS

(mark with an **X** or fill in your answer)

1. What is your gender?

1. Male	
2. Female	

2. What is your age?

Younger than 25		25-34		35-44		45-54		55 or older	

3. To which ethnic group do you belong?
[choose one option]

1. Black	
2. Coloured	
3. Indian	
4. White	
5. Other	

If you have selected "other" please write down the ethnic group you belong to:
_____

4.   **What is your home language?**
      [write down your language]
      _____

6.   **Which province tripod you visit most frequently as a domestic tourist?**
      [select one relevant province]

1. Gauteng	
2. KwaZulu-Natal	
3. Western Cape	
4. Eastern Cape	
5. Mpumalanga	
6. Limpopo	
7. North West Province	
8. Free State	
9. Northern Cape	

7.   **Indicate how much you are prepared to spend at an accommodation per room per night**
      [select only one amount]

1. Less than R100	
2. R101 –R200	
3. R201– R300	
4. R301 – R400	
5. R401 – R500	
6. R501 – R1000	
7. R1001 – R1500	
8. R1501 – R2000	
9. R2001 – R3000	
10. R3001 and more	

Please continue with **Section C**.

SECTION C: SERVICE EXCELLENCE

The following statements describe the experience of delivery at the accommodation establishment.

After you have read each statement, please indicate the degree to which your **expectation** and actual **experience** was met. Please cross (**X**) **the number of your choice** which most adequately reflects your expectation and experience of service excellence at the accommodation establishment. If you are unable to answer a question, please select the "don't know" option.

Construct	Sub-dimension	Item	Value Chain	My Expectation of service excellence…					My Experience of service excellence…					Don't know
		With regard to…		Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					
		Prior to your visit												
MARKETING	Consistency of message	1. … the consistency in communicating their messages about the product offering.	Leave residence	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		2. … the delivery of the right message the first time.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		3. …how likely the reviews influenced me to visit the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Accuracy and accessibility of information	4. … how easy it was to obtain information about the facilities.	Leave residence	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		5. … how convenient it is to receive advertisements electronically about the establishment's facilities?		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		6. … the importance of real time feedback when you are making a reservation.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Constant updating of message and material	7. …how up to date the directions to the accommodation facility are?	Leave residence	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		8. … the recentcy of the information about the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6

				1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		9. … how accurately the messages describe the accommodation offering.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		26. … the variety of accommodation products to choose from.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Research and evolve in order to meet guest needs	10. …whether the accommodation establishment enquires about special requirements, such as dietary requirements.	Leave residence	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		11. … whether you were asked to participate in a customer service survey.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Honest and truthful information	24. … the variety of pricing options offered to you.	Leave residence	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		13. … what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment?		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		14. … the state of the facilities you can expect at the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Market sensitive / inoffensive marketing	15. … how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards of cultural diversity.	Leave residence	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		16. … non-sexist advertisements about the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		17. …any discrimination in the advertising campaigns.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	During your visit															
PRODUCTS / QUALITY ASSURANCE	Quality	18. … how evident a service quality culture is amongst the facility's staff?	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		19. … how willing staff are to help you?		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		20. … how courteous the staff are towards you?		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	State of repair	21. … how interested staff are in helping you solve your problems?		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6

		22. … how well the staff (e.g. Receptionists) handle your complaints?		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		23. … the response time in resolving your complaints.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Flexibility/ choice	12. … how trustworthy the information in their marketing campaign is.	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		25. … the convenience of the facility's operating hours.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Facilities	27. … how quiet sleeping conditions are at the establishment.	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		28. … the cleanliness of the facilities.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		29. … whether the facilities offer good bedding.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Value for money	30. … the provision of an overall value for money experience.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		31. … the fairness of the price asked in comparison to what you have received.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		32. … the affordability of the establishment.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Universal accessibility	33. … how sufficient the parking facilities are.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		34. … how convenient the distance between the different facilities are.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		35. … the provision of special facilities for people with all types of disabilities.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Safety and security	36. … how safe the location of the facility is.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		37. … how safe you feel during your stay at the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
		38. … how safe your belongings are in your room during your stay at the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Continual training /	39. … the interpersonal relationship skills	During the	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6

	People Empowerment	to work in the hospitality industry.	tourist's stay												
		40. … how competent staff appear in the work that they do.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		41. …the training for staff to deliver excellent service.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Information management: confidentiality and privacy	42. … how safe you feel in your financial transactions with the accommodation establishment.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		43. … how secure your personal information is at the accommodation establishment.6		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		44. … the protection of your privacy while you are staying at the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Environmentally friendly products	45. … the application of green practices, such as the use of energy saving equipment.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		46. … the sourcing of amenities from companies which sell environmentally friendly products.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		47. …the communication to guests about the facilities' efforts to use natural resources in a sustainable manner		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Adherence to grading criteria	48. … being a graded accommodation establishment, through the South African Tourism Grading Council.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		49. … the offering of services as required by the grading status of the establishment.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
		50. … the visibility of the grading plaque at the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
SERVICE DELIVERY /	Professionalism/up skilling/training	51. …whether the staff treats every guest equally and with respect.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6

EXCELLENCE		52. ...how competent staff appear in the work they do.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		53. ... how well trained the front-line staff are in using technology (e.g. computer systems) to do their work?		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Professional interaction	54. ... clear communication amongst staff in the delivery of quality services.	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		55. ... how supportive managers act towards their subordinates.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		56. ... how confident staff behave toward each other when they are rendering a service.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Guest-focused attitude / Guest-centred processes	57. ... how positive the attitude of the staff are when they are on duty.	Arrive at the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		58. ...how much you can you trust the staff working at the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		59. ...the promptness of the staff in responding to your requests.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		60. ... the provision of the necessary resources to staff to deliver excellent service.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		61. ... a service culture amongst the staff.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Service excellence-orientated organisational behaviour	62. ... the customisation of services for you.	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		63. ... the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment.		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		64. ... how willing that staff are to help you?		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Constructive peer reviewing	65. ...how encouraged staff appear to work together?	During the tourist's stay	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		66. ... the accountability given to staff in		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6

Construct	Sub-dimension	Item	Value Chain													
		~~the execution of their responsibilities.~~														
		67. … the recognition given to staff when they provide excellent service (e.g. the employee of the month).		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		After your stay														
MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT	Consistent collection and evaluation of information / Accuracy of information/ Revision and evaluation of monitoring tools	68. …the option for guests to assess service delivery via a web-based self-assessment tool.	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		69. … the feedback systems in place to reward or discipline employees	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		70. … the tailoring of feedback systems through the integration of information technology or social media.	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
		~~71. … the necessity customer feedback received via a public voting system.~~	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6
	Rewards and awards system	72. … how likely is it that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it.	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		6

The following statements describe the importance of service excellence assessment.

After you have read each statement, please indicate the degree of importance to you. Please cross (X) the number of your choice which most adequately reflects the extent to which the overall evaluation of service is to you.

Construct	Sub-dimension	Item	Value Chain	The level of IMPORTANCE to you…				
		In the overall evaluation of service excellence in South Africa, how important is …		Low 1 2 3 4 5 High				
MARKETING	Research and evolve	72. … the introduction of an "Annual National	Leave residence	1	2	3	4	5

	in order to meet guest needs	Tourist Service Index" to monitor service excellence in South Africa.						
MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT	Feedback systems	74. …the use up-to-date technology.	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5
		75. … the application of an effective performance appraisal system of staff on their service excellence delivery.		1	2	3	4	5
	Reporting medium of stakeholders	76. … the establishment of an "Excellence in SERVICE starts with ME" initiative.	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5
		77. … the establishment of the "National Service Excellence Requirements" for the industry.		1	2	3	4	5
		78. … the launch of a service excellence brand for the industry.		1	2	3	4	5
	Rewards and awards system	79. … governments' commitment to instil a service culture amongst staff working in the hospitality industry.	Leaving the accommodation establishment	1	2	3	4	5
		80. … the implementation of a National Tourism Awareness campaign for service excellence.		1	2	3	4	5

How will you define service satisfaction?

_____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return this questionnaire to the fieldworker

APPENDIX D: FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

STAND A CHANCE TO WIN THE NEXT GENERATION

IPAD!!!

Service Excellence Questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam,

The provision of service excellence to the tourism industry is a national priority. The purpose of this survey is therefore to determine how domestic tourists feel about the quality of service delivery they received at an accommodation establishment. It further aims to establish what the criteria are to inform the assessment of tourism service excellence in South Africa.

If you have not completed this survey previously, I kindly would appreciate your participation.

Should you have any enquiries or comments regarding this survey, you are welcome to contact the fieldworker, Miss Nonhlanhla Tshabalala, at mobile number 071 3514458 or tourism1@uj.ac.za.

Instructions for completion:

The survey is anonymous, however, if you would like to stand a chance to win the next generation iPad please include your full name, address and contact details at the back of this questionnaire. **Please NOTE:** Only respondents who answer fully will qualify for the iPad competition. The winner of the prize will be randomly selected from the list of respondents we receive who choose to take part in this competition. This prize is not transferrable or redeemable for cash. Winners will be notified in December 2012.

Your free and honest expression of your experiences will be most helpful. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the statements in this questionnaire. Your opinion on each of the statements is what matters.

This questionnaire contains a number of statements about your service experience at an accommodation establishment. You are requested to cross (**X**) or circle (**O**) the number of your choice which most correctly fits the level to which you evaluate your service experience. After you have read each question, please use the scale below to describe your own service experience and expectations.

With regard to…	My EXPECTATION of service excellence …						My EXPERIENCE of service excellence …				
… how satisfied you are with the level of service quality you have received	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

Example: If you feel that **you are always satisfied with the level of service quality received**, mark 5 with a cross (X). Alternatively, if you feel that **you are always dissatisfied with the level of service quality received**, mark 1 with a cross (X). If you feel **that you are satisfied with the level of service quality received, but not always**, mark 3 with a cross (X) or mark to the side that reflect your experience / expectations the best. Please select an option in both scales (the "my expectation of service excellence" scale as well as the "my experience of service excellence" scale).

tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Please read each statement carefully and complete all the questions in this questionnaire. When you have completed all the statements please return the questionnaire to the fieldworkers. The questionnaire consists of the following sections:

SECTION A: SCREENING QUESTIONS
SECTION B: MARKET SEGMENTATION DETAILS
SECTION C: SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. We really appreciate it.

SECTION A: SCREENING QUESTIONS

(mark with an **X** or fill in your answer)

1.   **Please indicate whether you are a domestic or international tourist.**

1. Domestic tourist	
2. International tourist	

Please return the questionnaire to the fieldworker if you have selected the "international tourist" option.

2.   **Please indicate the category of accommodation establishment you are staying in.**

1. Hotel / Lodge	
2. Guest house / Country house / Bed and Breakfast	
3. Self-Catering	
4. Backpackers / Hostelling	
5. Other	

If you have selected "other", please specify.

_____

3.   **What is the name of the city / town you are staying in?**

_____

4.   **What is the main purpose for your travel?**

1. Holiday	
2. Business	
3. Shopping	
4. Life event such as a wedding / funeral	
5. Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)	
6. Sport	
7. Education / training / business study	
8. Medical / Wellness	
9. Other	

If you have selected "other", please specify.

_____

Research Project – 2012/2013

5.   How many nights will you stay at this accommodation establishment?

1. One night	
2. Two nights	
3. Three nights	
4. Four to Seven nights	
5. Longer than a week (One to four weeks)	
6. Longer than a month	

Please continue with **Section B**.

SECTION B: MARKET SEGMENTATION DETAILS

(mark with an **X** or fill in your answer)

1.   **What is your gender?**

1. Male	
2. Female	

2.   **What is your age?**

Younger than 25		25-34		35-44		45-54		55 or older	

3.   **To which ethnic group do you belong?**
         [choose one option]

1. Black	
2. Coloured	
3. Indian	
4. White	
5. Other	

If you have selected "other" please write down the ethnic group you belong to:
_____

4.   **What is your home language?**
         [write down your language]
_____

6.   **Which province do you visit most frequently as a domestic tourist?**
         [select one relevant province]

1. Gauteng	
2. KwaZulu-Natal	
3. Western Cape	
4. Eastern Cape	
5. Mpumalanga	
6. Limpopo	
7. North West Province	
8. Free State	
9. Northern Cape	

7.   **Indicate how much you are prepared to spend at an accommodation per room per night**
        [select only <u>one</u> amount]

1. Less than R100	
2. R101 –R200	
3. R201– R300	
4. R301 – R400	
5. R401 – R500	
6. R501 – R1000	
7. R1001 – R1500	
8. R1501 – R2000	
9. R2001 – R3000	
10. R3001 and more	

Please continue with **Section C.**

SECTION C: SERVICE EXCELLENCE

The following statements describe the experience of delivery at the accommodation establishment.

After you have read each statement, please indicate the degree to which your **expectation** and actual **experience** was met. Please cross (**X**) **the number of your choice** which most adequately reflects your expectation and experience of service excellence at the accommodation establishment. If you are unable to answer a question, please select the "don't know" option.

Item	My Expectation of service excellence…					My Experience of service excellence…					Don't know
With regard to…	Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					
Prior to your visit											
1. … the delivery of the right message the first time.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. …how likely the reviews influenced me to visit the accommodation establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. … how easy it was to obtain information about the facilities.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. … the importance of real time feedback when you are making a reservation.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. …how up to date the directions to the accommodation facility are?	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. … the recent of the information about the accommodation establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. … the variety of accommodation products to choose from.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. … whether you were asked to participate in a customer service survey.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. … the variety of pricing options offered to you.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. … what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment?	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. … how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards cultural diversity.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. … non-sexist advertisements about the accommodation establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. …any discrimination in the advertising campaigns.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
During your visit											
14. … how willing staff are to help you?	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6

Item	My Expectation of service excellence…					My Experience of service excellence…					Don't know
With regard to…	Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					
15. … how courteous the staff are towards you?	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. … the response time in resolving your complaints.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. … how quiet sleeping conditions are at the establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. … the cleanliness of the facilities.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. … whether the facilities offer good bedding.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. … the provision of an overall value for money experience.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. … the fairness of the price asked in comparison to what you have received.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. … the affordability of the establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. … how sufficient the parking facilities are.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. … how convenient the distance between the different facilities are.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. … the provision of special facilities for people with all types of disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. … how safe the location of the facility is.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. … how safe you feel during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. … how safe your belongings are in your room during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. … how competent staff appear in the work that they do.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. … being a graded accommodation establishment, through the South African Tourism Grading Council.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. … the offering of services as required by the grading status of the establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. … the visibility of the grading plaque at the accommodation establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. …whether the staff treats every guest equally and with respect.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. …how competent staff appear in the work they do.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. … how well trained the front-line staff are in using technology (e.g. computer systems) to do their work?	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. …how much can you trust the staff working at the accommodation establishment?	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. …the promptness of the staff in responding to your requests.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. … a service culture amongst the staff.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. … the customisation of services for you.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. … the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. … how willing that staff are to help you?	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. … the recognition given to staff when they provide excellent service (e.g. the employee of the month).	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
After your stay											
43. …the option for guests to assess service delivery via a web-based self-assessment tool.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. … the feedback systems in place to reward or discipline employees	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. … the tailoring of feedback systems through the integration of information technology or social media.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. … how likely is it that you would rather stay at an	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6

24

Item	My Expectation of service excellence…					My Experience of service excellence…					Don't know
With regard to…	Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					Low 1 2 3 4 5 High					
accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it.											

The following statements describe the importance of service excellence assessment.

After you have read each statement, please indicate the degree of importance to you. Please cross (X) for the number of your choice which most adequately reflects the overall evaluation of service offered to you.

Item	The level of IMPORTANCE to you…				
In the overall evaluation of service excellence in South Africa, how important is …	Low 1 2 3 4 5 High				
47. … the introduction of an "Annual National Tourist Service Index" to monitor service excellence in South Africa.	1	2	3	4	5
48. …the use of up-to-date technology.	1	2	3	4	5
49. … the application of an effective performance appraisal system of staff on their service excellence delivery.	1	2	3	4	5
50. … the establishment of an "Excellence in SERVICE starts with ME" initiative.	1	2	3	4	5
51. … the establishment of the "National Service Excellence Requirements" for the industry.	1	2	3	4	5
52. … the launch of a service excellence brand for the industry.	1	2	3	4	5
53. … governments' commitment to instil a service culture amongst staff working in the hospitality industry.	1	2	3	4	5
54. … the implementation of a National Tourism Awareness campaign for service excellence.	1	2	3	4	5

55.   How will you define service satisfaction?

_____
_____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return this questionnaire to the fieldworker

FOR A CHANCE TO WIN AN IPAD FILL IN BELOW:

NAME	
SURNAME	
ADRESS	
CONTACT NUMBER	

APPENDIX E: E-MAIL LETTER WITH INSTRUCTION FOR ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

STAND A CHANCE TO WIN THE NEXT GENERATION
IPAD!!!

October 2012

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: **NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM SERVICE SATISFACTION RESEARCH**

The provision of service excellence to the tourism industry is a national priority. Therefore The School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) was task by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) to conduct research on the service satisfaction of domestic tourism at accommodation establishments. The purpose of this survey is to determine how domestic tourists feel about the quality of service delivery they received at an accommodation establishment. It further aims to establish what the criteria are to inform the assessment of tourism service excellence in South Africa.

If you have not completed this survey previously, I kindly would appreciate your participation.

Please "click" on the link below.

http://take-survey.com/statkon/Service_Excellence_Questionnaire.htm

If you cannot access the survey press the "ctrl" button on your keyboard and "click" simultaneously on the URL link, you will then be directed to the survey.

Please note that the instruction for the completion of the questionnaire is on the next page.

Should you have any enquiries or comments regarding this survey, you are welcome to contact, the University of Johannesburg Academic Head Tourism - Dr. Llewellyn Leonard on 011 5591036 or e-mail: lleonard@uj.ac.za

Sincerely

Dr Llewellyn Leonard

tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Instructions for completion:

The survey is anonymous, however, if you would like to stand a chance to win the next generation iPad please include your full name, address and contact details at the end of this questionnaire. **Please NOTE:** The winner of the prize will be randomly selected from the list of respondents we receive who choose to take part in this competition. This prize is not transferrable or redeemable for cash. Winners will be notified in December 2012

Your free and honest expression of your experiences will be most helpful. There is no right or wrong answer to any of the statements in this questionnaire. Your opinion on each of the statements is what matters.

This questionnaire contains a number of statements about your service experience at an accommodation establishment. You are requested to cross (**X**) or circle (**O**) the number of your choice which most correctly fits the level to which you evaluate your service experience. After you have read each question, please use the scale below to describe your own service experience and expectations.

With regard to…	My EXPECTATION of service excellence …						My EXPERIENCE of service excellence …				
… how satisfied you are with the level of service quality you have received	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

Example: If you feel that **you are always satisfied with the level of service quality received**, mark 5 with a cross (X). Alternatively, if you feel that **you are always dissatisfied with the level of service quality received**, mark 1 with a cross (X). If you feel **that you are satisfied with the level of service quality received, but not always**, mark 3 with a cross (X) or mark to the side that reflect your experience / expectations the best. Please select an option in both scales (the "my expectation of service excellence" scale as well as the "my experience of service excellence" scale).

Please read each statement carefully and complete all the questions in this questionnaire. When you have completed all the statements please return the questionnaire to the fieldworkers. The questionnaire consists of the following sections:

SECTION A: SCREENING QUESTIONS
SECTION B: MARKET SEGMENTATION DETAILS
SECTION C: SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. We really appreciate it.

Research Project – 2012/2013

SECTION F: LETTERS FROM STH TO NDT TO REQUEST ACCESS TO THE TGCSA DATABASE

Dr. Diane Abrahams
Director
School of Tourism and Hospitality
Faculty of Management
University of Johannesburg
Bunting road campus
Auckland Park
2006

25 June 2012

Mr. L. M. Makhubela
Director General
National Department of Tourism
17 Trevena Road
Tourism House
Sunnyside
Pretoria
0001

(Tel: 011 – 4446721)

BY E-MAIL: MSibiya@tourism.gov.za

Dear Mr. Makhubela

Access to national database of graded tourism establishments from the Tourism Grading Council

I hope this correspondence finds you well. With our commitment to partnerships that informs quality tourism, the University of Johannesburg was tasked by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) this year to conduct research on the satisfaction levels of customers at graded accommodation establishments in South Africa. Our contact person within the NDT for the commissioned research is Kholadi Tlabela, Directorate Research, Tel - 012-444 6384/ 0827735586, E-mail - ktlabela@tourism.gov.za).

Our research will entail embarking on a study methodology were we will be using random sampling to select graded accommodation sites in South Africa to ensure robustness and statistical validity of the results. As such we would like to include all the different graded accommodation categories in the nine provinces. Although we

have contacted Mr. Thekiso Rakolojane, Marketing and Communications Manager from the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) – at Bojanala House, Chislehurston, for this information, Mr. Rakolojane suggest that due to the confidential nature of the database, a request be rather send to him by the NDT to release the information to the University of Johannesburg.

In order to ensure that we adhere to all the research requirements of the NDT we would be grateful if you could contact the TGCSA and Mr. Rakolojane (thekiso@tourismgrading.co.za / Tel: (+27)11-895-3018) to release the requested information so that we can get access to the national database for the graded establishments in their respective categories. We will treat the information confidential. We would like to receive this information as a matter of urgency due to keeping with timelines of the research.

I hope this request reaches your favourable consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have any issues for clarity.

Kind regards

Dr. Diane Abrahams

APPENDIX G: LETTER FROM THE NDT TO TGCSA TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE WITH THE RESEARCH

tourism
Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref: S.13/21/1/7
Enquiries: Ms K Tlabela

Tel: 012 444 6384   Fax: 012 444 7089   E-mail:ktlabela@tourism.gov.za

Ms T. Kunene
Chief Quality Assurance Officer
Tourism Grading Council of South Africa
Private Bag X10 012
SANDTON
2146

Dear Ms Kunene

ACCESS TO NATIONAL DATABASE OF GRADED TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS

The National Department of Tourism (NDT) has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Johannesburg (UJ). The purpose of the MOU is to establish a formal basis of cooperation in support of tourism research between NDT and the University of Johannesburg.

The research project conducted by the School of Tourism and Hospitality (University of Johannesburg) in collaboration with NDT focuses on the satisfaction levels of customers at graded accommodation establishments in South Africa. In order to identify a sample for the study, the School of Tourism and Hospitality will require access to the national database of graded tourism establishments from the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA). The information provided will be kept confidential.

We therefore will appreciate it if you can provide the School of Tourism and Hospitality at the University of Johannesburg access to the national database of graded tourism establishments. The contact person for University of Johannesburg is Dr. Diane Abrahams, tel (011) 559 1049.

Should you have any queries for NDT, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Kholadi Tlabela at the following e-mail address:ktlabela@tourism.gov.za, tel number 012-444 6384/082 7735586.

Thanking you in advance.

Sincerely

Ambassador LM Makhubela
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
Letter signed by: Mr. Victor Tharage
Designation: Deputy Director-General: Policy and Knowledge Services
Date: 03/07/2012

APPENDIX H: LETTER TO TOURISM STAKEHOLDER TO ASSIST WITH THE FIELDWORK

<div align="right">

PO Box 2814

Polokwane

0700

2 November 2012

</div>

Mr M Matsetela
Chairperson
Limpopo Tourism Agency

Dear Sir,

Re: **NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM – CUSTOMER SERVICE SATISFACTION RESEARCH AT GRADED ACCOMODATION ESTABISHMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The provision of service excellence to the tourism industry is a national priority. Therefore The School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) was task by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) to conduct research on the service satisfaction of domestic tourism at accommodation establishments. The purpose of this survey is to determine how domestic tourists feel about the quality of service delivery they received at an accommodation establishment. It further aims to establish what the criteria are to inform the assessment of tourism service excellence in South Africa.

It is important that all the South African provinces participate in this study to ensure transparency and consistency in the research results. We therefore want to invite the Limpopo Tourism Agency to participate in this study. According to the terms of reference provided by the NDT this study must only be conducted amongst domestic tourists who are staying at any the different types of accommodation establishments, namely from the hotels to the backpackers.

A quantitative research approach was identified as the most suitable research methodology for this exploratory study. The research design captures the empirical nature of this study and uses a positivist epistemology. Responses will be collected through a questionnaire and therefore a communication study will be used. An ex post facto design approach, will be followed as the researchers have no control over the various variables, in a field setting. A non-probability sampling technique, namely convenience sampling, are used. Against the background of this methodology summary we request your support in aligning us with possible accommodation establishments who are be able to support us in the distribution of the questionnaires to their guests. We also have a URL (website) link available for distribution to your database.

Should you have any enquiries or comments regarding this survey, you are welcome to contact, the University of Johannesburg Academic Head: Tourism – Dr. Llewellyn Leonard on 011 5591036 or e-mail: lleonard@uj.ac.za

Sincerely

Dr Llewellyn Leonard

APPENDIX I: FIELDWORKER FORM

FIELDWORKER'S MEMO

Thank you for agreeing to participate as a field worker in this study, please note the following:

1. You will be paid R20.00 Per completed questionnaire, and of R30.00 for lunch each day worked

2. No advanced payments will be made, payments will be made into your account once service has been rendered

3. Please fill in your details below:

Name:
Surname:
Contact details:
Bank Name:
Branch Code:
Type of Account:
Account Number:

TOTAL QUESTIONNAIRES COMPLETED - _____
ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS VISITED AND NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES COMPLETED PER ESTABLISHMENT:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Signature of fieldworker: _____   Date:_____
Signature of Main fieldworker:_____

tourism
Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

APPENDIX J: PROPOSED EXPECTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

PROPOSED EXPECTATION OF SERVICE SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Value Chain	TSEI Pillars represented	Item number in final questionnaire	New proposed factors (Pillars)	Item
				With regard to…
Prior to the visit (When the domestic tourist leaves their home – making reservation)	**Marketing**	C1	**Message and information**	… the delivery of the right message the first time.
		C2		…how likely the reviews influenced me to visit the accommodation establishment.
		C3		… how easy it was to obtain information about the facilities.
		C4		… the importance of real time feedback when you are making a reservation.
		C5		…how up to date the directions to the accommodation facility are?
		C6		… the recent of the information about the accommodation establishment.
		C7		… the variety of accommodation products to choose from.
		C9		… the variety of pricing options offered to you.
		C10		… what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment?
	Marketing	C11	**Market sensitivity**	… how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards of cultural diversity.
		C12		… non-sexist advertisements about the accommodation establishment.
		C13		…any discrimination in the advertising campaigns.
During visit (Products / quality assurance and Service delivery / excellence)	**Product / quality assurance**	C15	**Product offering and quality assurance**	… how courteous the staff are towards you?
		C16		… the response time in resolving your complaints.
		C17		… how quiet sleeping conditions are at the establishment.
		C18		… the cleanliness of the facilities.
		C19		… whether the facilities offer good bedding.
		C20		… the provision of an overall value for money experience.

Value Chain	TSEI Pillars represented	Item number in final questionnaire	New proposed factors (Pillars)	Item
		C21		… the fairness of the price asked in comparison to what you have received.
		C22		… the affordability of the establishment.
		C26		… how safe the location of the facility is.
		C27		… how safe you feel during your stay at the accommodation establishment.
		C28		… how safe your belongings are in your room during your stay at the accommodation establishment.
		C33		…whether the staff treats every guest equally and with respect.
	Service delivery / excellence	C34	**Service excellence**	…how competent staff appear in the work they do.
		C35		… how well trained the front-line staff are in using technology (e.g. computer systems) to do their work?
		C36		…how much you can you trust the staff working at the accommodation establishment.
		C37		…the promptness of the staff in responding to your requests.
		C38		… a service culture amongst the staff.
		C39		… the customisation of services for you.
		C40		… the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment.
		C41		… how willing that staff are to help you?
		C42		… the recognition given to staff when they provide excellent service (e.g. the employee of the month).
	Product / quality assurance	C23	**Grading and accessibility**	… how sufficient the parking facilities are.
		C24		… how convenient the distance between the different facilities are.
		C25		… the provision of special facilities for people with all types of disabilities.
		C30		… being a graded

Value Chain	TSEI Pillars represented	Item number in final questionnaire	New proposed factors (Pillars)	Item
				accommodation establishment, through the South African Tourism Grading Council.
		C31		… the offering of services as required by the grading status of the establishment.
		C32		… the visibility of the grading plaque at the accommodation establishment.
After stay (Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement)	Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement	C43	Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement	…the option for guests to assess service delivery via a web-based self-assessment tool.
		C44		… the feedback systems in place to reward or discipline employees
		C45		… the tailoring of feedback systems through the integration of information technology or social media.
		C46		… how likely is it that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it.

APPENDIX K: PROPOSED EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

PROPOSED EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Value Chain	TSEI Pillars represented	Item number in final questionnaire	New proposed factors (Pillars)	Item
				With regard to…
Prior to the visit (When the domestic tourist leaves their home – making reservation)	**Marketing**	C1	**Message and information**	… the delivery of the right message the first time.
		C2		…how likely the reviews influenced me to visit the accommodation establishment.
		C3		… how easy it was to obtain information about the facilities.
		C4		… the importance of real time feedback when you are making a reservation.
		C5		…how up to date the directions to the accommodation facility are?
		C6		… the recent of the information about the accommodation establishment.
		C7		… the variety of accommodation products to choose from.
		C9		… the variety of pricing options offered to you.
		C10		… what is included in the advertised price of the accommodation establishment?
	Marketing	C11	**Market sensitivity**	… how sensitive the marketing campaigns are towards of cultural diversity.
		C12		… non-sexist advertisements about the accommodation establishment.
		C13		…any discrimination in the advertising campaigns.
During visit (Products / quality assurance and Service delivery / excellence)	**Product and quality assurance**	C19	**Quality assurance**	… whether the facilities offer good bedding.
		C23		… how sufficient the parking facilities are.
		C25		… the provision of special facilities for people with all types of disabilities.
		C26		… how safe the location of the facility is.
		C27		… how safe you feel during your stay at the

Value Chain	TSEI Pillars represented	Item number in final questionnaire	New proposed factors (Pillars)	Item
				accommodation establishment.
		C28		… how safe your belongings are in your room during your stay at the accommodation establishment.
		C30		… being a graded accommodation establishment, through the South African Tourism Grading Council.
		C31		… the offering of services as required by the grading status of the establishment.
		C32		… the visibility of the grading plaque at the accommodation establishment.
		C33		…whether the staff treats every guest equally and with respect.
	Product and Quality Assurance	C16	**Product Offering**	… the response time in resolving your complaints.
		C18		… the cleanliness of the facilities.
		C20		… the provision of an overall value for money experience.
		C22		… the affordability of the establishment.
		C24		… how convenient the distance between the different facilities are.
		C37		…the promptness of the staff in responding to your requests.
	Service delivery / excellence	C35	**Service excellence**	… how well trained the front-line staff are in using technology (e.g. computer systems) to do their work?
		C36		…how much you can you trust the staff working at the accommodation establishment.
		C38		… a service culture amongst the staff.
		C39		… the customisation of services for you.
		C40		… the personal attention you get from the staff during your stay at the accommodation establishment.
		C41		… how willing that staff are to help you?
		C42		… the recognition given to staff when they provide excellent service (e.g. the employee of

Value Chain	TSEI Pillars represented	Item number in final questionnaire	New proposed factors (Pillars)	Item
				the month).
	Product and quality assurance	C15	**Product quality**	… how courteous the staff are towards you?
		C17		… how quiet sleeping conditions are at the establishment.
		C21		… the fairness of the price asked in comparison to what you have received.
		C34		…how competent staff appear in the work they do.
After stay (Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement)	**Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement**	C43	**Monitoring, evaluation and continual improvement**	…the option for guests to assess service delivery via a web-based self-assessment tool.
		C44		… the feedback systems in place to reward or discipline employees
		C45		… the tailoring of feedback systems through the integration of information technology or social media.
		C46		… how likely is it that you would rather stay at an accommodation establishment with a loyalty programme attached to it.

APPENDIX L: FIELDWORKERS REPORT

Below are two examples of fieldworkers report received during the fieldwork process.

Fieldwork report: Junayne Baatjes (Port Elizabeth)

The following provides information on the challenges faced whilst collecting raw data

- The ideal time to collect data is when the client is checking out and during this time, clients don't have time to sit down and fill in a questionnaire, simply because they don't have the time
- Many questionnaires were halfway completed, and given to the respondent to fill in, but were never returned
- Clients do not want to fill in questionnaires when checking in
- It was suggested that some questionnaires should be left in the rooms, these questionnaires were never returned
- Some respondents were confused with answering the rating questions, and some said that the questionnaires were complicated
- Non-cooperation of accommodation establishments

The following accommodation establishments were approached but did not accept the research:

Radisson Blu Hotel
Beach Hotel
Protea Marine Hotel

The fieldwork was completed at the following:

The Humewood Hotel
The Summerstrand Hotel

Fieldworker report: Lizette Monare (Kimberley, Polokwane and Witbank)

The number of completed questionnaires is 64 for all three destinations. The Following are the accommodation establishments we visited:

KIMBERLEY
•Halfway house
•Edgerton Houe /luxury Guest House
•Estate Private Hotel
•Cullinan Guest House
•Protea Hotel Diamond Lodge
•Garden Court
•Belgravia B&B
•Executive Self-Catering
•Protea Hotel Kimberley
•The Nook
•Gumtree Lodge

The above mentioned establishments allowed us to do the fieldwork except Halfway House did not want to be associated with the survey, Estate Private Hotel, Executive Self-Catering and The Nook only had International guests.

POLOKWANE
•Igloo Inn backpackers
•Country blue Luxury
•Ruthers Place Self-Catering
•Zanani Lodge
•Howick Accommodation
•Elegant guesthouse
•Danlee Overnight Accommodation
•Pafuri Self-Catering
•The Pits Lodge

- Devenish Guesthouse

- The Lofts

- Cycad Guesthouse

- Miami Lodge

- rustic Rest luxury Accommodation

- Victorious guest house

- Fusion Boutique Hotel

- Marco Accommodation

- Col John

- villa Africa

- Gateaway gate

- Yellowstone Luxury lodge

- Kiepersol Accommodation

- Viona lodge

- Ruby Stone

Those that refused us are Devenish Guest house,The Lofts, Cycad guest house, victorious guest house, Howicks and Marco Accommodation.

WITBANK
- Villa Anne guesthouse

- Reginald guesthouse

- Visit Vakasha lodge

- Willow House

- KB Lodge

- Elephant Hills Country Lodge

- Elite Guesthouse

- Star guest house / backpackers

- Saligna 2

- Protea Hotel and Witbank Dam

Only Saligna 2 and Elephant hills country Lodge refused to see us.

It was an awesome experience doing the Fieldwork and Very Challenging, We discovered that Many guests love to be left at peace and undisturbed. The questionnaires were Too Long, most Guests complained about the length, so If it's possible that the next time It be short. It was not easy approaching guests to fill in questionnaire as most gave a reason that they were not in school but on break from one.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your team. Would love to be given another opportunity to do better than this time.