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Expected benefits segmentation of international tourists participating in Zimbabwe safari tourism

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Abstract

The study aims to categorize tourists visiting national parks in Zimbabwe into clusters that are similar to each other according to their expected benefits and to determine different tourist profiles in terms of the expected benefits. For this purpose, data was collected through convenience sampling between 1 February and 30 April 2019 in Hwange National Park, Mana Pools National Park, and Gonarezhou National Park. It was 307 usable questionnaires were obtained. In the research, descriptive statistics and t-tests, ANOVA, factor analysis, cluster analysis, and chi-square analysis were utilized. Three benefit factors were named "Socialization & self-improvement," "Recognizing nature & wildlife," and "Relaxing." In addition, two market segments (clusters) were identified and termed "socialization seekers" and "nature & wildlife seekers."

Keywords: *Market segmentation, Benefit sought, Zimbabwe, Safari tourism, Nationals parks*

1. Introduction

Tourism has emerged as a global industry that contributes to the growth of national, regional, and international businesses. Tourism is a significant industry in both developed and developing nations (Goodall & Ashworth, 2013). Tourism plays a major role in Zimbabwe's economy, with safari tourism being one of the developing sectors in the Zimbabwe tourism industry (Woyo & Woyo, 2016; Zhou, 2018). Tourists from all over the world visit Africa for safari tourism opportunities. Zimbabwe, one of the forty-eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, is mainly known for its Safari tourism. While the number of international tourist visitors in Zimbabwe was 1.2 million in 2009, it reached 2.1 million in 2015 (Zimbabwe-Visitor Exit Survey Report 2015/16, 2019). Zimbabwe was visited by 2,567,000 international tourists in 2018 and 2,290,000 in 2019. For Zimbabwe, safari tourism is seen as an even more significant driver of the economy as it offers tourists unique game and safari experiences (Manrai et al., 2020).

The "Big 5" animals, namely elephant, lion, leopard, rhinoceros, and buffalo, are essential in safari tourism in the Sub-Saharan Africa Region (Skibins et al., 2016). Spread over an area of 390,757 km², Zimbabwe is home to more than 100 animal species, including the "Big 5" (except rhinoceros), African wildcat, serval, honey badger, civet, and hyena, and over 400 hundred bird species. This region offers unique safari opportunities such as game drives, safari hunting, sightseeing, walking safaris, hiking, and various accommodation (tents, bungalows, luxury lodges) (Manrai et al., 2020).

This study aims to determine the expected benefits of international safari tourists visiting Zimbabwe's national parks and categorize them into groups based on market segments. Understanding the expected benefits of foreign tourists participating in safari tourism in Zimbabwe is very important for managers in developing the marketing mix and strategies and meeting tourist demands and expectations.

2. Literature

2.1. Market segmentation

Market segmentation is dividing consumers with different needs into groups according to their similar characteristics (Birdir, 2015). Common and data-driven segmentation are

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two different approaches to segmenting the market (Birdir, 2009; Dolnicar et al., 2018). Markets may require separate marketing strategies or mixes for different needs and characteristics (Holloway, 2004). This segmentation divides the market into distinct buyer groups with different behaviors, characteristics, and needs, which may require separate marketing strategies or mixes (Dalgıç et al., 2016; Kotler et al., 2017).

Buyers in the market differ in their wants, resources, positions, purchasing attitudes, and purchasing practices. The fundamental principle of market segmentation is that markets are not homogeneous, and it is commercially essential to distinguish marketing offers for different customer groups (Baker 2003). Through market segmentation, companies can divide large and heterogeneous markets into smaller segments that can be reached more efficiently and effectively with products and services suited to their unique needs (Hunt & Arnett, 2004).

Segmentation can also be applied to different subjects, such as segmenting of business markets, segmenting of international markets, segmenting of consumer markets, and the requirements of effective segmentation. There is no universal consensus on segmentation characteristics in the tourism industry, but variables are generally classified as geographical, demographic, and behavioral (Middleton & Clarke, 2012). Different needs must be fulfilled for a market segment to be helpful to managers. The criteria identified for the usefulness of segments should be considered when selecting one or more of the many possible segments for active targeting (Dolnicar et al., 2018; Dolnicar, 2004).

According to the literature, the marketing segmentation process consists of different stages, with most literate having different numbers of steps (Lopez-Guzman et al., 2018). According to Goyat (2011), the marketing segmentation is a 7-step process. However, some authors state that this process consists of 10 steps (Dolnicar et al., 2018): (1) Deciding on the segment, (2) Determining the ideal target segment, (3) Data collection, (4) Exploring data, (5) Segment extraction, (6) Creation of segment profiles, (7) Describe segments, (8) Select target segment(s), (9) Customize the marketing mix, (10) Evaluation and monitoring. On the other hand, some studies approach the market segmentation process in three stages: (1) research phase, (2) analysis phase, and (3) grouping phase (Kotler, 2000).

Consumers can be grouped in various ways based on geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioral variables (Baloglu et al., 2004; Nduna, 2017; Papadimitriou & Gibson, 2008). However, other types of segmentation include situational segmentation, sought benefit segmentation, usage rate, user status, and loyalty status segmentation (Armstrong et al., 2017; Frochot, 2005; Marques et al., 2010; Won & Hwang, 2009). A market segment consists of consumers who respond similarly to given marketing efforts. For example, tourists who like to travel independently and have a luxurious experience regardless of price represent a specific segment. In contrast, tourists who care about their budgets will form another part, and an organization should be aware of all these variations. It is a challenge to offer the same service as people have different reasons for traveling (Dolnicar et al., 2018; Holloway & Humphreys, 2016; Huang & Sarigöllü, 2012; Middleton & Clarke, 2012; Van Der Merwe & Saayman, 2008).

2.2. Safari tourism

Safari tourism takes tourists to the African continent to explore culture, geography, landscape, and wildlife (Akama et al., 2011; Stone & Stone, 2013; Stone, 2015; Stone, 2017). Safari is a term from Swahili, meaning travel, and is the most common term for wildlife viewing tourism (Mbaiwa, 2007). When used in English or German during colonial times, it referred to hunting expeditions (UNWTO, 2015). It is a form of tourism that can be attended all year round, regardless of the season. However, seasonal factors such as rain or drought impact the number of animals seen on a given day. Safari has changed over the years and has become one of the largest industries in East and Southern Africa, contributing to citizens' economies and social well-being through job creation (Carmago & Maingi, 2015). Safari tourism contributes more to the economy than traditional industries such as farming in Southern African countries (Mbaiwa, 2007; Stone & Stone, 2013; Stone, 2017).

Safari experiences include guided tours, mobile, self-drive, walking, fly-in and fly-back safaris, elephant watching, river cruises, primate viewing, horseback safaris, hot air ballooning, night game drives, and photography (Akama et al., 2011; Stone & Stone, 2013). African wildlife Safaris have started to focus more on the big five animals: buffalo, elephant, leopard, lion, and rhino. Safari tourism benefits many stakeholders, particularly national parks, local tourism providers, and local communities. Safari tourism contributes considerably to the local communities, considering the poor living conditions experienced by most Africans. It also employs host communities and contributes 80% of all African sales. On a typical safari tour, the average stay is ten days, the average tour price is $433 per person per day, and the daily out-of-pocket expenditure is $55 (UNWTO, 2015). With such economic and social benefits, safari tourism is now highly competitive between Eastern and Southern African countries. However, effective marketing can make a destination successful, and therefore, through market segmentation, the needs of current and potential tourists can be better met.

2.3. Zimbabwe tourism industry

Several iconic national parks in Africa attract millions of tourists, such as Table Mountain, The Serengeti, Hwange, and Gorongosa National Park (Nhamo et al., 2023). National parks have played a significant role in Zimbabwe's tourism industry. In general, the National parks sector consists of Safari tourism. In the last 30 years, Zimbabwe has seen economic, social, political, technological, and climatic changes

in the management of its national parks. Zimbabwe has 11 national parks, which the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority manages. The Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority operates under the Parks and Wildlife Act, 1975 Act of Parliament (Child et al., 2008; Matura & Mapira, 2018). Zimbabwe National Parks cover approximately an area of 5 million hectares, which is about 13% of Zimbabwe's total land area. Most parks are in economically deprived areas with hot and mountainous climatic conditions (Cameron, 2018; Mutanga et al., 2017; Nyaruwata & Runyowa, 2017).

Zimbabwe is also part of the Peace Parks initiative in South Africa. The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park is a collaboration that involves the management of shared natural resources between South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. Gonarezhou, which was also included in the current study, is part of the cross-border initiative, has a size of 5000 km^2, and the name "Gonarezhou" means "Place of Many Elephants." Mana Pools is part of the Lower Zambezi initiative between Zambia and Zimbabwe. Mana Pools is a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for its beautiful flora and fauna, home to a wide variety of mammals, over 350 bird species, and aquatic wildlife. It is home to more than 16,000 buffalo and more than 12,000 elephants. Hwange National Park is the largest park in Zimbabwe, covering approximately 14650 square kilometers. Hwange boasts a wide range of wildlife, with over 100 species of mammals and nearly 400 species of birds. Hwange is renowned for its distinct elephant sounds, and the Park's elephant population is one of the largest in the world (Cameron, 2018; Mutanga et al., 2017).

3. Methodology

This study was produced from Emmanuel Brighton T. Muraicho's thesis, which was prepared under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Kemal Birdir at Mersin University. The Ethics Committee Approval was obtained from OU Research Center, Milton Keynes, UK, with the decision numbered 2024/8-1E dated 19.08.2024.

This research aims to categorize tourists visiting the national parks in Zimbabwe based on the expected benefits and identify different tourist characteristics in terms of the benefits they expect. The research was conducted using a quantitative research design, and both descriptive and exploratory research models were used.

3.1. Research questions

RQ_1: What are the demographic and travel characteristics of tourists participating in safari tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

RQ_2: What factors influence tourists' decision to participate in safari tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

RQ_3: What are the dimensions of the benefits tourists expect from tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

RQ_4: How many segments does the tourist market in Zimbabwe's national parks consist of according to the expected benefit from safari tours? What are the profiles of these segments?

RQ_5: What are the complaints and likes of tourists participating in safari tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

3.2. Population and sample of the study

The research population consists of tourists who visited Zimbabwe for summer vacation. In 2018, 2,579,974 foreign tourists visited Zimbabwe. It was noted that the National Parks in the country attracted 957,752 visitors in 2018. 33,305 foreign tourists visited the Hwange National Park, 3.041 tourists visited Mana Pools National Park, and Gonarezhou National Park was visited by 2.554 foreign tourists (Letley et al., 2019; Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2019). However, due to time constraints, the study sample only includes tourists who visited Hwange, Mana Pools, and Gonarezhou National Parks in January, February, and March 2019. The tourists participating in the study on these dates from the study sample. The research used a non-probability convenience sampling method (Fricker, 2008).

3.3. Data collection tool

The relevant literature was reviewed to collect data, and the questionnaire was adapted. To determine the expected benefits of a safari holiday, a scale developed benefiting from the work of Akama & Kieti (2003), Huang & Sarigöllü (2012), Jang et al. (2002), Nduna & Zyl (2017). This first scale consists of 17 items. The second scale in the survey aimed to determine the factors influencing foreign tourists' decision to choose Zimbabwe's National as their destination, and it consisted of a total of 19 items. The scale was adapted from the studies of Huang & Sarigöllü (2012), Jang et al. (2002), and Nduna & Zyl (2017). Both scales are importance scales and are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The survey consists of 23 questions in total. The questions in the survey focus on determining the demographic and travel characteristics of tourists, and the questions are open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple-choice. The questionnaire was administered in Turkish and English. The survey was administered to tourists visiting the Gonarezhou, Hwange, and Mana Pools national parks during their summer holidays through face-to-face and web-based Hypertext Markup Language (HTML).

The study's pilot test was conducted in January 2019 on a group that shared similar characteristics with the target population. According to the data obtained from foreign tourists, the Cronbach's Alpha value of the scale measuring the expected benefits of a safari holiday was determined as 628, and the Cronbach's Alpha value of the second scale with 19 items was calculated as 855. Factor analysis was performed to determine the construct validity of the scales. The sample size was sufficient, with 307 questionnaires deemed sufficient for the study, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test showed a value of .810. Bartlett's test was significant for

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the scale "Expected benefits from Safari tour during the summer vacation." As a result of factor analysis, three factors were identified that explained 55.211% of the total variance. On the second scale, "Factors influencing tourists' decision to choose Zimbabwe's National Parks for a Safari tour," the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test was found to be .827, and Bartlett's test was significant, resulting in a three-factor structure, explaining a total variance of 54.64%. The study used different analyses, such as arithmetic mean, mode, median, and standard deviation, to evaluate data. In addition, t-test, ANOVA, factor analysis, and clustering analysis were applied.

4. Findings

4.1. Research question 1

What are the demographic and travel characteristics of tourists participating in safari tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

The demographic characteristics of foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe's national parks for Safari Tourism during summer vacation are presented in Table 1. According to the research findings, of the tourists who participated in the study, 49.2% are "women," and 48.9% are "men." When the ages of the tourists participating in the research were examined, it was determined that 44.3% were between the ages of "20-37" and 39.1% were between the ages of 38-53. Regarding marital status, it was determined that 41% of the tourists were "married," and 45.6% were "single,".11.4% emphasized that they live together. Regarding educational background, 42% of the tourists hold "undergraduate" degrees, and 26.7% are "master's" graduates. 18.9% of the tourists participating in the research are "college" graduates, and 10.4% are "high school" graduates.

In terms of occupation, 21.5% of the tourists are "students," 15% are "self-employed," 12.7% are "managers," 11.7% are "civil servants," 11.4% are "other," 9.8% are "academics," and 8.5% are "artists/mechanics/workers". When the income levels of foreign tourists visiting national parks were evaluated, it was found that 51.1% were in the "middle" income group and 28% were in the "upper middle" income group. Additionally, it was determined that 10.4% of the participants were in the "lower middle" income group, and 8.5% were in the "high" income group. When the nationalities of foreign tourists participating in the research are analyzed, the proportion of British tourists visiting national parks in Zimbabwe is 16.6%. South African tourists follow them at 14%, Americans at 11.1%, Australians at 9.1%, 6.5% Germans, 4.9% Canadians, 3.9 % Chinese, Mozambicans at 3.9%, South Koreans at 2%, and 1.3% Japanese.

When the accommodation places used by foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe National Parks for Safari Tour were evaluated, it was determined that 35.8% stayed in "Safari Lodge." Additionally, 25.1% of the participants are in "other" accommodation, with 11.7% in "4-star" hotels, 9.1% in "5-star" hotels, 8.5% in "3-star" hotels, and 7.8% with "friends/relatives". The travel characteristics of the tourists participating in the research are as follows: 38.1% of the tourists spent an average of 4-6 days per year on safari tourism. On the other hand, 30.3% of the tourists spent "1-3" days on safaris, 18.9% spent "7-9" days, and 10.7% spent "10 days or more". The percentage of tourists who had previously visited Zimbabwe for holiday purposes was 34.2%. The percentage of tourists coming to Zimbabwe for the first time with this trip is 63.8%. 11.7% of the tourists who participated in the survey stated that they had visited Zimbabwe "7 times or more" before. 10.4% of the tourists stated that they had come to Zimbabwe "1-3 times," and 9.8% said they came to Zimbabwe "4-6 times". On the other hand, 76.2% of Safari visitors said they would like to revisit Zimbabwe, while 21.8% will not visit Zimbabwe's national parks after their last tour.

It was determined that 59.3% of the tourists participated in the Safari Tour through tour packages, while 38.3% did not use tour packages. It was determined that 30.3% of the tourists went on vacation with their "friends," followed by those who went on holiday with their spouses, with a rate of 15.6%. The rate of tourists who go on vacation "alone" is 11.4%, and 8.5% "with their families." Regarding the total amount of money spent on this holiday, it was determined that 25.7% of the tourists spent "$1-1000". The percentage of tourists spending "over $4001" is 23.5%. This is followed by tourists spending between "$1001-2000" with 19.9% and between "$2001-3000" with 13.7%. Additionally, it was determined that 12.1% of the tourists spent between "3001-4000$". When analyzing the tourists' satisfaction with Zimbabwe national parks, it was found that 45.6% are "delighted" and 36.2% are "satisfied." Therefore, 81.8% of the tourists were satisfied with the national parks. The percentage of those unsatisfied with the national parks is 4.2%, and the rate of those dissatisfied is 3.3%. The rate of those who are undecided is 8.8%.

When the activities of the tourists during their holidays are examined, the top five activities are (1) "safari walks" with a percentage of 64.2%, (2) "bird watching" with 52.1%, (3) "walking and camping" with 39.7% (4) % "game viewing (painted dogs, lions)" with 34.8 and (5) "river rafting" with 28.3%. Other activities included "fishing" with 27.7%, "safari education" with 13.6%, "hiking trails" with 12.1%, and 11.7% visiting local and regional events". The most used source of information in choosing a holiday was "travel agencies" with 63.8%. This was followed by "internet/social media" with 56.7%, "friends/family/colleagues" with 40.7%, "travel magazine" with 40.1% and 36,8% "documents/movies."

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of foreign tourists

	n	%		n	%
Gender			*Marital status*		
Female	151	49,2	Single	140	45,6
Male	150	48,8	Married	126	41,0
Unspecified	6	2	Living together	35	11,4
Total	307	100	Unspecified	6	2
			Total	307	100
Age			*Teaching status*		
18-19	21	6,8	High school	32	10,4
20-37	136	44,3	College	58	18,9
38-53	120	39,1	Undergraduate	129	42
54 and above	21	6,8	Postgraduate	82	26,7
Unspecified	9	2,9	Unspecified	6	2
Total	307	100	Total	307	100
Nationality			*Profession*		
Germany	20	6,5	Academician	30	9,8
English	51	16,6	Self-employment	46	15
South African	43	14	Craftsman/Mechanic/Worker	26	8,5
Chinese	12	3,9	Officer	36	11,7
Canadian	15	4,9	Retired	9	2,9
Mozambican	12	3,9	Student	66	21,5
South Korean	6	2	Unemployed	14	4,6
Australian	28	9,1	Manager	39	12,7
Japanese	4	1,3	Others	35	11,4
American	34	11,1	Unspecified	6	2
Others	69	22,5	Total	307	100
Unspecified	13	4,2			
Total	307	100			
Income status			*Where did you stay this holiday?*		
Below-middle	32	10,4	5-star hotel	28	9,1
Middle	157	51,1	4-star hotel	36	11,7
Above-middle	86	28	3-star hotel	26	8,5
High	26	8,5	Friends/Relatives	24	7,8
Unspecified	6	2	Safari Lodge	110	35,8
Total	307	100	Others	77	25,1
			Unspecified	6	2
			Total	307	100

Table 2. Factors influencing tourists' decision to go on a safari tour in Zimbabwe National Parks

Factors	Load	Eigen-value	Explained vari-ance	Mean	Reliability coefficient
I. Comfort and affordability		*3,941*	*30,318*	*37749*	*,722*
6.Friendly and responsive parking staff	,564				
9.Value of money	,798				
15.Affordable admission price	,733				
17. Prices in park restaurants and shops	,669				
II. Security and Quality Service		*1,599*	*15,448*	*4,1462*	*,700*
1.Adaptation of the infrastructure to the natural environment	,708				
2.First aid services in the national park	,777				
3.Security and security services in the national park	,741				
4.Knowledge level of guides/park staff	,514				
10. Accommodation Quality	,523				
III. Access to entertainment and education		*1,365*	*8,874*	*3,3372*	*,738*
8.Nightlife and entertainment	,619				
14.Information panels about flora and fauna	,730				
18.Number and accessibility of parking spaces	,663				
19.Information panels about cultural and historical features	,776				

Varimax rotated principal component analysis. Total variance explained: %54,640; KMO: ,827; Chi-Square for Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: 1013,290; SD. 78; p<0.0001; Overall average: 3.7830; Cronbach's Alpha for the entire scale: ,804; Reaction Categories: 1: Not important at all … 5: Very important.

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Table 3. Factor analysis according to the expected benefits of the foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe National Parks from the safari tour

Factors	Load	Eigen-value	Explained variance	Mean	Reliability coefficient
I. Socialization and self-improvement		*4,213*	*32,411*	*3,5269*	*,773*
4.Interact with local people during my vacation	,833				
3.Meeting people from different cultural backgrounds	,748				
11.To learn about new cultures on holiday	,664				
5.Meet people looking for similar holiday experiences	,631				
15.To increase my knowledge on this holiday	,522				
II. Getting to know nature and wildlife		*1,599*	*12,303*	*4,0108*	*,729*
16.Learn about wildlife on the go	,830				
14.Learning nature during the journey	,721				
8.Spending time in a natural environment	,703				
17 Enjoying an environmental ecology trip	,519				
III. Relaxation		*1,365*	*10,496*	*3,9668*	*,649*
13.Experience a change from a busy business life	,784				
12.To experience a speed change from my daily life	,741				
6.Rejuvenating after this visit	,581				
2.To discover new places	,522				

Varimax rotated principal component analysis. Explained total variance: %55,211; KMO Sample Adequacy: ,810; Chi-Square for Bartlett's Sphericity Test: 1105,335; s.d. 78; p<0.0001; Overall mean: 3,8110; Cronbach's Alpha for the whole scale: ,822 Reaction categories: 1: Not important at all … 5: Very important.

Table 4. Cluster analysis applied to benefit dimensions

Factor	Marketing segment I (n=156)	Marketing segment II (n=144)	F value	I-II	I-III	II-III
Socializing and self-improvement	17.42	11.52	471.938	***	***	***
Getting to know nature and wildlife	14.03	12.18	49.284	***	***	***
Clusters	13.87	11.63	75.332	***	***	***
Clusters	Those seeking socializa-tion	Those seekers of nature and wildlife				

***p<0.001; [x]The mean values are calculated based on a 5-point Likert scale (1: Not important at all … 5: Very important)

Table 5. Distribution of Market Segments by Gender

Gender	Those seeking socialization		Those seeking nature and wildlife	
	f	%	f	%
Female	75	48,1	76	50,3
Male	81	51,9	68	49,7
Total	156	100	144	100

Not: X2: 0,662; SD: 1; p=0,416

Table 6. Distribution of market segments by nationality

Nationality	Those seeking realization		Those seeking nature and wildlife		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Germany	11	7,1	9	6,5	20	6,8
English	25	16,2	26	18,7	51	17,4
South African	21	13,6	22	15,8	43	14,7
Chinese	9	5,8	3	2,2	12	4,1
Canadian	11	7,1	4	2,9	15	5,1
Mozambican	6	3,9	6	4,3	12	4,1
South Korean	3	1,9	3	2,2	6	2,0
Australian	11	7,1	17	12,2	28	9,6
Japanese	2	1,3	2	1,4	4	1,4
American	16	10,4	18	12,9	34	11,6
Others	39	25,3	29	20,9	68	23,2
Total	154	100	139	100	293	100

Note: X2: 8,638; SD: 10; p=0,567

Table 7. Distribution of market segments by satisfaction levels

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with this national park	Socializing seekers		Nature and wildlife seekers	
	f	%	f	%
Not satisfied at all	6	3,8	7	4,9
Not Satisfied	6	3,8	4	2,8
Undecided	10	6,4	17	11,8
Satisfied	56	35,9	54	37,5
Very satisfied	78	55,7	62	43,1
Total	156	100	144	100

Not: X2: 3.683a; SD.: 4; p=0,451

Table 8. Analysis results of foreign tourists' likes and complaints about Zimbabwe National Parks

(n=260)	n	%	(n=259)	n	%
Preferences of tourists who go on a safari tour in Zimbabwe's national parks			Complaints of tourists who go on a safari tour in Zimbabwe's national parks		
-variety of animals	101	38,8	Transportation and infrastructure	74	28,5
-Good management	80	30,7	-Everything is expensive	59	22,7
-Good parks	60	23	-Aggressive staff	31	11,9
-Delicious food	42	16,1	-Unable to see animals	21	0,8
-Knowledgeable staff	31	11,9	-No electricity	11	0,4
-Safety	24	0,9	-No petrol	8	0,3
-Well-trained guides	19	0,7	-Animals causing damage to belongings	9	0,3
-Weather	3	0,1	-Lack of water	7	0,2
			-Poachers	4	0,1

Note: The total exceeds 100% because multiple options were selected.

4.2. Research question 2

What factors influence tourists' decision to participate in safari tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the factors influencing tourists' decision to go on a safari tour in Zimbabwe's national parks. While conducting the factor analysis, attention was paid to the items having a correlation level of .500 or higher, and the factors with an eigenvalue more significant than one were processed. The validity of the factor analysis is assessed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, where a KMO test score above 60% is desired (Nakip, 2003). In the study, the KMO sampling adequacy ratio of the scale of "Factors Influencing Tourists' Decision to Go on a Safari Tour in Zimbabwe National Parks" was determined to be 82% (Table 2).

Table 2 shows the findings of the factor analysis. The analysis determined that the items were grouped into three factors. The total variance explained is 54.64%. The factors were named "comfort and affordability," "safety and quality service," and "access to entertainment and education."

4.3. Research question 3

What are the dimensions of the benefits tourists expect from tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the dimensions of the benefits expected from the safari tour by foreign tourists making safari tours in Zimbabwe's national parks. It was observed that the expected benefits were grouped under three dimensions (Table 3). In the factor analysis, it was determined that four items did not fit into any factor. The remaining 13 items were subjected to factor analysis again. According to the factor analysis, the KMO test score for the scale was 81% (Table 3). The total variance explained was determined as 55.211%. The factors were named "'socialization and self-development", 'knowing nature and wildlife' and 'relaxing.'

4.4. Research question 4

How many segments does the tourist market in Zimbabwe consist of according to the expected benefit from safari tours? What are the profiles of these segments?

Hierarchical Clustering and K-means Cluster analyses were performed on the three benefit factors obtained through factor analysis to find the answer to the fourth research question. In the study, a hierarchical clustering analysis was conducted first. Upon examining the clustering coefficients, it was determined that there could be either 3 or 4 clusters. Subsequently, K-means cluster analysis resulted in 2 market segments (clusters). While forming these clusters, care was taken to ensure that each cluster contained a minimum of 30 participants. The clusters were named according to the factor with the highest mean within each cluster. The results of the clustering analysis are presented in Table 4.

Market Segment I: The first market segment comprises 156 foreign tourists. This segment is named "seekers of socialization" because the factor with the highest mean among the three factors in this market segment is "socializing and self-improvement" ($\bar{x}$ = 17.42). The other factors have lower means.

Market Segment II: The second tourist market segment is named "seekers of nature and wildlife ($\overline{x}$ = 12.18)" because it has the highest mean among the dimensions considered. This segment is composed of 144 foreign tourists. It has been found that tourists in this segment try to relax, socialize, and engage in self-improvement during the safari tour.

The research showed that 48.9% of international safari tourists are male, and 49,2% are female. However, when considering the distribution of gender within market segments, it is noted that the proportion of female respondents who are "seeking socialization" was 48.1%, and 51.9% were male (Table 5). On the other hand, in the "seekers of nature and wildlife" segment, 50.3% are females, and 49.7% are males. Based on these results, during marketing activities, it can be concluded that both male and female participants should be equally addressed in both market segments.

The characteristics of the market segments based on age show that the ages of foreign tourists in both market segments are close to each other. It was determined that 36.5% of the foreign tourists "seeking socialization" foreign tourists were "married," 35.3% were "single," and 10.3% were "living together." On the other hand, among the "seekers of nature and wildlife" foreign tourists, 47.2% are "married," 29.9% are "single," and 13.2% are "living together." According to the research, among the foreign tourists in the "seekers of socialization" market segment, 41.7% are "undergraduate" graduates, 25.6% are "graduate" (master's) graduates, 20.5% are "associate degree" graduates and 9.6% are "high school" graduates. On the other hand, among the foreign tourists in the "seekers of nature and wildlife" market segment, 43.1% are "undergraduate" graduates, 20.8% are "graduate" (master's) graduates, 18.1% are "associate degree" graduates and 11.8% are "high school" graduates. According to these results, it can be said that marketing managers should primarily focus their marketing activities mainly on "undergraduate," "graduate," and "college" graduates for both market segments.

Based on the cross-tabulation results shown in Table 6, it is determined that most foreign tourists in both market segments are "students" and have "middle" income levels. When analyzing the market segments according to nationality, it is observed that tourists from "other" nationalities make up the most considerable portion in both market segments. The highest proportions of tourists in the "seekers of socialization" segment are tourists from the following nationalities: "British (16.2%)", "South African (13.6%)", "American (10.4%)", "Australian (7.1%)", "German (7.1%)", "Canadian (7.1%)", "Chinese (5.8%)", "Mozambican (3.9%)", "South Korean (1.9%)", and "Japanese (1.3%)". When examining the nationalities of foreign tourists in the "seekers of nature and wildlife" market segment, the following proportions have been determined, respectively: "British (18.7%)", "South African (15.8%)", "American (12.9%)", "Australian (12.2%)", "German (6.5%)", "Mozambican (4.3%)", "Canadian (2.9%)", "Chinese (2.2%)", "South Korean (2.2%)", and "Japanese (1.4%)". Table 7 shows the satisfaction of foreign tourists who have taken a safari vacation in Zimbabwe's National Parks. In the, 55.7% of foreign tourists in the "Seeking Socialization" segment expressed that they were "very satisfied." The percentage of foreign tourists who stated they were "satisfied" is 35.9%. As for the foreign tourists in the "nature and wildlife seekers" segment, 43.1% of them mentioned being "very satisfied." Following them are 37.5% of foreign tourists who reported being "satisfied."

4.5. Research question 5

What are the complaints and likes of tourists participating in safari tours in Zimbabwe's national parks?

After visiting Zimbabwe's national parks during the summer vacation, foreign tourists who participated in the research were asked open-ended questions about what aspects of Zimbabwe's national parks they liked or had complaints about. The results are shown in Table 8. It was determined that the most liked aspect by the foreign tourists who took a safari tour in Zimbabwe's national parks was the variety of animals (38.8%). 30.7% of the tourists liked the "good management," 23% liked the "good parks," 16.1% liked the "delicious food," 11.9% liked the "knowledgeable staff," 0.9% liked the "security," 0.7% liked the "educated guides," and 0.1% liked the "weather."

When the data relating to the complaints of foreign tourists was analyzed, it was noted that the most complained-about aspect was "transportation and infrastructure" (28.5%). The percentage of participants who stated that everything was expensive is 22.7% of the complaints. This was followed by 11.9% of the participants complaining about "aggressive staff" and 0.8% complaining about "not being able to see animals." In addition, 0.4% of tourists complained about "lack of electricity," 0.3% about "lack of fuel," 0.3% about "animals damaging belongings," 0.2% about "experiencing water scarcity," and 0.1% about "the presence of people hunting in the national parks."

5. Results, discussion and recommendations

African countries have long supported biodiversity conservation through the sustainable use of natural resources and have achieved tremendous success in protecting and restoring wildlife populations (UNWTO, 2015). Safari tourism has become immensely popular in Africa as it drives sustainable development (UNWTO, 2015). This study aims to identify the expected benefits of foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe's national parks by categorizing them into similar groups, profiling them, and offering solutions and suggestions based on the findings obtained from the evaluations of the data obtained from 307 international tourists.

It was determined that the ratio of "female" and "male" foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe and participating in safari tours is evenly distributed, with 45.6% being "single." Most

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fall within the age group of "20-37." Based on the nationalities of the foreign tourists participating in the study, it was observed that British tourists had the highest percentage of 16.6%. "South Africans" followed with 14%, and Americans with 11.1%. Approximately 42% of the tourists were university graduates. Regarding income levels of foreign tourists visiting the national parks, 51.1% were confirmed to be "middle-income" tourists. In addition, 15% of the foreign tourists were "self-employed." Similar demographic results were found in Huang & Sarigöllü (2012) research on tourists visiting Latin America. They noted that more women than men visited Latin America, with most visitors falling within the "20-34" age group, followed by the "35-54" age group. Most tourists had received a university education and were of middle-income level.

When the travel characteristics of the tourists are examined, it was found that most of the tourists participating in the safari tour spend an average of "4-6 days (38.1%)" per year for safari tourism. While 34.2% of the tourists had previously visited Zimbabwe National Parks for holiday purposes, 63.8% had never been to Zimbabwe before. It was found that 59.3% of foreign tourists purchased package tours during their visit to Zimbabwe's national parks. The rate of tourists acting individually is 38.8%. It has been determined that the decision-making process for 27.7% of the tourists took "1-4 months".

It has been determined that 63.8% of foreign safari tourists use "travel agencies" as information for their travel preferences. 30.3% of foreign safari tourists went with their "friends." For accommodation preferences, 35.8% of the tourists stayed in a "safari lodge," and 25.1% preferred "other" accommodation facilities. During the safari tour, 64.2% of the tourists participated in "walking safari," 52.1% in "bird watching," and 39.7% in "hiking and camping" activities. Most tourists spend between "$1-1000" during the trip. Additionally, the % of tourists who are very satisfied and satisfied with the national park is 81.8%.

In the research, factor analysis was used to determine the characteristics that influence the decision-making of foreign tourists who spend their summer holidays in Zimbabwe's national parks and participate in safari tours. Three factors were identified based on the results of the factor analysis. These are 1) comfort and affordability, 2) safety and quality service, and 3) access to entertainment and education. Jang et al.'s (2002) study has similar findings.

Factor analysis was applied to determine the benefits expected from the safari tour by foreign tourists who take safari tours in national parks during the summer vacation, and 3 benefit factors were determined. The factors obtained were (1) socialization and self-improvement, (2) understanding nature and wildlife, and (3) relaxation. A similar study by Nduna (2017) in the literature obtained nine benefit factors named (1) Spending time with loved ones, (2) Social bonds, (3) Relaxation, (4) Natural environment, (5) Outdoor adventures, (6) History, (7) Culture, (8) Escape and (9) Learning, and factors 2, 3 and 4 support the factors in this study.

Cluster analysis determined the number of market segmentations that could be created according to the benefits expected from the Safari tour by foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe's national parks. According to the cluster analysis results, two market segments were obtained. The clusters were named (1) Socialization seekers and (2) Nature and wildlife seekers. Nduna and Zyl (2017) studied the benefit segmentation of tourists visiting Mpumalanga in South Africa. In the research, two segments were identified, and the segments were named "nature-escapists" and "culture-naturalist."

Looking at the characteristics of the market segments obtained, the "socialization seekers" segment is composed of British, South African, and American tourists. It was also determined that the majority of the participants in this segment are "male," "married," and "20-37" age group. They are predominantly "students" with an "average" income. The 'nature and wildlife seekers' market segment comprises British, South African, and Australian tourists. The majority of the tourists are "female" and "married" and are also in the "20-37" age group. Similarly, most are "students" and "middle class" income groups. Therefore, marketing managers can diversify their promotional activities by considering these features in their marketing activities for both markets.

Based on the travel characteristics of tourists, the following differences have been noted in these two market segments: "Socialization Seekers" segment: most of the foreign tourists in this segment have not visited Zimbabwe's national parks for safari tourism before, but they have previously visited Zimbabwe for vacation purposes "4-6 times". Most of the tourists in this segment participate in safari tourism for a minimum of "4-6 days" per year. Most tourists travel with their friends, opt for package tours, prefer "hunting lodges" as their accommodation, and are "very satisfied" with the national parks. These findings are consistent with the results of a study conducted by Jang et al. (2002). They observed that tourists traveled with tour packages, most with their friends or spouses.

The travel characteristics of the foreign tourists who make up the "Nature and wildlife seekers" segment are as follows: most of them visit Zimbabwe national parks for different purposes and have visited Zimbabwe "1-3" times before, take "4-6 months" period to make a vacation decision. On average, they spend "4-6 days" a year on safari tourism, typically use "package tours", and prefer to travel with their "friends". They prefer "hunting lodge" for accommodation and are "very satisfied" with national parks. Similar results were found in Jang et al.'s (2002) study.

The suggestions for the problems based on the responses given by the tourists to the open-ended questions are as follows:

Transport and infrastructure have become obsolete in the last two decades. Safari tourists complain that the roads are full of potholes and that driving is dangerous. Tourists have also expressed dissatisfaction with the long distance between Victoria Falls and Hwange National Parks, which was

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long, and the old accommodation facilities. All these problems should be addressed by making renovations to equip the tourists with the best luxury accommodation they desire. It was concluded that roads must be rebuilt and widened to travel safely and faster.

Some accommodations reported aggressive employees. Hotel managers train their staff members in "guest relations management" so that they can have positive contact with guests.

Tourists also reported no fuel for their cars in national parks. Tourism authorities should supply fuel in national parks reserved for tourist use only. This would allow tourists to have adequate vehicle fuel and ease their travel and exploration within the park areas.

Poaching has become a significant problem as the number of animals, such as elephants and rhinos, rapidly decreases. National park authorities should be equipped with appropriate equipment to combat poaching and use some of their income for human resources improvement. The public should be educated about the importance of natural resources, and heavy penalties should be imposed on those engaging in poaching activities.

It has been stated that wildlife destroys things such as clothes and camping tents in the camp. This is a challenging issue to control and it is recommended to set up a security perimeter around accommodation areas to prevent animals from destroying any belongings and property.

Continuous drought conditions have resulted in water shortages for animals and accommodation providers in national parks. However, there is a simple solution. Authorities are recommended to drill and pump water from the ground to provide continuous water for animals and guests.

5.1. Theoretical implications

This study addresses Zimbabwe's benefit segmentation. It contributes significantly to the existing literature, as there is no study on this topic in Zimbabwe. This study provides valuable information for marketing managers and decision-makers in the tourism sector to fill the gap in the literature. This study contributes significantly to understanding the benefits and expectations of foreign tourists visiting Hwange, Mana Pools, and Gonarezhou national parks in Zimbabwe.

5.2. Practical implications

This study provides important information for the safari tourism market, safari accommodation facilities and safari marketers, and valuable holiday experiences of safari tourists in national parks.

- Destination and national park managers can implement different practices to meet the expectations of current and potential local and foreign tourists. To do this, local and foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe's national parks can be divided into similar groups, and their profiles can be determined based on their expected benefits.
- It is recommended that transportation and infrastructure be renewed to facilitate Safari tourism in the national parks where the study was carried out.
- It has been determined that there needed to be more water in the national parks where the study was conducted. The authorities should open boreholes to pump water from the ground and provide continuous water to the animals and guests.
- It is recommended that the carbon footprint of national parks be paid attention to.
- Green initiative incentives can be implemented for tourists to promote sustainable living.
- Loyalty programs can be developed.
- Destination managers and marketers should develop proactive strategies to minimize complaints from tourists who experience safari tourism.

5.3. Limitations and directions for future research

This study is limited to foreign tourists visiting Zimbabwe's Hwange, Mana Pools, and Gonarezhou national parks. Future studies can be conducted on tourists visiting different countries and cities for safari tourism to generalize the findings.

- Data collection was limited to three months of distribution with the questionnaire in the study.
- The study could be conducted in other national parks in Zimbabwe.
- This study can be conducted for domestic tourists and compared with the current study.
- Using qualitative research methods, more detailed studies can be conducted on smaller sample groups, and the expectations of tourists can be examined in more detail.
- Researchers can also collect information about tourists' satisfaction with their safari experience.
- Future studies could approach this research from the perspective of managers.

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Emmanuel Brighton T Muraicho: Conceptualizing and writing the original draft, methodological design, investigations, formal analysis, interpretation, and critical review.

Kemal Birdir (Advisor): Methodological design, formal analysis, and critical review and editing of the paper.

Sevda Sahilli Birdir: Formal analysis, critical review and editing of the paper, and publication preparation.

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The authors reported no potential competing interest.

Ethics committee approval

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