

DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

**PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF COASTAL
TOURISM IN THE KWAZULU NATAL PROVINCE OF
SOUTH AFRICA.**

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**Prospects and Challenges of Coastal Tourism in the KwaZulu Natal
Province of South Africa.**

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Management Sciences**

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at the Durban University of Technology

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APPROVED FOR FINAL SUBMISSION

Supervisor: Dr N S Chili Signature:

Date: August 2024

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, the undersigned, certify that:

- I am familiar with the rules regulating higher qualifications at Durban University of Technology, and understand the seriousness with which DUT will deal with violations of ethical practice in my research.
- Where I have used the work of others this has been correctly referenced in the proposal and again referenced in the bibliography. Any research of a similar nature that has been used in the development of my research project is also referenced.
- This project has not been submitted to any other educational institution for the purpose of a qualification.

I HEREBY DECLARE THAT THE ABOVE FACTS ARE CORRECT.

Signed:

Date: August 2024

(Student)

SUPERVISOR APPROVAL

I hereby approve the final submission of this Thesis.

Name : Dr N S Chili

Signature :

Date : August 2024

DEDICATIONS

This dissertation is dedicated to my family for their indelible patience and support.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBD	: Convention on Biological Diversity
DEDT	: Department of Economic Development and Tourism
DMO	: Destination Management Organisation
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
ICM	: Integrated Coastal Management
ICZM	: Integrated Coastal Zone Management
KZN	: KwaZulu Natal
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organisations
SME	: Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises
UNCLOS	: United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea
UNWTO	: United Nations World Tourism Organisation

ABSTRACT

The research explored prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. The research employed a mixed-methods approach. Primary data is gathered through interviews with key stakeholders in the tourism industry, tourism operators, and government officials. Additionally, surveys were conducted with tourists in KwaZulu Natal to gain insights into their perspectives, preferences, and satisfaction levels. The aesthetic beauty of the coastline offers significant opportunities for tourism development. The province's strategic location, accessibility, and well-established tourism infrastructure further contribute to its potential as a premier coastal destination. However, the research identified challenges which hinder sustainable coastal tourism development. Environmental concerns such as pollution, habitat degradation, and climate change impact affect the coastal ecosystems, requiring effective management strategies. The research highlighted the significance of involving local communities in decision-making process, promoting cultural heritage preservation, and ensuring equitable distribution of tourism benefits. Collaboration between government bodies, private sector entities, and community organisations is crucial for addressing these challenges and fostering sustainable coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal. Recommendations are provided for all stakeholders involved. By adopting sustainable practices, preserving natural and cultural assets, and fostering community participation, KwaZulu Natal Province can unlock the full potential of its coastal tourism sector.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This study seeks to explore the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in the province of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa. The chapter provides the study background which presents an accurate synthesis of context of the study, the overview of both coastal as well as marine tourism in KwaZulu Natal in South Africa, type inquiry and data collection methods, theoretical framework, research problem and aims, the role of coastal and marine-based tourism in Durban, motivation for carrying out this study, dissertation structure, interpretation of major key terms and the summary of the whole chapter.

1.1 The Background to the Study

Coastal tourism has become an integral part of sustainable development and presents opportunities to balance economic growth and environmental protection. Mendes and Nunes (2019) found that coastal regions are some of the most sought-after destinations for travelers, offering a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage and recreational opportunities. The Great Barrier Reef in Australia is one of the most famous coastal tourist destinations in the world. The destination attracts millions of visitors every year, contributing significantly to the country's economy. According to a study by Deloitte Access Economics (2017), the Great Barrier Reef generates approximately AUD 6.4 billion in economic activity annually and supports approximately 64,000 jobs. The study also highlighted the reef's value as a natural asset, attracting visitors and providing opportunities for various tourism-related industries.

Rosado-May and Valenzuela (2018) conducted a research paper that examined the socio-economic impacts of tourism in the Cancun region of Mexico. Cancun, is a large region located on the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico known for its beautiful beaches and vibrant tourism industry. The study revealed that coastal tourism contributed significantly to job creation and infrastructure development (Rosado-May & Valenzuela, 2018).

In another research study, Mendes and Nunes (2019) examined the various economic effects of tourism with a particular focus on coastal tourism in the Algarve region of Portugal. The region is known for its coastal beauty and attracts a significant number of tourists every year. A study by Kizys and Figueiredo (2017) provides insight into the employment impacts of coastal tourism in the region. In particular, the study revealed employment created in sectors such as accommodation, catering and related tourism activities. Thus, the study revealed substantial multiplier effects on employment as coastal tourism not only directly employed individuals in the tourism industry but also supported employment in various indirect sectors. According to the Algarve Tourism Board, the coastal tourism sector in the Algarve region was a significant employer and in 2018 the sector accounted for 30% of total employment in the region.

Coastal tourism has gained wide recognition and has become a pillar of the economies of most African nations. A Tanzanian study by Njau and Mkiramweni (2018) examined the economic impacts of tourism in Zanzibar. Zanzibar is described as an archipelago off the coast of Tanzania known for its pristine beaches and rich cultural heritage. Research has revealed that coastal tourism contributes significantly to employment, income generation and foreign exchange earnings. The study is

similar to a study conducted in Kenya in which Kibicho et al., (2020) demonstrated the positive contribution of tourism to the country's economy. The study found that the coastal city of Mombasa provides tourist attractions that are key drivers of economic growth in the region.

The economic benefit of coastal tourism is not a new phenomenon in South Africa. Studies have shown that coastal tourism plays a key role in the South African economy (Rogerson & Visser, 2019; Saayman & Saayman, 2016). As noted by Rogerson and Visser (2019), coastal tourism has an undisputed role in Durban's economy. Durban is a city located on the east coast of South Africa and home to popular coastal tourist destinations. According to Rogerson and Visser (2019), coastal tourism in Durban contributes a lot to this

South Africa has long been recognized as a tourism destination, attracting both domestic and international visitors. For example, large cities in South Africa such as the Central Drakensberg region and urban tourism are a major tourist attraction (Njau & Mkiramweni, 2019). Its coastline boasts stunning beaches and cultural heritage, making it an attractive destination for tourists seeking sun, sand and adventure. The economic importance of coastal-based tourism South Africa is evident as it contributes significantly to employment, foreign currency reserves earnings and local businesses. According to the South Africa Tourism Annual Report (Saayman & Saayman, 2016).

Despite the existing success of coastal tourism in the Republic of South Africa, there is still untapped potential for the growth and development of coastal tourism in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The region's unique natural resources, including its diverse coral reefs and estuaries, present various opportunities for a variety of

tourism activities. In addition, the cultural heritage of the Zulu people and their traditions combined with vibrant local communities offer the potential for cultural tourism experiences. These prospects, if properly exploited, can diversify the offer of tourism products and attract a wider range of tourists to the region.

1.2 Research Problem

Studies done by Mtapuri, O., Daitai, J., Camilleri, M.A., & Dluzewska, A. (2024) indicate that coastal tourism plays a critical role in driving economic growth as well as development in many regions around the world. In the case of KwaZulu Natal Province in South Africa, coastal areas have significant potential for tourism development due to their diverse natural and cultural attractions. However, despite the apparent prospects, there is a lack of comprehensive research examining the specific prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in this region. Existing literature provides limited insights into the unique dynamics and complexities of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal province by failing to address key gaps in understanding (Kibicho et al., 2020; Rogerson & Visser, 2019; Saayman & Saayman, 2016).

Existing studies (Rogerson & Visser, 2019; UNWTO, 2015) on coastal tourism in South Africa often focus on the national or regional level and neglect the specific nuances and characteristics of individual provinces. While some studies discuss the overall tourism industry in KwaZulu Natal province, such as Saayman and Saayman's (2019) work on destination competitiveness, there is a lack of research specifically delving into the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in the region. Saayman and Saayman (2019) conducted a research study on tourism in South Africa, but focused mainly on the trends and economic benefits of the sector. While I acknowledge that there is a growing literature on tourism trends, specifically

on coastal tourism, the fallacy is that research is generally limited to South Africa. This gap in the literature hinders the development of effective strategies and policies to exploit the full potential of coastal tourism in the province of KwaZulu Natal.

Furthermore, the theories and frameworks that explain the development and management of coastal tourism have primarily been derived from international contexts and may not fully capture the unique challenges and opportunities facing the province of KwaZulu Natal. Theories such as the destination life cycle model proposed by Butler (1980) and the tourism area life cycle framework by Butler and Wanhill (2003) have even been widely applied in various global settings but have not been sufficiently explored in the KwaZulu context. Natal Province. Consequently, there is a need for research that adapts and applies these theories to the specific conditions and circumstances of coastal tourism in this province. This study therefore aims to address the aforementioned gaps and provide a comprehensive understanding of the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in the province of Kwazulu Natal. By conducting an in-depth analysis of the region's natural combined with cultural resources, tourism infrastructure, visitor profile and stakeholder perspectives, the research will contribute to existing body of knowledge mainly on coastal tourism development (Kibicho et al., 2020; Saayman & Saayman, 2019). Furthermore, by evaluating the applicability of established theories and frameworks, such as the destination life cycle model and the tourism life cycle framework, in the context of KwaZulu Natal province, this study will provide valuable insights for policy makers, tourism planners and industry stakeholders effectively use the potential of coastal tourism in the region.

1.4 Research Aim

The research explored the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa.

1.5 Research Objectives

The study is guided by the following specific research objective;

1. To assess the current state of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.
2. To explore the prospects and opportunities for coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.
3. To examine the challenges and barriers hindering the sustainable growth of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.
4. To examine the impacts of coastal tourism on the local economy, environment, and communities.
5. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies and strategies in addressing the challenges and promoting sustainable coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

1.6 Research Questions

- What is the current state of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province?
- What are the key prospects and opportunities for coastal tourism development in KwaZulu Natal Province?
- What are the major challenges and barriers faced by coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province? [environmental issues, infrastructure limitations, seasonality, socio-economic impacts]

- How does coastal tourism contribute to local economy, environment, and communities in KwaZulu Natal?
- What policies, regulations and strategies are currently in place to address the challenges and promote sustainable coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province?
- How effective are the existing policies and strategies in addressing the identified challenges and enhancing the prospects of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal?
- What are the perspectives and experiences of key stakeholders regarding the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province? [government agencies, local communities, tourism operators]

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study on prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in Kwazulu Natal Province of South Africa lies in its potential to contribute to valuable insights and practical implications to various stakeholders. The study provides evidence-based recommendations and strategies to policymakers and government agencies responsible for coastal tourism development in KwaZulu Natal Province. By identifying the prospects and challenges, the study can inform policy formulation, planning, and decision making processes, leading to more effective and sustainable tourism development practices.

Coastal tourism plays a significant role in the economic growth and development of many regions. Understanding the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province allows for the identification of sustainable practices and

policies. The study can contribute to the promotion of environmentally responsible tourism, conservation of natural resources, and the well-being of the local communities, ensuring long-term benefits for both residents and visitors.

Coastal tourism has the potential to generate substantial economic benefits, including employment opportunities, income generation, and local business development. By examining the prospects of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province, the study can shed light on the economic potential and opportunities for diversification and expansion of the tourism sector. This can support economic planning and empower local communities through increased participation in the tourism industry.

The study can examine the social implications of coastal tourism on local communities in KwaZulu Natal Province. Through an understanding of the challenges such as social inequalities, cultural conflicts, or displacement, the research can inform strategies to enhance community engagement, empowerment, and inclusivity. This can promote social cohesion, cultural preservation, and the well-being of residents living in and around coastal tourism destinations.

The research study also contributes to the existing body of knowledge on coastal tourism in South Africa, especially in KwaZulu Natal Province. The prospects and challenges of coastal tourism are explored in this research, this fills gaps in the literature, providing a deeper understanding of coastal tourism dynamics, and offer insights into specific context of the province. This knowledge enrichment can serve as a foundation for future research and inform academic discussions and debates in the field of tourism studies.

1.7 Study Area

This study was carried out in eThekweni District Municipality located on the Durban, which is the largest city in KwaZulu Natal province. The city is geographically located on the eastern coast of South Africa. The district municipality encompasses the city of Durban and its surrounding areas. The city is geographically located on the Bay of Natal along the Indian Ocean which makes it a very conducive area for coastal tourism.

In terms of inland tourism, Durban has several parks which include the Botanic Gardens, Jameson Park and the Snake Park. There are also several museums. In terms of cultural aspects, Durban has a diverse ethnic base, with a mixture of very rich cultural values and norms. The area has Zulus, British and those of Indian descent. This alone has a great influence on tourism as a variety of cuisines, cultures and religions is brought about by the different ethnic groups. Economically, there will be a boost in domestic tourism. As a result of this diversity in tourism-related activities, Durban was regarded as the world's greenest city by Husqvarna Urban Green Space Index.



Figure 1.1: Map of KwaZulu Natal Coastal Region (Source: South African Statistic, 2023)

1.8 Inquiry Type and Data Collection Methods

The objective of the study was to explore the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. In this study a mixed research approach combining quantitative and qualitative research methods in the form of a case study design was used. The approach and design enabled the researcher to gather comprehensive data and insights into participants' opinions, experiences and perceptions. According to Creswell (2016), a mixed research approach involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods within a single study. This approach allows the researcher to collect a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research problem by integrating different types of data and analysis techniques. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) highlighted that combining qualitative and quantitative methods enables the researcher to address potential gaps in understanding that may arise from using only one type of method. On another hand,

a mixed research method provides a holistic view of the research problem and enhance the credibility of the findings (Maxwell, 2013). The target population for this study comprises of tourists, tourism operators and government officials involved in coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. A sample size of forty five (45) tourists and fifteen (15) key informants from tourism operators and six (6) government officials was targeted for data collection. The use of a small sample size was as advised by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhil (2016), who said that a small sample size can be used in situations where resources, time, and accessibility to target population is limited. Thus, in this study, the researcher had financial constraints and access to certain participants like tourists. Convenience sampling method was used to select tourists while key informants were selected using purposive sampling technique based on their expertise and involvement in the coastal tourism industry. According to Saunders et al., (2016), convenience sampling refers to the selection of participants based on their convenient accessibility to the researcher. Thus, tourists who were readily available were selected to participant in the research. On another hand, purposive sampling involves the intentional selection of participants based on specific characteristics, knowledge, experiences, and other criteria relevant to the research objectives (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhil, 2012). The use of purposive sampling technique enabled the researcher to gather valuable and targeted data that aligned closely with the study aims.

In-depth interview guides (Appendix F & G) were used to collect qualitative data from key informants including tourism operators and government agencies involved in coastal tourism in order to gain insights into the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism. The choice of interviews was as advised by Creswell (2016) who argued that interviews allow the researcher to obtain original and unique data directly from

the source, providing insights that may not be accessible through other data collection methods. These interviews were semi-structured which allowed for in-depth discussions and exploration of key themes. A questionnaire survey (Appendix H) was designed to collect quantitative data from tourists regarding demographic information, travel patterns, satisfaction levels, perceptions of coastal tourism experiences and future intentions.

Since the study employed a mixed research approach, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse quantitative data (Maxwell, 2016). Qualitative data was analysed through transcription of in-depth interviews. Thematic analysis was also used to analyse interview data to identify key themes, patterns, and insight related to the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

1.9 Scope of the Study and Delimitations

The study focused specifically on coastal areas within KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. The prospects and challenges of coastal tourism from the perspectives of tourists both domestic and international visiting the area. The study also considered perspectives of key stakeholders involved in coastal tourism such as tourism operators, and government officials involved in coastal tourism. However, much emphasis was on the tourist perspectives. The current state of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province was focused on, though a historical analysis was as well considered to provide context to the study.

The study was conducted in English, which limited the inclusion of non-English-speaking participants.

The existing infrastructure and services supporting coastal tourism, such as accommodation facilities, transportation networks, and recreational amenities and coastal tourism-related businesses within the KwaZulu Natal Province was considered in the study. However, the study could not delve much into the specific details of infrastructure.

This study was conducted with a small group of participants, managers, drawn from Durban's Beachfront over a duration of a year. As a result, research findings from this study may not be a true reflection of all the residents and tourism players from KwaZulu Natal province as a whole.

1.10 Motivation for Carrying Out the Research

The main motivational factor behind conducting this research was the need to explore tourism opportunities in rural areas, particularly in the South Coast of KwaZulu Natal. Understanding the potential for tourism development in rural coastal areas is also a driving factor.

On another hand, the National Development Plan 2030, which emphasises the need for diverse backgrounds to work together to solve complex problems, also influenced the motivation behind the research. This suggests a broader interest in addressing socio-economic challenges and promoting inclusive development, which could be relevant to the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

One other motivation for carrying out the study is environmental impact and climate change. The impact of climate change on visitor destination selection, as well as the implications of global warming on nature tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province, also

motivated the research. This suggests a concern for understanding how environmental changes, such as rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and coastal flooding, are affecting coastal tourism in the region.

1.11 Ethical Considerations

The research was approved by the Durban University of Technology, and an ethical clearance certificate was granted by the Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC). The responsible authorities from eThekweni District Municipality permitted the research to be carried out in their area of jurisdiction. Letter of consent was signed by participants showing informed consent and voluntary participation in the study.

1.12 Thesis Structure

The study comprises of five chapters which are explained as follows:

Chapter 1: This chapter provides a detailed contextual background to the study, as well as the aims and objectives of this study, the overview of the thesis and also provides the conceptualization of key terms used in the study such as coastal tourism and comparative advantage

Chapter 2: The chapter presented an overview of coastal tourism in South Africa and the theoretical perspectives of coastal tourism development. Earlier studies are reviewed, presenting prospects of coastal tourism, challenges facing coastal tourism, sustainable tourism practices and policies, stakeholder perspectives and engagement. Lastly, the chapter highlighted the research gaps and provides future directions for research.

Chapter 3: The chapter discusses the overall methodology in which the research falls in. The data collecting methods used, types of data, sampling methods, sample size study area and ethical issues fundamental to the study were analysed.

Chapter 4: The chapter centers on the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. The research findings are presented, analysed and discussed in this chapter in relation to themes derived from research objectives.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents the summary of the entire study, conclusions and recommendations of the study. It presents a review of the research objectives and discusses major findings. It identifies contribution of this research to existing theory and body of knowledge, practice, and methodology; opportunities for future research; as well as the researcher's personal reflections on the research process

1.13 Interpretation of Key Terms

Tourism -is defined by UNTWO as "those activities carried out by people outside their place of usual residence for a period longer than one day and less than one year for leisure, business or other motivations".

Coastal Areas -are transitional areas between the land and sea characterized by a very high biodiversity and they include some of the richest and most fragile ecosystems on earth, like mangroves and coral reefs.

Coastal Tourism -includes those recreational activities which involve travel away from one's place of residence which have as their host or focus the marine environment and/or the coastal zone" Orams, (1999). In other words this concept of coastal tourism embraces the full range of activities such as tourism, leisure, and all

those recreationally oriented activities that may take place in the coastal zone and the offshore coastal waters.

Competitive Advantage -refers to factors that allow a company to produce goods or services better or more cheaply than its rivals. These factors allow the productive entity to generate more sales or superior margins compared to its market rivals.

1.14 Summary

This the introductory chapter has specified the central focus of the research based on objectives of the study. It provides an overview of the significance and potential prospects for coastal tourism in the world, African and in South African context. This overview was necessary since it helped to located KwaZulu Natal Province in the coastal tourism sector. Based on this global, national and regional overview of potential prospects in coastal tourism I was able to identify the gaps literature regarding coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. These gaps in literature provide the basis and justify the need for the current research study. The chapter concluded by highlighting the significance of the study, objectives and research questions, definition of key terms, and the overall structure of the thesis. The next chapter reviews literature related to this study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

As the glamour of coastal tourism in South Africa continues to grow, it turns into necessary to explore the prospects and challenges that structure this dynamic industry. This contemporary chapter of the study delves into current literature on coastal tourism in the region [country], shedding light on the unique possibilities and barriers that outline the landscape. The chapter aims to contribute to a deeper appreciation of the workable for sustainable growth and improvement of coastal tourism within KwaZulu Natal Province via the synthesis and analysis of the present day physique of knowledge. This precious exploration, allows the lookup to grant treasured insights for stakeholders, policymakers, and industry players, in the end aiming to decorate the ordinary experiences of coastal tourism in this bright South African province. To achieve the targets of the research, the chapter mainly affords an overview of coastal tourism, highlights the theoretical viewpoint on coastal tourism development, and discusses the nature and possibilities of coastal tourism. The challenges confronted with the aid of coastal tourism, sustainable tourism practices and policies, and stakeholder views and engagement in coastal tourism in South Africa are also discussed in this chapter. Finally, the chapter offers lookup gaps and instructions for future researches

2.1 An Overview of Coastal Tourism

The global origin coastal tourism can be tracked back to the Roman epochs, when the first cabins were built in the Southern part of the Apennine peninsula. In the following centuries, particularly from the mid-18th century onwards, coastal tourism become a prominent segment of the global travel industry, with numerous

destinations catering for beach-loving tourists. Coastal regions in countries like United State, Spain, France, Thailand, and Mexico are currently among the most popular tourist destinations today, offering a variety of attractions including pristine beaches, water-based activities, cultural experiences, and coastal resorts (United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 2018).

Coastal tourism is toughly reliant on natural (climate, landscape, ecosystems) and cultural (historic and cultural heritage, arts, and craft, traditions etc.) (Kizys & Figueiredo, 2017). resources. This tourism sector encompasses activities that can only be carried out in a particular areas and in specific conditions. Therefore, certain areas are considered to be particularly suited to specific type of tourism activities, for which they become known on a global scale. According to Kizys and Figueiredo (2017), the development of tourism in coastal areas is related to socio-economic features of the receiving environment such as local community interests, health and security conditions and political factors.

Tourism counts among the main economic activities in many countries. UNWTO statistics (UNWTO, 2015) show that tourism is the world's largest industry with regards to the number of people involved and economic profit. According to Yunis (2016), 53% of European holidaymakers prefer the coast as compared to 15% favouring mountains, 15% preferring cities and 13% the countryside. Although there is no reliable data on coastal tourism alone, it is generally considered to be one of the fastest growing form of tourism in recent decades. Here again, UNWTO statistics show that 12 of the 15 world's top destination countries in 2010 were countries with coastlines. As an illustration Caruana, Glozer, Crane and McCabe (2014) report that three US coastal states (Florida, California and New York) hosted 64% of a total of 20.6 million of overseas visitors to the US in 1995, generating 75% of tourist-related

revenues. According to the same author, beach tourism in the USA generates US\$40 billion annually, which equals 85% of tourist-related revenues (Caruana et al., 2014).

Another significant example is the Mediterranean Basin. With all the difficulties of extrapolating data from the statistics collected on Mediterranean countries as a whole, UNWTO estimates that Mediterranean coastal areas alone hosted some 250 million of visitors in 2008. As forecasted by Yunis (2016), the number could increase to 312 million by 2025. According to the European Environment Agency (EEA, 2015), peak population densities on the Mediterranean coast of France and Spain reach 2,300 people per square kilometre, which is more than double those of the winter season.

The economic importance of coastal tourism is unquestionable. Some figures for the above two regions speak clearly; for example, a study by Ritchie and Crouch (2013), show that predominantly coastal tourism in California is, with US\$9.9 billion, the largest contributor to the state's economy followed by ports (US\$6.0 billion) and offshore oil (US\$860 million), EEA data for France, for instance shows that tourism provides 43% of jobs in French coastal regions, generating more revenue than fishing or shipping. Similarly, the coastal tourism sector in other regions of the world is increasingly growing in importance with regards to its magnitude and contribution to national economies as well as the wellbeing of local communities.

The coastal environment is a rich and diverse asset, providing valuable economic, social and ecological opportunities, DEA, (2014). It provides opportunities for employment, income generation, recreation and a quality living environment.

Paradoxically this contributes to greater levels of human settlement in the coastal zone and associated pressure on resources.

South Africa's total GDP, is driven by two primary macro-contributors to the Province's economy: its ports and tourism, both intimately linked to the coastal and marine environment, van der Elst and Goble, (2014). The ports of Durban and Richards Bay together handle 63% of South Africa's sea cargo and more than 50% of vessel traffic. As the busiest port in Africa, cargo values flowing through the Port of Durban are estimated to have reached more than R160 billion per annum. Not only do the ports of Durban and Richards Bay underpin much of the KZN economy, they also stimulate and support high levels of employment associated with manufacture, sea trade and transport (Jones, 2014).

Africa boasts breath-taking coastlines that attract tourists from around the world. The continent offers diverse coastal destinations, rich in natural beauty, cultural heritage, and wildlife. Popular coastal regions in Africa include Zanzibar in Tanzania (Njau & Mkiramweni, 2019). Zanzibar is known for its pristine beaches, historic Stone Town, and vibrant marine life, making it a sought-after coastal destination.

Growth in tourism sector in South Africa was experienced in the mid-1990s when the country gained its constitutional democracy. Since then the sector is characterised by more conservative gains and increased contribution to overall job creation. The South African's tourism sector become the fast growing tourism market in the world by 2002 (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism [DEAT], 2015). The creation of employment is one of the robust recommendation for South African tourism in general and coastal tourism in particular. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) categorised the coastal tourism sector as

an apparatus for growth in its 2018 White Paper (Saayman & Saayman, 2019). Following a doubling of tourist arrivals from 2018 to 2022, the department estimated that a new job was created for every four visitors. Recently, it is estimated that over 1, 200,000 people are directly employed by the tourism sector in South Africa (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018).

2.2 Theoretical Perspective on Coastal Tourism Development

The term theoretical framework can better be defined by first understanding the terms theory and framework. As highlighted by Kerlinger, (1986), a theory is a set of interrelated constructs and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables with the purpose of predicting a phenomena. On the other hand, a framework is a set of ideas used in forming a judgement. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) define a theoretical framework as a collection of interrelated concepts that can be used to give a research direction so as to predict and explain the results of research.

The study is supported by and guided by the Tourism Area Life Cycle [TALC] framework proposed by (Butler & Wanhill, 2003). The framework provides a theoretical lens for understanding the evolution and development of tourism destinations over time. This framework can be used to analyse the stages of development, identify challenges, and assess the prospects of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. The TALC framework is particularly relevant to the study of coastal tourism as it focuses on the life cycle of tourism destinations. It recognises that tourism areas go through different stages of development, from exploration to consolidation, stagnation, and possible rejuvenation or decline. Applying this framework to KwaZulu Natal Province will provide insights into the current stages of

coastal tourism development in the region and challenges and prospects associated with each stage. The Tourism Area Life Cycle [TALC] framework is well established and has been widely applied in various global contexts to understand the evolution of tourism destinations. Its conceptualisation and empirical validation make it a robust framework for analysing tourism development patterns and identifying associated challenges. By utilising a well-established theoretical framework, the study gains credibility and allows for comparisons with other research conducted in different regions.

The TALC framework offers flexibility for adaptation to the specific regional context of KwaZulu Natal Province. While the framework has primarily been applied in international settings, it can be modified to consider the unique characteristics, resources, and challenges of the coastal tourism industry in this South African province. This adaptability will ensure that the framework is relevant and applicable to the research topic.

2.3 Nature of Coastal Tourism in South Africa

The tourism industry already exists in South Africa. Presently there are more than 1446 different attractions. The attractions are spread throughout the province, but areas with the largest number of tourist attractions are the Drakensberg and the Coastal Stretch from Kosi Bay to Lake Sibayi and Sodwana Bay, Ferrario, (1981). The natural beauty and the location of this province in terms of different markets and the cultural experiences have been identified as the causal factors for the existing industry. The map below shows some of the major attraction centres in the province of KwaZulu Natal.

South Africa boasting a diverse range of natural attractions. Chief among the natural attraction centers is the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site (Department of Economic Development and Tourism [DEDT], 2012). The name 'iSimangaliso' means miracle and wonders, reflecting the unique and wondrous nature of the park. The heritage site is recognised for its critical habitats that encompass a range of species from Africa's marine, wetland, and savannah environments. ISimangaliso is South Africa's third largest protected area, spanning 280 km of coastline, extending from the Mozambican border in the north to Mapelane south of the Lake. According to Rogerson and Visser (2019), the part is a vast protected area along a coast of KwaZulu Natal Province. The park protects rare swamp forests, Africa's largest estuary, and some the world's highest coastal vegetated dunes. On another note, iSimangaliso is home to diverse ecosystems, making it unique and ecologically significant area for tourists (Saayman & Saayman, 2019). This suggests that the province's coastal tourism is characterised by its unique geographical location and rich biodiversity, offering visitors opportunities to engage with diverse ecosystems and natural landscape (Rogerson & Visser, 2019).

The Hluhluwe area is at present the most important draw-card for international tourists. As observed by Saayman and Saayman (2019), the rest of the region is also visited by international tourists but to a lesser degree. St Lucia and Sodwana Bay (in the Zulu land part) are the two main family destinations for the domestic tourists. The Ulundi and Eshowe areas are known for the extent of educational tourism. On another hand, the Wetlands of the St. Lucia is also a popular destination from an educational point of view (Rogerson & Visser, 2019). The Durban area is made popular by beaches and it serves as a pool for tourists since it has most of the facilities needed by the tourists, for example, accommodation. Other areas have

attractions but they are not properly developed because the attractions are so widely spread throughout the province.

A research conducted by Dundee Publicity Association (2015), revealed that the Thukela region is an area of contrasting variety whose magnificent landscape has provided a backdrop for the unfolding drama of some of South Africa's most significant history. The spirit of Thukela region is epitomized by the pioneering endeavour of the first European settlers who courageously crossed the forbidding heights of the Drakensberg Mountains in their search for a free new homeland. The region has also witnessed the explosive confrontation between European and African cultures as the early settlers encroached on the territories of the Zulu nation (Saayman & Saayman- 2019). The Thukela region offers an experience that is revitalising and original, an opportunity to escape from the hustle and bustle of the mainstream and to relax in the warm embrace of the delightful freshness of nature while sounded by the evocative ambience of living history. The variety of challenging and scenic hikes, the opportunity of excellent close range game viewing, a wide range of waterspouts, and fresh water fishing are found in this area.

Despite having a diverse of tourist attraction centers in South Africa, the country faces environmental challenges, including coastal pollution and the impacts of climate change on coastal tourism. In a research conducted by Mtapuri, Daitai, Camilleri and Dluzewska (2024), it was established that extreme weather events, rising levels, tidal activities, coastal flooding, and heat waves have been identified as factors affecting the coastal environments and tourism industry in the region. A different study exposed that KwaZulu Natal's coastal tourism is greatly influenced by its marine and coastal attractions (Rogerson & Visser, 2019). The region's marine

environment and coastal biological diversity contribute to its appeal as a tourist destination, with a focus on activities such as marine transport and coastal tourism.

2.4 Prospects of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

2.4.1 Natural Attractions

KwaZulu Natal Province is home to a diverse range of natural attractions that draw visitors from around the world. Among the attraction centers is Sodwana Bay located along the province's Elephant Coast. According to the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority [TKNTA] (2013), Sodwana Bay is characterised by pristine beaches, crystal clear waters, and numerous reefs renowned for their spectacular beauty. Sodwana Bay holds significant importance in the development of coastal tourism in the region. The TKNTA (2013) highlighted that the area is part of iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and is known as a prime destination for tourists and nature enthusiasts. A close study of the Sodwana Bay revealed that the bay offers a range of recreational activities, including scuba diving, and turtle watching, which are popular among tourists (TKNTA, 2013). The region's natural attractions, such as the largest forested coastal dunes in Africa and the largest natural freshwater lake in Southern Africa, contribute to its appeal as a tourist destinations. In terms of economic impacts, Sodwana Bay plays a crucial role in the local and regional economy through its contribution to the tourism industry. According to Mtapuri et al., (2024), the area's natural beauty and diverse marine life attract visitors, generating economic benefits for the local communities and businesses. Additionally, the bay's significance in the tourism industry is underscored by its role in providing economic benefits within the broader context of coastal tourism.

KwaZulu Natal is also home to Drakensberg Mountains which are water-rich, forested and with undulating landscape that offer breath-taking natural beauty. A study conducted by Saayman and Saayman (2019) revealed that the Drakensberg Mountains, the largest mountain range in South Africa, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, holds significant importance in the tourism industry. The mountains offer natural beauty, diverse ecosystems, and recreational opportunities. The Drakensberg Mountains are known for boasting stunning natural beauty, including dramatic cliffs, lush forests, and cascading waterfalls (Saayman & Saayman, 2019). This makes the mountains a magnet for hiker, nature enthusiasts, and adventure seekers. The region offers a plethora of recreational activities such as hiking, rock climbing, birdwatching, and fly-fishing, attracting tourists from around the world. Rogerson and Visser (2019) articulated that the Drakensberg Mountains play a vital role in ecotourism and sustainable tourism practices, with the Central Drakensberg Region being a significant tourist attraction for mountain tourism and ecotourism. The area's commitment to sustainable tourism is evident through the development of tourism sustainability indicators for montane-based route in the Drakensberg Mountains, highlighting the focus on responsible and environmentally conscious tourism practices (TKNTA, 2013).

Studies have shown economic impacts of the Drakensberg Mountains in KwaZulu Natal Region. According to Mtapuri et al., (2024), the Drakensberg Mountains contribute significantly to the local and regional economy through tourism. This observation was acknowledged by Mendes and Nunes (2019) who reported that the popularity of the region as a tourist destination generates economic benefits for local communities and businesses. This significantly supports livelihoods and contribute to the overall growth of the tourism industry. In addition to its natural attractions, the

Drakensberg Mountains hold cultural and historical significance, with a wealth of San rock art sites that provide insights into the region's rich cultural heritage (Mtapuri et al., 2024). This cultural heritage adds depth to the tourist experiences and contributes to the overall appeal of the area as a tourism destination.

Rogerson and Visser (2019) conducted a research in South Africa and exposed a number of tourist attraction destination chief among other the Lake St Lucia. Lake St Lucia is part of iSimangaliso Wetland Park with amazing water wilderness. The lake is about 280 km north of Durban, offering unique opportunities for wildlife viewing and exploration. In a research study, TKNTA (2013) established ecological significance of Lake St Lucia. The lake's ecological importance is renowned as it forms part of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The shifting salinity states within the lake system and its role in protecting coastal areas highlight its ecological significance and contribute to the preservation of natural ecosystems. Literature reviewed from Schroeder (2021), exposed that the lake system, designated as a Ramsar Site, contributes to tourism development by providing unique opportunities for visitors to explore ancestral. Similarly, the lake allows tourists to experience the diverse ecosystems within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. This underscores the lake's role in promoting sustainable tourism and [reserving natural heritage for the benefits of the tourism industry. In a different research, Saayman and Saayman (2019) found out that Lake ST Lucia's significance extends to its economic impact on coastal tourism. The preservation of the lake and its surrounding ecosystems supports tourism properties and contributes to the socio-economic well-being of the region, highlighting its importance to the local economy and the broader tourism industry.

2.4.2 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage plays significant contribution in tourism development. KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa is rich in cultural heritage, boasting a diverse tapestry of traditions, customs, and historical landmarks (Mtapuri et al., 2024). For example, the Zulu people are the largest ethnic group in KwaZulu Natal and have a vibrant cultural heritage. Their customs, music, dance, and traditional attire are an integral part of the province's cultural landscape (Rogerson & Visser, 2019). The annual Reed Dance ceremony, held at the Enyokeni Royal Palace, is a significant cultural event that attracts visitors from around the world (Kolgan, 2017). In another research, Kizys and Figueiredo (2017) noted that KwaZulu Natal has a significant Indian community that traces its roots back to the arrival of indentured labourers in the 19th century. Durban, the province's largest city, showcases Indian influences through its cuisine, religious festivals such as Diwali and Eid, and architectural landmarks like the Juma Mosque and Victoria Street Market (Kizys & Figueiredo, 2017). Similarly, Mtapuri et al., 2024) found out that KwaZulu Natal played a vital role in the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), a conflict between the British Empire and the Boer Republics. Battlefield such as Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift are significant historical sites where memorable events took place (South African Tourism, n.d). Visitors can explore museums and monuments dedicated to this period of history (Rogerson & Visser, 2019). The observation was supported by Kolgan (2017) who reported that cultural tourism enables visitors to immerse themselves in vibrant festivals, explore cultural sites, and engage with local communities, contributing to the growth of cultural tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

The contribution of cultural tourism in the economic development of KwaZulu Natal Province cannot be overemphasised. According to Kolgan (2017), cultural tourism generates significant economic benefits for KwaZulu Natal. In this regard, visitors spend money on accommodations, local transportation, dining, craft, and souvenirs, stimulating the local economy and creating employment opportunities. Cultural events and heritage sites often serve as magnets for tourists, leading to increased revenue for businesses and communities (Rogerson & Visser, 2019). In a research study, Mtapuri et al., (2014) found out that tourism development focused on cultural heritage and helped preserve, and promote the unique identity and traditions of KwaZulu Natal. Tourism creates awareness and appreciation among both locals and visitors by showcasing cultural practices, rituals, and art forms. Spenceley (2018) argued that preservation of cultural identity contributes to community pride, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and the safeguarding of tangible cultural heritage.

2.4.3 Infrastructure and Services

Coastal tourism infrastructure in KwaZulu Natal Province is well-developed and caters to the diverse needs of visitors. The province's stunning coastline along the Indian Ocean offers a range of attractions and facilities that contribute to a thriving coastal tourism industry. A research conducted by Spenceley (2018) established an array of beautiful beaches in KwaZulu Natal including the Durban's Golden Mile, Umhlanga Rocks, and Ballito. The beaches are equipped with amenities such as lifeguard services, promenades, beachfront restaurants, and water sports rental facilities.

The coastal areas of KwaZulu Natal offers a wide range of accommodations to suit every budget and preference. There is a variety of options available in the KwaZulu Natal area from luxury beachfront, resorts and boutique hotels to guesthouses, self-catering apartments, and backpacker lodges (Saayman & Saayman, 2019). Many of these establishments are situated along the coast, providing visitors with easy access to the beaches and other attractions. Of interest are the coastal hiking trails in KwaZulu Natal region. Rogerson and Visser (2019) highlighted that the KwaZulu Natal coastline features picturesque hiking trails that offer breathtaking views of the ocean and surrounding landscapes. The Dolphin Coast Trail, Amatikulu Nature Reserve, and Oribi Gorge are popular choices for hiking enthusiasts. These trails are equipped with signage, rest areas, and picnic spots, ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable experience for visitors (Rogerson & Visser, 2019).

The KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority [TKNTA] (2013) noted that tourist facilities and services are among the tourism infrastructure available in KwaZulu Natal Province. Coastal towns and cities in KwaZulu Natal have a range of tourist facilities and services like restaurants, cafes, bars, shops, and markets where visitors can sample local cuisine, purchase souvenirs, and enjoy the vibrant coastal atmosphere. Spenceley (2018) also acknowledged the presence of information centers, tour operators, transport services, and organised events and festivals as contributing to the ease of travel and exploration for tourists. These facilities help stimulate economic activity and extending visitor stays.

2.4.4 Competitiveness of coastal tourism destinations

The destination competitiveness of any tourism destination plays a crucial role in the tourism development. Kibicho et al., (2020) described competitiveness as the

destination's ability to attract and satisfy tourists in relation to other destinations. As already alluded to, KwaZulu Natal Province is renowned for its diverse and stunning natural attractions. The province's natural beauty and biodiversity contribute significantly to its destination competitiveness. Caruana et al., (2014) argued that tourists are drawn to these attractions for a diverse of activities. In another note, the preservation and promotion of these natural asserts enhance the province's appeal and contribute to tourism development.

KwaZulu Natal's rich cultural heritage add depth and uniqueness to its tourism offerings. Similarly, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage contribute to the destination's competitiveness, as it differentiates KwaZulu Natal from other regions and creates memorable experiences for tourists (Saayman & Saayman, 2019). A study by TKNTA (2013) revealed that KwaZulu Natal Province offers a diverse of infrastructure which are accessible to local and international tourists. The availability of well-developed infrastructure and ease of accessibility are vital factors in destination competitiveness. According to Rogerson and Visser (2019), KwaZulu Natal benefits from a solid transportation network, including airports, roads, and railway connections. These elements strongly contribute to destination competitiveness, by providing convenience, and a range of options for tourists.

Effective marketing and promotional strategies are critical for destination competitiveness. KwaZulu Natal promotes its tourism offerings through various channels, including digital marketing, travel fairs, international collaborations, and partnerships. The region is also reckoned for highlighting its unique attractions, cultural experiences, and adventure tourism opportunities to attract target markets (TKNTA, 2013) where strategic marketing efforts increase awareness, visibility and

demand for KwaZulu Natal as a tourist destination, thereby contributing to its tourism development (Mtapuri et al., 2024).

2.5 Challenges Faced by Coastal Tourism in South Africa

2.5.1 Environmental Concerns and Climate Change

The impacts of environmental challenges and climate change are hard felt in coastal areas. The coastal areas of KwaZulu Natal are not immune to these environmental shocks and stresses. The region's susceptibility to climate-related events such as floods, and coastal erosion, pose significant obstacles to the sustainable development of coastal tourism. These environmental concerns can affect the overall attractiveness and accessibility of coastal destinations, impacting visitor experiences and the long-term variability of tourism in coastal regions (Dolnicar & Leisch, 2018).

The impact of climate change on coastal regions' environmental sustainability and tourism performance is a critical factor. Department of Economic Development and Tourism [DEDT] (2012) noted that most coastal regions in South Africa are particularly susceptible to the effects of climate change, and these impacts are likely to increase with population growth and the effects of climate change. For example, more extreme temperature and precipitation experienced in coastal areas can prevent crop from growing, harm crops, and reduce yields, affecting the availability of local produce and impact the overall sustainability of these regions. Similarly, Mtapuri et al., (2024) highlighted that coastal areas of South Africa are vital for tourism, with wide, sandy beaches being a significant attraction. However, the impacts of climate change on these coastal areas, including potential changes in beach landscapes and erosion, can directly affect the appeal of these destinations for tourists.

Climate change directly affects the appeal of coastal regions for tourists in several ways. As a result of climate change, sea-level rise poses a direct threat to coastal areas, pushing coasts landward and affecting baselines and maritime zones that are measured from the baselines (Gossling, 2018). This eventually leads to changes in the physical landscape of coastal regions, potentially impacting the natural beauty and appeal of these regions for tourists. Additionally, climate change can result in more frequent and severe coastal storms, which can directly impact the safety and desirability of coastal destinations for tourists. Vulnerability to coastal storms, drought, and sea-level rise due to climate change may deter tourists from visiting these areas, impacting the appeal of coastal regions for tourism (Gossling, 2018). In a different study, Hernandez and Ryan (2011) noted that the potential submergence of small island and coastal areas due to sea-level rise and climate change directly impacted the availability and attractiveness of coastal tourism destinations in South Africa for tourists. The physical changes to coastal landscapes and the potential loss of natural beauty and biodiversity due to climate change can significantly affect the appeal of tourism regions for tourists.

2.5.2 Policy and Governance

Policy and governance play a crucial role in shaping and managing coastal tourism in South Africa. The government's policies and regulatory frameworks, coupled with effective governance mechanisms, have significant impacts on the development, sustainability, and management of coastal tourism. According to Dredge, Ford and Whitford (2016), policy governance frameworks promote sustainable development practices in coastal tourism. Environmental regulations and guidelines aim to protect and conserve coastal ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources. These policies encourage responsible tourism practices. Similarly, Dolnicar and Leisch

(2018) noted that sustainable development policies ensure the long-term viability of coastal tourism while minimising negative impacts on the environment. However, policy gaps and governance issues within the environmental sector, governed by the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs [EDTEA] presented obstacles to sustainable coastal tourism development (Dredge et al., 2016). Inadequate policy or regulatory frameworks hindered effective management of coastal tourism activities, potentially leading to environmental degradation and unsustainable tourism practices in South Africa.

Rogerson and Visser (2019) conducted a research in South Africa and established that weak and inadequate environmental regulations has led to the degradation of coastal ecosystems and natural resources. South Africa experience lax enforcement of policies which subsequently resulted in uncontrolled pollution development, habitat destruction, and overexploitation of coastal resources. These scenarios undermine the long-term sustainability of coastal tourism in the country particularly in the tourism destinations.

Limited spatial planning and development control is another challenge facing coastal tourism in South Africa. As observed by Kibicho et al., (2020), ineffective spatial planning and development control resulted in haphazard and unplanned coastal development in the country. The findings are in tandem with Dredge et al., (2016) who reported that improper zoning regulations and land-use planning results in overdevelopment, encroachment on sensitive areas, and loss of natural beauty. This is normally a consequence of inadequate governance and enforcement which may result in overcrowded beaches, visual pollution, and a decline in the quality of the visitor experience.

Policy and governance issues are critical in sustainable coastal tourism development. Weak governance and policy gaps in ensuring safety and security for tourism can negatively impact coastal tourism development. Although South Africa is renowned for a diverse of attraction destinations, the country offers insufficient resources for beach patrols, and emergency response systems (Dolnicar & Leisch, 2018). This tend to compromise visitor safety. In fact, as a country South Africa lack effective regulations and enforcement to address issues such as crime, harassment, and coastal hazards, which creates negative perceptions and deter potential tourists.

Addressing these policy gaps and governance issues is crucial to fostering sustainable coastal tourism development in South Africa. It requires the formulation and implementation of comprehensive policies, effective governance mechanisms, and stakeholder collaboration to ensure environmental sustainability, community involvement, and visitor safety. By addressing these challenges South Africa can enhance its coastal tourism offerings, attract more visitors, generate economic benefits, and preserve its natural and cultural assets for future generations.

2.5.3 Community Interactions and Stakeholder Perceptions

The impacts of community interactions and stakeholder perceptions on coastal tourism development cannot be overemphasised. In a South African research, Mtapuri et al., (2024) found out that negative community interactions and stakeholder perceptions hindered the growth and sustainability of coastal tourism in the country. The research exposed that local communities living in coastal areas were resisting tourism development due to various reasons. Some communities argued that coastal tourism development in their areas may compromise their traditional livelihoods while others perceived that the development may bring about social or cultural changes

(Mtapuri et al., 2024). In a different study, Rogerson and Visser (2019) highlighted that community resistance manifest in protests, legal challenges, and other forms of opposition, leading to project delays or cancellations. In the South African context, conflicts between communities and tourism developers created an unfavourable environment for investment of tourism infrastructure and services.

Coastal tourism development initiatives require the engagement of local communities. Whenever local communities feel excluded from decision-making processes and perceive limited benefits from coastal tourism, it can hinder its development. Saayman and Saayman (2019) found out that coastal tourism was not effectively development in potential coastal areas of South Africa as tourism operators failed to engage and consider the inputs of local communities. The findings are supported by Kolgan (2017) who reported that if communities do not have a sense of ownership or participation in tourism projects, they may not actively contribute to its success. Similarly, lack of community engagement in coastal tourism development initiatives in South Africa led to missed opportunities for cultural preservation, and a failure to harness the potential of community-based tourism for sustainable development (TKNTA, 2013). Mtapuri et al., (2024) established that stakeholder perceptions can impact coastal tourism development. Sustainable development of coastal tourism development in South Africa is being affected by negative perceptions about tourism's impacts. Some stakeholder associate coastal tourism development in their areas with environmental degradation, overcrowding, and social issues, hence their perceptions restrict tourism development. Thus, unfavourable perceptions from stakeholders can create barriers and limit the opportunities for growth and investment in coastal tourism (Department of Economic Development and Tourism, 2012).

In coastal tourism development, various stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, tourism operators, and environmental organisations, have different interests and priorities. According to Mtapuri et al., (2024), misalignment of interests has led to conflicts, delays in decision-making processes and compromises that hindered sustainable tourism development in South Africa. Similarly, Lee and Moscardo (2015), reiterated that failure to find common ground and engage in effective collaboration can impede progress and limit the potential for integrated and sustainable coastal tourism development. Similarly, community interaction challenges can also affect iSimangaliso, and impedes coastal tourism development of this UNESCO World Heritage site in South Africa. Thus, effective community engagement and the management of stakeholder perceptions are crucial for ensuring the sustainable development of coastal tourism.

2.5.4 Infrastructure and Resource Management

The management of coastal resources and infrastructure is essential for sustainable coastal tourism development. Issues related to sediment samples collected from intertidal regions of major tourist beaches in South African coastal regions highlight the importance of effective coastal resource management and the need to address potential environmental impacts on tourist destinations.

Literature has it that all tourism systems and undertakings are dependent on the use of environmental resources (Kizys & Figueiredo, 2017; Mtapuri et al., 2024; TKNTA, 2013). Although tourism is regarded as a soft industry, it has a key environmental impact in various coastal areas, which are predominantly exposed to pressures associated with its growth. The relationship existing between tourism and environment is best qualified as a relation of mutual dependence: not only tourism is

highly dependent on environmental quality but environmental quality is also highly vulnerable to tourism development.

The impact of coastal tourism is manifold and delicate for the coastal community and their livelihood. The negative impacts on coastal environments resulted from the tremendous pressure on limited local resources, increased or unwanted invasion of natural areas and serious conflicts between tourism and other sectors (Mtapuri, Camilleri & Dluzewska, 2022). The impacts on water, food and energy resources are extreme as they are primarily for personal consumption and are heavily abused by tourists in hotel and food outlets along with excessive lighting and air cooling systems, swimming pools, golf courses, etc. (Dredge, Ford & Whitford, 2016).

The global trend and reality is that tourism investors and developers create pressure on government to spend public finance on improving infrastructure and services essential for the industry, promoting campaigns, including tax breaks and other financial incentives (Dredge, Ford & Whitford, 2016). It is true and shall remain an uncontested fact that coastal tourism results in an increase in employment opportunities and that can be an economic benefit, even attracting job seekers from outside the local community. But in lean seasons and other tourism crisis can see mass scale unemployment leading to social consequences (Department of Economic Development and Tourism [DEDT], 2012).

During tourism development the supply and demand concept will force the cost of basis commodities and services and real estate to increase rendering them inaccessible to the local population resulting in an increase in the cost of living (South African Tourism, 2021). Influx of tourists can always alter the traditional culture of the local community to render vulnerable changes, posing risk to the loss

of a community's structure and indigenous identity, intra-community conflicts, between generations, genders, races, and classes, and can even make local resources inaccessible to the native population (Dredge, Ford & Whitford, 2016).

2.6 Impacts of Coastal Tourism in South Africa

2.6.1 Economic Impacts

Coastal tourism in South Africa has significant economic impacts, contributing to the country's economy through various channels. Coastal tourism plays a crucial role in job creation, providing employment opportunities for a significant portion of the population. In Sub-Saharan Africa, one in twenty jobs is in travel and tourism, highlighting the substantial employment potential of this sector. Statistics and data highlight the substantial impact of coastal tourism on job growth and the labour market. According to Landmark (2016), South Africa's tourism and recreation sector exhibited significant growth in 2019 increasing by 27.3 percent, contributing to the creation of good-paying jobs. In another note, the healthy coral reefs, often a focal point of coastal tourism, provide millions of jobs and contribute to economies worldwide (Kibicho, Kipruto & Rotich, 2020). The same study highlighted the decline in beach visitor days resulting in fewer tourism dollars spent, translating into a decrease in local jobs. These statistics underscore the substantial employment potential of coastal tourism, emphasizing its role in job creation and its contribution to the labour market. Coastal tourism in South Africa contributes significantly to revenue generation through various channels, playing a pivotal role in the country's economic landscape. Here's how coastal tourism contributes to revenue generation:

UNTWO (2022) conducted a research to examine the economic impacts of coastal tourism in Southern Africa. The research found out that coastal tourism in South

Africa generates substantial foreign exchange earnings, contributing to the country's overall revenue. This influx of foreign currency through tourism activities plays a crucial role in bolstering the nation's financial resources. Similarly, Frey and George (2015) noted that economic activities associated with coastal tourism lead to increased tax revenue for most governments. In the context of South Africa, revenue, derived from various aspects of tourism, contributes to the country's overall financial resources available for public expenditure and developmental initiatives. South African Tourism (2021) argued that coastal tourism contribute to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This reflects the economic value generated by the tourism sector. In a different research, Landmark (2016) established that coastal tourism's role in job creation and personal income growth also contributes to revenue generation. The employment opportunities and income generated through tourism activities lead to increased consumer spending, further stimulating economic activity and revenue generation.

2.6.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental impacts of tourism is particularly important to consider since the greatest ecological threat that any form of mass tourism creates is linked to demands on the infrastructure, particularly the accommodation sector, and transport arrangements required to support it, which can result in substantial, often irreversible, environmental degradation, (Davenport & Davenport, 2016). The main negative environmental impacts of tourism are associated with changes in land-use and the destruction of the natural environment, Emissions to soil, air and water, releasing carbon emissions contributing to climate change, high consumption of energy and water during the event, generation of large amounts of waste, bringing pollution and waste into some of the world's most biologically and culturally diverse

areas, the consumption of non-renewable resources and utilisation reserves of irreplaceable natural capital.

According to Landmark (2016), coastal tourism is characterised by modification of original characteristics of the environment which were initially relied upon to attract tourists. For instance, the development of tourism infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, and recreational facilities, has altered the natural landscape and traditional features that initially attracted visitors in South Africa. Additionally, the influx of tourists and the associated activities have led to changes in the local culture and environment, impacting the authenticity and originality of the coastal areas (Landmark, 2016). The modification of the environment due to coastal tourism development in South Africa is manifold. As observed by Mendes and Nunes (2019), the reliance on natural and cultural resources as the main driver of growth and development in the tourism economy has led to the commercialization and commodification of these resources, altering their original characteristics. Furthermore, the need to cater to the preferences and demands of tourists has sometimes resulted in the modification of local traditions and practices to align with tourist expectations, potentially diluting the authenticity of the coastal areas.

2.6.3 Social Impacts

The development of coastal tourism in South Africa has brought about a range of social impacts, both positive and negative, on the local communities and residents. Literature has shown that coastal tourism development has created employment opportunities and stimulated economic growth, providing local residents with avenues for livelihood and income generation (Landmark, 2016, South Africa Tourism, 2021; UNSESCO, 2023). In a research study, World Travel and Tourism

Council (2020), noted that the travel and tourism sector supported 25.4 million jobs in Africa in 2019 which constituted about 8.7% of the total employment in the continent. The study further established that coastal tourism contributed enormously to these employment figure, since a number of African countries depend on their coastal areas for tourism development and creation of jobs. Similarly, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation [UNWTO] (2020) estimated that in some African countries, coastal tourism accounted for up to 90% of the total tourism employment. The coastal city of Cape Town in South Africa also serves as an excellent case study illustrating the employment opportunities generated by coastal tourism.

UNWTO (2020) argued that tourism has facilitated cultural exchange and interaction between local communities and visitors. This significantly promotes understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures. A research study by South African Tourism (2021) found out that coastal tourism in the country contributes significantly to cultural exchange by facilitating interaction and understanding between visitors and local communities. This exchange is evidenced in various aspects, including language, cuisine, architecture, and traditions. According to Landmark (2016), the movement of people to coastal areas outside their usual environment fosters social and cultural interactions, allowing for the sharing of customs, beliefs, and practices between tourists and local residents. The type of exchange enriches the cultural landscape of coastal areas and promotes mutual understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures. Additionally, the rich cultural history of South Africa, particularly along the eastern coast, provides a unique backdrop for cultural exchange, as evidenced in the language, dress, architecture, and traditions of the region (South African Tourism, 2021).

Studies have shown social implications of coastal tourism in infrastructure development (Jabareen, 2018; Yunis, 2016). According to Yunis (2016), the development of tourism infrastructure has often led to improved local amenities and services, benefiting both residents and tourists. Coastal tourism contributes to infrastructure development in South Africa in several ways. South African Tourism (2021) highlighted that the influx of tourists often leads to the improvement and expansion of infrastructure to accommodate the growing number of visitors. This includes the development of transportation networks, such as roads and airports, as well as the construction of hotels, resorts, restaurants, and recreational facilities. Additionally, the demand for amenities and services by tourists often drives the enhancement of local infrastructure, benefiting both residents and visitors (UNESCO, 2023). The development of coastal infrastructure not only supports the tourism industry but also contributes to the overall economic and social development of the region. Despite of the positive contributions of coastal tourism to the social development of the local communities, the sector posse negative impacts.

UNWTO (2020) conducted a research study on coastal tourism in which finding indicated that the influx of tourists and the associated commercialization of local culture have led to changes in traditional practices and values. This cultural change potentially impacted the authenticity of the local community. On another hand, rapid tourism development sometimes lead to social disruption within local communities, affecting social cohesion and traditional ways of life. In such cases, the local community become vulnerable to the negative impacts of tourism development. The negative impacts of coastal tourism development manifest when the local community fails to preserve their social and cultural integrity.

2.7 Strategies for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development in South Africa

Tourism is increasingly recognised as a major income-generating sector in African economy. However, a study conducted by the UNWTO (2020) predicted a worrisome situation where unsustainable tourism development may threaten the preservation of the constructive tourism dynamics that African countries are supposed to enhance and experience. The African Sustainable Tourism Charter serves as a voluntary framework that monitors tourism development in Africa. The Charter features six areas of activity, each of which is composed of generic principles that take account of Africa's 'plurality' and diversity of its countries (Ritchie & Crouch, 2013). Each country, or group of countries, that signed the Charter can implement it according to their national or regional characteristics.

Instantly after dawn of constitutional democracy in South Africa in 1994, the government advocated for the development and promotion of ecotourism as the major contributor of export revenue and job creation (International Finance Cooperation, (IFC) (2020). The South African government took this bold idea after realising the importance of tourism in alleviating poverty and boost the country's economy. The country developed legal and administrative frameworks in which new regulations were created in support of business development in tourism emphasising on the conservation of the environment. The idea of environmental conservation in tourism development is rightly supported by Camilleri (2022) who emphasised the need to formulate environmental management laws, regulations and principles for the purpose of developing and preserving the ecological amenities that support natural resources. In this regard, tourism operators are expected to follow guidelines that put aside by the government to protect the natural environment. According to the African Wildlife Foundation (2023), collaborative efforts taken by the South African

Government and private sectors in environmental management helped much in the use of resources, prevention of pollution and preservation of biodiversity. In support, and to strengthen the environmental management framework, South Africa adopted Agenda 21 as a law. The law was used as a set of rules for the sustainable management of the planet's natural resources (Ritchie & Crouch, 2013).

South Africa has implemented various sustainable tourism practices and policies to address the challenges and enhance the prospects of coastal tourism. These initiatives aim to promote environmental sustainability, support local communities, and ensure the long-term viability of the tourism industry. According to Mtapuri et al., (2024), the South Africa government shows commitment to balancing economic tourism growth with environmental and cultural preservation, making it an attractive and responsible travel destination through its sustainable tourism practice and policies. Sustainable tourism is a responsible and environmentally friendly approach to travel that aims to conserve a destination's natural and cultural resources, benefits the local community, and provide a positive experience for traveller. It is a way of balancing the needs of the environment and the local community with the desires of the tourists.

2.7.1 Government Policy Frameworks and Interventions for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Developments

The development of sustained ecotourism in South Africa has been supported by government policy interventions. These interventions are aimed at ensuring that tourism development takes into account its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, and the environment.

The South African government established a new statutory framework, the Tourism Act No. 3 of 2014, in 2014, substituting the Tourism Act 72 of 1993. The establishment of a new legislative framework was as a result of gaps in the old act, and its failure to align to sustainable tourism development. According to South African Tourism (2021), the new tourism act provided the responsible minister with the option to determine norms and standards to be applied by official tourism institutions. The 'leading by example' is an authority instrument where the official institutions stimulate the private sector to follow suit. The National Department of Tourism Act 72 from 1993 to the current act is the creation of the Tourism Grading Council, responsible for the enactment of the national grading system (South African Tourism, 2021). The council is to supervise that all grading conforms to the standards and objectives of the national strategies and, furthermore, that the standards are maintained and upgraded where necessary (Reproduction of South Africa, 2014).

The South African government has experienced a shift in the weighting of sustainable tourism policy instruments in recent years. The Tourism Act 3 of 2014 gives the National Department of Tourism the mandate to establish new programmes and mechanisms to further encourage and develop sustainable tourism industry (UNESCO, 2023). The Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP) was later on launched in March 2015 with the aim of achieving the objectives of the National Tourism Sustainability Strategy (NTSS), the National Development Plan and other government policies (National Department of Tourism, 2015E). The TIP contains four sub-programmes using financial incentives to drive growth in the tourism industry. These programmes focus on market access, tourism grading, investments, and energy-efficiency respectively.

The energy-efficiency programmes were first introduced at state-owned attractions, and destinations to shift to renewable energy technology to reduce costs and make establishments more environmentally friendly (Landmark, 2016). The programmes were later on developed for establishments in the sector (Bloem, 2015) and provided participating private firms with a competitive advantage over those not participating as consumers increasingly expect companies to have environmentally friendly practices.

2.7.2 International Conventions for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development

Coasts are regarded as very fragile environments and because of their interactions with different global activities, there is need for the formulation of frameworks which set standards on how they can be used on a sustainable manner. Ritchie and Crouch (2013) articulated that these regulatory frameworks govern the participation of different industries so that they adhere to standards spelt out in international conventions that affect the coastal tourism industry. The conventions are necessary in an effort to make coastal tourism a more sustainable venture. Major conventions which include the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982) were signed by different countries in an effort to safeguard and standardise the operations of coastal areas. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea [UNCLS] (2019) described the UNCLOS as an international agreement which sets forth the legal framework within which all activities on the oceans and seas must be carried out. UNCLOS defines the rights and responsibilities of States with respect to their use of the world's oceans. As explained in its Preamble, Its objectives are to facilitate international communication, promote the peaceful uses of the seas and oceans, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is also another strategy adopted to maximize opportunities. Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) the study found that a few participants were really knowledgeable in the Convention. The cruise ship industry placed more value on the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78) which concerns climate change and other aspects of pollution (UBC Fisheries Centre, 2004).

UBC Fisheries Centre (2004) highlighted that Conventions like CBD, adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, outlines specific guidelines to establish a sustainable tourism industry but lacked consistent monitoring and evaluation systems. The overall goals of the convention are conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources

Coastal lakes are mostly freshwater bodies that differ from estuaries in that they lack a surface water connection with the sea under present conditions. South Africa has two sets of coastal lakes; a group of five in the Southern Cape and a KZN series on the sandy coastal plain north of the Thukela River, including Sibaya, uMzingazi, Bhangazi and five others. Most of the KZN coastal lakes are set in sandy porous soils with little or no river input and sustained by a high surrounding water table; their waters are therefore clear and nutrient poor. Biological productivity is driven by vegetation, either emergent forms in surrounding reed-banks and marshes, or submerged and floating forms in their shallow sections, with the highest numbers of animals and most diverse communities occurring in marginal areas (MacKay et al., 2014). The Zululand coastal lakes were originally estuarine and connected to the sea. However, the connection was lost with changes in sea level, creating freshwater

lakes. Remarkably, in several cases, relics of marine fauna still occur, hence making these lakes quite unique. It follows that the biota of these lakes is also special and that several of these species are of conservation significance as recognised by IUCN and SA Red Data listings. This infers a potentially high conservation value of these systems and highlights the need for a management approach (MacKay et al., 2014).

2.7.3 Strategic Planning and Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development

Tourism is one of many activities in a coastal area that require planning and coordination. A number of guidelines are laid down in order to promote comprehensive strategic planning for sustainable tourism development of coastal destinations. The Durban Beachfront is in great need of proper planning so as to achieve sustainable tourism development.

In order for strategic planning to be a success, there is need to identify objectives and formulate means of obtaining them. A tourism destination is a composite phenomenon and so strategic planning considers all of the tourism resources, organisations, markets, and programmes within such a destination (UNWTO, 2020). Strategic planning also considers economic, environmental, social, and institutional aspects of tourism development. According to UNESCO (2023), strategic planning is a “step-by-step” process with definite objectives and end products that can be implemented and evaluated. Put simply, it is a process by which we look into the future, paint a picture of that future based on current trends and of objectives that we set for ourselves, and influence the forces that will affect us (Mtapuri et al., 2024). It tells you where you are, where you want to go, how you wish to get there, when you want to arrive, who will do the work, and how much you are willing to pay.

UNESCO (2024) highlighted that a strategy for sustainable tourism development is the use of assets through long-term planning and development to ensure success. Contrary to other sectors (spatial planning, for example) strategic planning for sustainable tourism development in coastal areas such as the Durban Beachfront is rather short term, and it typically looks three to five years ahead but can reach a maximum of ten years (South African Tourism, 2021). It charts a definite course based on sustainable tourism indicators of what the tourism destination will be like in those years as illustrated below (Figure 2.1).

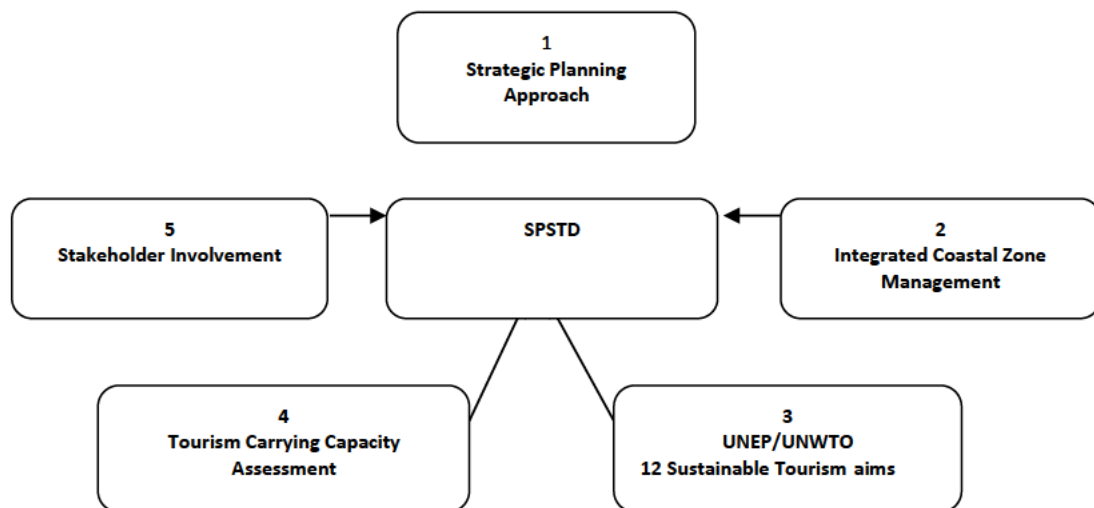


Figure 2.1: Principles for Strategic Tourism Planning (UNESCO, 2023)

According to the Sustainable Coastal Tourism/An integrated planning and management approach (2009), the overall objectives of a Strategic Planning Process for Sustainable Tourism Development is better explained as follows:

- It enables local people to make an assessment of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;

- It addresses the two main questions facing communities which “where they want to go” and “how they are going to get there” in terms of setting goals and objectives;
- Emphasise the importance of markets in promoting sustainable tourism;
- Help in promoting community projects and activities;
- Communities are assisted in planning for both the short, medium and long term.

2.7.4 Climate Change Response and Sustainable Tourism Developments

South Africa’s National Climate Change Response Green Paper managed to identify the vulnerability of the tourism sector to climate change. In response to this climate change vulnerability, the National Department of Tourism established the Tourism and Climate Change Task Team to develop an action plan for the tourism industry on how best to adapt to the changing climate and reduce the industry’s impacts. The National Tourism and Climate Change Response Programme and Action Plan was developed to be implemented for three year beginning in 2012 and designed to deliver on the following five goals; improve understanding of how tourism is vulnerable to climate change, reduce greenhouse gasses from tourism activities, provide consistent and efficient information to the industry, design a nationally consistent protocol for the implementation, and maintain a positive climate change position in key markets, (National Department of Tourism, 2011).

The first objective, to improve understanding of how tourism is vulnerable to climate change, will be achieved by gathering relevant information (Klein, 2011). A research study has been initiated together with the Department of Environmental Affairs and

the German organisation for international cooperation, Deutsche Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit, to assess the impacts of climate change on some of the biggest tourism attractions in South Africa (National Department of Tourism, 2011C). Following this, in 2012, a guideline for assessing tourist attractions was developed and implemented (National Department of Tourism, 2012A).

The second objective, to reduce greenhouse gases from tourism activities, is to be achieved by information and voluntary authority instrument. As already mentioned in the public-private partnership section, the National Department of Tourism works closely together with the national energy supplier, Eskom, to raise awareness in the industry on energy efficiency. The action plan states that a report should be made describing the tools, which the industry can use in its management of greenhouse gas emission; this was developed and approved of in 2012 (National Department of Tourism, 2011C; National Department of Tourism, 2012A). Furthermore, a voluntary accord was developed and implemented during 2013 to motivate the tourism sector to reduce its carbon footprint. The draft for the voluntary accord for the tourism industry offset programme for the tourism industry had been investigated but was not found practicable (National Department of Tourism, 2011C).

The third objective, to provide consistent and efficient information to the industry, builds on two information instruments, group-targeted information to the industry and at-large information on a more general level to tourists. Governmental workshops for tourism stakeholders were held in each province to discuss responsible tourism and climate change. The workshops took place during 2013, during which time, awareness flyers were distributed to tourists (National Department of Tourism, 2014B).

The fourth objective, to design a nationally consistent protocol for the implementation, has three recommendations for action. First, it recommends that climate action plans should be developed for each province, which they were in the spring of 2015 (National Department of Tourism, 2012C; National Department of Tourism, 2015C). Second, climate change initiatives implemented should be reviewed and reported on, and, lastly, provincial tourism stakeholders should be encouraged to report climate change initiatives at the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Focal Points Forum, which has accepted Responsible Tourism as a standing item on its agenda (National Department of Tourism, 2011C).

The fifth, and last objective, to maintain a positive climate change position in key markets, is achieved through branding South Africa as a climate-friendly destination. At the same time, the changes in preferences and behaviour, in relation to climate and environmental sustainability, among tourists from key markets are closely monitored. Furthermore, international policy that might affect South African tourism were monitored with regard to travel carbon emissions that account for 40 percent of greenhouse gas emission from tourism. As many of South Africa's tourist attractions are placed in rural areas, scattered throughout the country, both international and many domestic tourists travel by aeroplane (National Department of Tourism, 2011C).

The national Tourism and Climate Change Response Programme and Action Plan states that the best approach to address the climate change challenges is for the government to provide the industry with clear and precise information and advice for the businesses. The majority of instruments recommended by the action plan is, therefore, also different tools to use in distributing information. The information

instruments are, however, coupled with the authority instrument, but only on a voluntary basis (National Department of Tourism, 2011C).

2.7.5 The Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development

A number of sustainable tourism practices, policies and action plans have been implemented in coastal regions. The integration of coastal tourism into strategic development planning have been recognised and endorsed as a way of minimising tourism-induced problems and secure both the sustainability of tourism industry and coastal resources (UNESCO, 2013; UNTWO, 2022). However, emphasis is being made in focusing on the appropriate planning of tourism growth with regards to capacity of local systems when planning for tourism development. Many tourism operators and decision-makers across the globe have recognised Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) as a path to follow towards the sustainable development of coastal tourism. UNTWO (2022) describes the ICZM as an adaptive, multi-sectoral governance method, which attempts to achieve a composed development, use and protection of coastal environments. The ICZM is founded on philosophies of universal and ecosystem-based approach, good supremacy, inter and intra-generational cohesion, safeguarding the distinctiveness of coasts, precautionary and preventive principle, which give a context for achieving the aims of sustainable tourism. Additionally, the ICZM approach is characterised by constructive dialogue between the interests of authorities and multiple user-groups (National Department of Tourism, 2011C). It also prepares government representatives and other relevant actors for developing effective environmental legislation within their jurisdictions. Given the scale of tourism in world's coastal zones, one of the greatest challenges

faced by coastal managers is giving tourism development a proper place within integrated coastal management in order to increase its long-term sustainability.

The South African government embarked on a number of initiatives and best practices to promote sustainable tourism development. One successful initiative in coastal regions involves the best practice guidance. As observed by Lee and Moscardo (2015), the Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism shares the best practice case studies in sustainable ecotourism, providing valuable insight and guidance for promoting sustainable coastal tourism. These case studies are a practical example of successful sustainable tourism initiatives that can be applied to coastal regions, including those in KwaZulu Natal Province. The Compendium of Best Practice in Sustainable Tourism to coastal areas is guided by several key principles. The first principle is the restoration of coastal habitats. The compendium emphasises the restoration of coastal habitats including beaches, wetlands, and estuarine areas, to promote environmental sustainability and biodiversity (Mendes & Nunes, 2019). In another note, the Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism to Coastal Areas focuses on the integration of economic, social, and welfare aspects into sustainable tourism practices in coastal areas (UNESCO, 2023); highlighting the importance of balancing environmental conservation with socio-economic benefits. The importance of sustainable tourism practices that benefit local communities, highlighting the need to ensure that tourism activities contribute to the well-being and development of coastal communities is another emphasis of the compendium (UNWTO, 2020). An analysis into this principle shows that the compendium's focus on community benefits ensures that the communities are empowered and involved in sustainable tourism initiatives. This approach to

sustainable tourism ensures greater community engagement and participation in coastal area development.

The implementation of the Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism to Coastal Areas offers several benefits. Chief among the benefits of this compendium is environmental restoration. Focusing on the restoration of coastal habitats, according to Mendes and Nunes (2019), enables the compendium to contribute to the preservation and enhancement of natural ecosystems. This promotes biodiversity and ecological sustainability in coastal areas. On another hand, the emphasis on economic, social, and welfare considerations ensures that sustainable tourism practices in coastal areas contribute to the economic development and well-being of local communities, fostering a balance between conservation and socio-economic benefits. This initiative has been effective in restoring biodiversity, community structure, composition, and functioning, contributing to the preservation of coastal ecosystems and the promotion of sustainable tourism development.

Tourism is one of many activities in coastal areas that need planning and coordination. There are several international conventions that affect the coastal tourism industry in an effort to make it more sustainable venture. Some major ones include the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982), Agenda 21, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention). However, these agreements are only as effective as the signatories' abilities to ratify and enforce them, as there is often a gap between theory and practice (Garrod & Wilson, 2013). The CBD, adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, outlines specific guidelines to establish a sustainable tourism industry. The overall goal of the convention are conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its

components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources (UNESCO, 2023).

A sustainable strategy is necessary to formulate a sustainable coastal tourism management plan for mitigating the process of degradation of coastal community considering the physical environment, local economy and culture, and must include the local industries not related to the coastal tourism (Mihalic, 2016). There should be a holistic policy for sustainable development involving policy and decision makers, and developers and governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, and other organisations, the private sector, and the local and native communities during formulation of a tourism development plan. There must be a balance between conservation and people, addressing the demands of the local community for easy access to necessary services and ability to manage their own natural resources, ensuring their livelihood and fair distribution of profits and resources including intercultural tolerance (Mihalic, 2016; UNESCO, 2023). Eventually, sustainable tourism is certainly a balance between the tourism industry and the local community to protect the destruction of assets on which the coastal tourism is really dependant (Dolnicar & Leisch, 2018; UNESCO, 2023).

2.8 Research Gap and Future Directions

Research on coastal tourism in South Africa is an important area of study to the country's vast coastline and the significant economic impact to tourism in coastal regions. While existing literature provides valuable insights into various aspects of coastal tourism in South Africa, there are several research gaps that warrant further investigation.

There is need for more in-depth research on the sustainability practices and initiatives within the coastal tourism sector in South Africa in general and KwaZulu Natal Province in particular. Studies could focus on the implementation of sustainable tourism practices, the effectiveness of conservation efforts, and the impact of tourism on the environment and local communities. Research gaps exist in understanding the extent of community involvement in coastal tourism development and the distribution of benefits among local communities. Exploring the perspectives of local residents, their participation in decision-making processes, and the equitable distribution of tourism revenues can provide valuable insights.

Given the vulnerability of coastal areas to climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, there is a need for research on climate change resilience strategies in the context of coastal tourism in South Africa. Studies could assess adaptation measures, risk management practices, and the integration of climate change considerations into tourism planning. Further research is needed to understand tourist behaviour and preferences in coastal destinations in KwaZulu Natal Province, studies could explore factors influencing tourist decision-making, travel motivations, satisfaction levels, and the demand for sustainable tourism experiences along the coast. Furthermore, research gaps exist in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and authenticity in coastal tourism destinations. Investigating the role of cultural attractions, heritage sites, and indigenous knowledge in shaping tourist experiences can contribute to a more holistic understanding of coastal tourism development. There is also need for research on tourism policy frameworks, governance structures, and regulatory mechanisms governing coastal tourism in South Africa particularly in KwaZulu Natal Province. Studies could also examine the effectiveness of policy implementation, stakeholder engagement, and the alignment of tourism

development with national development goals. By addressing these research gaps, scholars and practitioners can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal, inform evidence-based policy decisions, and support sustainable and inclusive tourism development along the country's diverse coastline.

2.9 Summary

The chapter highlighted the immense potential of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province while emphasising the need for sustainable development, community involvement, and addressing environmental challenges. By leveraging its natural and cultural assets, KwaZulu Natal can enhance its positioning as a premier coastal tourism destination. The next chapter, presents the methodology of the research. .

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology within which the research falls. Various research methods were used in order to meet the research objectives. The methodological chapter covers issues to do with research paradigm, design, study area and population, sample and sampling method, data gathering instruments, data gathering procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations.

The data gathering instruments of the research enabled the exploration of prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The focus of this study was to explore the prospect and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. The most appropriate research paradigm was the interpretivist model. Creswell (2016) highlighted that the interpretivist paradigm gives the researcher an opportunity to elicit the lived experiences of the participants. Thus, participants' experiences and opinions are used by the researcher to develop and interpret knowledge supplied from facts gathered during interactions (Creswell, 2016).

3.1.1 Ontology

Creswell (2019) views ontology as a viewpoint that contextualise the nature of various aspects of culture such as social actors, cultural norms and social structures, and the interactions between them. Ontological problems include questions relating to nature of things that happen within culture. Ontology unearth reality's nature and structure; implying the existence, and relationships between many parts of the

society (Yin, 2019). In other words, ontology relates to the assumptions made by humankind about the kind and nature of reality and the existing. Human beliefs about the kind and nature of reality and the social world is what actual concerns ontology (Yin, 2019). Likewise, beliefs also exist within researchers, about the facts, how and what can be learnt from all that exists. In that regard, researchers are equally motivated to explore whether there true, verifiable true and reality by ontological issues. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019), ontology is concerned with whether there is or there is no independent existence of social reality. The researcher was aware of the existence of coastal tourism attraction sites in KwaZulu Natal Province based on its close proximity to the Indian Ocean. This prompted the researcher to gather information from various research participants to examine the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in the region.

3.1.2 Epistemology

Epistemology relates to the theories rendered about the existence or form of information. Through epistemology individuals, and researchers in the context of this study, make sound understanding of the world. To be specific, epistemology discusses the spirit of knowledge including its probability, how to reach it and its validity (Saunders et al., 2019). It goes without mentioning that epistemology is a section of philosophy that studies the essence of knowledge and the system of gaining and confirming knowledge. Epistemological problems force the researcher to respond to issues of subjectivity, objectivity, desirability and even to some extent the validity and generalisability of knowledge gained (Creswell, 2012). The researcher studied the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. As an expert in the field of tourism and hospitality, it is to the belief of the researcher that the area of coastal tourism is under researched, particularly in the province.

When considering the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province, epistemology plays a pivotal role in shaping the understanding of the various aspects related to coastal tourism in the region. Mtapuri et al., (2024) highlighted that South Africa is regarded the third best biodiverse country in the world, largely linked to coastal diversity. Understanding the epistemological foundation of this biodiversity is essential for comprehending the unique ecological and environmental factors that influence coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal. The framing of climate resilience pathways, is an important aspect to consider when discussing the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in the region. Thus, this epistemological framework narrows the discussion around sustainable development to specifically address the impacts of climate change on coastal areas, thereby influencing the prospects and challenges of tourism in the region. Generally, epistemology influences the way knowledge is acquired, constructed, and applied in relation to the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism.

The current research will play a pivotal role in adding value to the existing body of knowledge.

3.1.3 Axiology

A discussion of general issues of beliefs, particularly the essence of origin and permanence of values are the concerns of axiology. Creswell (2019) articulated that axiology confines its focus on issues about what ought to be. Axiology concerns the essence of adhering to set principles and has position in the teaching of moral values and character building. The values and norms of research participants are embraced in axiology (Yin, 2019). In the context of this research, axiology ensured the research to respect the issue of confidentiality, and give value to participants'

perceptions. Axiology has an unswerving bearing on the ethical perspective of the research.

Axiology deals with the nature of values and value judgement, and is highly relevant to the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. Axiological considerations are important when examining the cultural and heritage values, assessing the environmental and ecological values and assessing economic values and impacts associated with coastal tourism in the region.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a well-structured plan of doing research that connects the research questions and the actual fieldwork of the research. This is a blueprint for conducting research and is a plan which researchers use to recruit study respondents and gather information from them (Saunders et al., 2012). Research design thus is a logical structure, the layout of a research process that serves the fundamental function of collecting data and answering research questions. The research design also informs on the data collection instrument and data analysis techniques of the study.

Research design as a plan of research activities, seeks to determine relationships among variables, (Yin, 2019). It determines the sources and type of information to be selected based on the research questions.

3.2.1 Descriptive Research Design

The research used a descriptive survey design with a mixed-methods research approach to examine the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. A descriptive research design is viewed as a

scientific process requiring examination and description of behaviours, opinions, experiences and voices of participants in their natural setting; without any manipulation (Creswell, 2014). Assessing, explaining or defining what is what defines a descriptive study. According to Asenahabi (2019), descriptive analysis focuses on providing a description of contemporary problems through a method of data collection that enables researchers to fully clarify the situation. In fact, describing a particular state of affairs to determine the form, type and degree of its existence is the major task and goal of a descriptive study. In essence, researchers employ descriptive studies whenever there is need to explain diverse facets of the phenomenon. Descriptive research design is considered as the most appropriate on prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa.

A descriptive research design was valuable in providing a comprehensive understanding of the current conditions, assessing the current state of sustainable coastal tourism as well as the challenges posed by tourism development in KwaZulu Natal Province. On another note, the research design enabled the evaluation of economic and social impacts of coastal tourism, including economic prospects associated with tourism activities.

3.2.2 Mixed-Research Method

A mixed-research method, triangulating quantitative and qualitative method, was employed in this research. Numbers and statistics are dealt with in quantitative research whereas, qualitative research deals with words and meaning. Creswell (2016) argued that quantitative and qualitative research each has its own aims and approaches though they are both significant in acquiring various kinds of information

Mixed-research method is normally considered in a situation where quantitative or qualitative research method may not be enough to address the research questions. The forms of research studies (quantitative and qualitative) augment each other. As advised by Yin (2019), mixed-research method is applicable if a researcher wants to follow up quantitative analysis with a qualitative one as a way of gaining more exact and tangible information from participants.

According to Saunders et al., (2019), a mixed-research method has its own set of philosophical assumptions and research methods. With a mixed-research method it is possible for a single study to employ philosophical assumptions to guide the gathering and interpretation of data. Integration of interpretivism and post-positivism, as is the case with mixed-research method, provides numeral benefits in approaching composite research issues (Fetters, 2016). Similarly, Maxwell (2016) indicated that mixed-research method enables researchers to acquire in-depth knowledge and details of smaller cases under logical grounds, and with methodological flexibility. In fact, the use of mixed-research method gives researchers an opportunity to find in-depth answers to research questions. Mixed-research method gained worldwide recognition and usage in the field of research as quantitative and qualitative research approach supplement each other (Yin, 2019). For example, quantitative data adds breadth to a study while qualitative data adds depth. In this case, breadth and depth in data together give value to a study.

The use of both quantitative and qualitative in this study gave the researcher a clearer picture and understanding of issues under investigation. The convergence of both quantitative and qualitative data, and, above all, employing both research methods helped in minimising the limitations and maximise the advantages of each research method (Creswell, 2016). The researcher, drawing from this reason,

believed that employing both quantitative and qualitative research method helped him in understanding participants' experiences, opinions and views regarding the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

3.3 Population

The study population consisted of tourists, tourist operators, and government agencies selected for 10 municipality districts of KwaZulu Natal Province in South Africa. The selected administrative districts are eThekweni, Amajuba, Harry Gwala, Ugu, Umgungundlovu, Umkhanyakude, Umzintathi, Uthukela, King Cetshwayo, and Zululand District Municipality. However, eThekweni District Municipality was selected at the study area because of its convenience and accessibility to the researcher.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

Sampling is a systematic collection of the sample participants of the research from the large target population size (Kara, 2012). The selected sample will reflect and represent the characteristics of the population of the study and they can provide the information of interest to the researcher. The samples are smaller than the total number of the population of the study. There are two primary methods of sampling, namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Cooper & Schindler, 2013). These techniques of sampling are decided by the researcher based on the location and population of the study. When researchers conduct research, they should pay careful attention to how the samples are selected. That is, the selection process of the samples and sampling technique is a fundamental part of the study (Flick, 2014).

3.4.1 Quantitative Sampling

KwaZulu Natal Province is one of the provinces in South Africa, making the research area of this research. The study area, is comprised of eleven (11) district municipalities; Amajuba, eThekweni, Harry Gwala, iLembe, King Cetshwayo, Ugu, uMgungundlovu, uMkhanyakule, uMzinyathi, uThukela, and Zululand where coastal tourism attraction centers are located. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the study area based on the availability of coastal areas. The samples of this research were tourists, tourism operators, and government agencies involved in coastal tourism. The researcher had access to the sampled participants. In the study area there were 150 tourist, 50 tourism operators and 20 government agencies. The sample was selected on the basis that they are directly involved in coastal tourism in the province. Of the 150 tourists thirty percent (45) were selected using convenience sampling process. Given the dynamic nature of coastal tourism and potential challenges in accessing a comprehensive list of tourists, convenience sampling provided a practical approach to quickly and easily gather data from available and accessible tourists in the region (Creswell, 2016). The use of convenience sampling also aligns with the research focus on understanding the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal. By selecting tourists who are readily available and accessible, the research captured a range of perspectives and experiences related to coastal tourism, providing valuable insights into the specific challenges and opportunities in the region.

3.4.2 Qualitative Sampling

Using non-probability sampling technique of the purposeful sampling technique, fifteen (15) tourism operators constituting thirty percent of a total population of fifty

(50), and six (6) accounting for thirty percent of a total population of twenty (20) government agencies involved in tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province were selected. The participants (tourism operators and government agencies) took part in in-depth interviews. The thirty percent was selected since the population considered in the study is well below one thousand.

The use of purposive sampling method in this research allowed for the intentional selection of tourism operators and government agencies who possessed specific characteristics or experiences that were directly relevant to the research focus (Creswell, 2016). In the context of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal, this method enabled the inclusion of tourism operators and government agencies with diverse backgrounds, experiences, providing a targeted representation of individuals whose insights were crucial for understanding the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in the region. On another hand, purposive sampling method facilitated the inclusion of participants who possessed expertise about specific aspects of coastal tourism. This method ensured that the research capture insights form participants with valuable perspectives on challenges and opportunities associated with coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instrument is any tool that is used to collect data in a research study. Tuckman and Harper (2012) define a research instrument as a tool that is used for collecting data needed to find solutions to the problem under investigation. Three data collection instruments were used in this study namely; questionnaire, interview guide and observations.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

Creswell (2013) describes a questionnaire as a research tool containing a set of questions sent to a group of people or to an individual person with the purpose of collecting data of interest to the researchers. A questionnaire is simply a collection of questions handed to participant(s).

The key themes of the questionnaire were developed as guided by the research questions. The researcher prepared closed-ended questions in English and were later on translated into a mother tongue language for participants, Zulu. The items included in the questionnaire aim to explore the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. The use of a questionnaire allowed for the collection of diverse perspectives from tourists visiting KwaZulu Natal Province (Best & Khan, 2013). This instrument allowed the researcher to gather insights on visitor destination selection, experiences with extreme weather events, and the impacts of climate change on coastal tourism, which were essential for understanding the prospects and challenges of tourism in the region.

3.5.2 Interview Guide

An interview is a primary data collection method which involves an interviewee giving the necessary details verbally in a face-to-face or non-face-to-face situation (Flick, 2014). Interviews were conducted with tourism operators, government agencies and officials from non-governmental organisations. The researcher developed and prepared interview guides with semi-structured questions, and were separated according to the categories of the interviewees. The use of semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to substantiate data collected through observations and questionnaire. In-depth interviews with tourism operators

concentrated on coastal tourism attraction sites and services offered, rate of tourist visits, challenges hindering sustainable coastal tourism, and suggested solutions to the challenges of coastal tourism in the area. The researcher also conducted in-depth interviews with tourism operators and government agencies. The interviews focused on challenges of coastal tourism, sustainable tourism practices and policies implemented in the region to address the challenges and enhance prospects of coastal tourism, successful initiatives and best practices to promote sustainable coastal tourism in the region, importance of stakeholder collaboration and engagement in coastal development, and

3.6 Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary data sources. The researcher used interviews and focus groups as primary data sources to collect first-hand information from Durban Beach Front staff members and officials from the Ministry of Tourism. This will give the researcher confidence that the data she will use will be reliable and accurate.

3.6.1 Primary Data

Primary data source will be used by the researcher because it will give the researcher recent and reliable data for the situation under study and the data will be collected through structured interviews and document analysis. The open ended and closed ended in-depth interviews will be used to help the researcher gather information from the respondents. The collection of primary data will give the researcher control over gathered data since it is first-hand information. Naturally the data gathered through primary sources will be more accurate, valid and reliable.

3.6.2 Secondary Data

The researcher likewise will gather pertinent information through secondary data sources which incorporate website, database, newspaper publications and journals. Borg and Gall (2016) observed that secondary (or desk) research is about collecting and collating data that already exists, having been initially gathered for a purpose other than the one at hand. These secondary data sources include the internet, journals, books and government publications. Secondary sources of data are most helpful in the literature of this research. This will serve the purpose of identifying factors contributing to the competitive advantages associated with coastal and marine tourism concerning its role in the socio-economic development of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. These sources will enable the researcher to cut costs, some assistance with timing and effort as the information will be readily accessible.

3.7 Data Collection and Analysis

Data analysis is a critical stage of the research process and as such it has to be accurately and meticulously done to enable the researcher to answer the research question(s). Cooper and Schindler (2013) describe data analysis as a systematic organization and synthesis of data that involves application of one or more statistical techniques. Thus, data analysis is a means to giving meaning to the collected data and affords the researcher tools to answer the research question(s). In the study which employs both qualitative and quantitative method design as earlier stated, analysis of data was done using an integrative approach where data was integrated during the interpretation and analysis phase. The study used quantitative approach to collect numerical and statistical data from respondents. Descriptive statistics was collected and analysed. Data was presented on bar graphs, frequency tables, and

pie charts among others which make the analysis quick and easier. Primary data was collected by means of interviews which were administered to the various respondents. The data in this study was analysed by employing both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods.

3.7.1 Quantitative Analysis

The analysis of qualitative research involves aiming to uncover and understand the big picture by using the data to describe the phenomenon and what this means (Haralambos and Holborne, 2014). Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through questionnaire and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques. Quantitative data was analysed through graphs, pie charts so as to easily compute frequencies and percentages.

3.7.2 Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data, on the other hand, will be analysed by grouping it into categories according to emerging themes and then analysed critically and objectively in order for the researcher to interpret the information beyond the data gathered and, hence, make conclusions which are valid and reliable.

Different types of data often require different analysis strategies. Two types of coding were used for analysing the data in this study, which is closed coding and open coding.

- Closed coding – this is used where instruments have pre-identified categories and some closed ended questions from the questionnaire. Frequency count of

teachers giving certain responses are made, changed into percentages and recorded

- Open coding – this involves reading through the data, picking up the patterns or trends arising from the results, categorising and naming trends (Cohen and Manion 1997). Open coding was used for coding answers from the School administrators' interview responses.

3.8 Reliability and Validity

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010, p 201), "Reliability refers to the repeatability of findings, while validity refers to the credibility or believability of the research". "Validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration" (Babbie, 2011). Reliability tries to answer the question, if the study were to be done a second time, would it yield the same results? If so, the data are reliable. On the other hand, validity answers the question, are the results genuine? For the purpose of this research the data was collected within the boundaries and expectations which fulfilled the aspects of reliability and validity. Reliability and validity works hand in hand with "quantitative" approach of research. Since this study was done using a mixed methods approach, reliability and validity was observed during completion of interviews.

3.9 Limitations of the Research

Institution under study is a complex system hence data can be biased. Data was collected from a representative sample; hence, the conclusions resolutions and, recommendations may not necessarily be the best for other coastal an. However the researcher included the most prominent microfinance institution and industry leader such that information obtained was a true representative of the industry setup.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

“Ethics in research is the general agreement shared by researchers about what is proper and improper in the conduct of scientific inquiry” (Babbie, 2011). Ethical considerations relate to moral standards that the researcher would consider in all stages of the research design. Similarly, the researcher made sure that various ethical issues were considered and addressed.

3.10.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Confidentiality refers to the handling of information concerning the respondent in a confidential manner (Creswell, 2019). The researcher ensured that the respondents' names, occupation and life in general were not disclosed. In fact, participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of their contributions.

3.10.2 Voluntary Participation and Informed Consent

The researcher ensured that the respondents were not coerced to participate but to do so willingly and if they would feel uncomfortable at any given time, they would feel free to withdraw. The principle of informed consent was attached on the questionnaires and verbally explained to the respondents.

Written informed consent was sought from every participant. The researcher provided all participants with full disclosure of all information necessary for making an informed decision of whether to participate or not in the research. The researcher explained all the contents of the informed consent which included a statement the of research purpose, the identity of the researcher, the identity of the institution from which the researcher was from, an invitation to participate, the expected duration and nature participation, a description of research procedures, an explanation of the

responsibilities of the participants and information pertaining to the recording of the interviews and storing of the data. Thereafter they made a voluntary and informed decision to participate in the research.

Participants were assured that the results of the research are going to be communicated to them upon their publishing. Before the interviews, each individual was given a copy of the consent form which was written in the local language and the researcher read it out to ensure that each participant understood what it entailed. An opportunity was given to each participant to ask questions relating to the research process and clarity was given accordingly. This was to ensure that the participants understood the implications of their participation and were able to give an informed verbal consent.

3.11 Summary

The chapter focused on the methodological details of the study, which included the research design, description of the data collection instrument and how the data was collected and as well as the data analysis software used. The methodology will set the carpet rolling for data collection in chapter four. The methodology will make it possible for data to be collected and analysed in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study which sought to investigate the competitive advantages associated with coastal and marine tourism as an economic component in Durban Beachfront. The evaluation and analysis forms the basis on which conclusions and recommendations of the study findings were made.

4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

The demographic information of respondents included gender, age distribution. Managerial position and educational qualifications of respondents and was derived from the SPSS outputs.

4.1.1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Participants' gender information is presented in the table below.

Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

N=66			
Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Male	40	60.0	60.0
Female	26	40.0	100.0
Total	66	100.0	

Table 4.1 illustrates demographic information of participants. Males constituted 60% while females constituted 40% of the respondents that were involved in the study. It can be seen that more males than females participated in this study.

4.1.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

The information on participants' ages was collected and presented on table 2 below.

Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

N=66			
Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Less than 25	5	7.0	7.0
25-30	13	20.0	27.0
31-40	13	20.0	47.0
41-50	26	40.0	87.0
Above 50	8	13.0	100.0
Total	66	100.0	

The data shows that 7% of the participants were below 25 years of age, 13% are above 50 years, and the 25-30 and the 31-40 year old range are each represented by 20% of the respondents. The highest percentage (40%) is in the 41-50 year range.

4.1.3 Participants' Level of Education

Educational levels were analysed using academic qualifications. As a result there is need for the inclusion of academic classifications. The researcher also took into consideration the aspect of academic qualifications. Academic qualification explains the mental traits of the respondents involved in the study. The various background of academic qualification may represent different understanding about coastal tourism and associated activities. As a result of different academic qualifications, preferences for tourism may be different from one another. So the researcher has taken this

classification with specific objectives of evaluation by considering academic qualification of the respondents.

Table 4.3: Participants' Level of Education

N=66			
Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Advanced	13	20.0	20.0
Certificate	13	20.0	40.0
Degree	26	40.0	80.0
Masters	13	20.0	100.0
Total	66	100.0	

The data shows that participants with Advanced level, college and degree qualifications are each 20%. The highest percentage (40%) have degree level qualifications. The education levels of respondents are important to consider in relation to responsible tourism since, as Mensah (2012) states, knowledge and information influences and shapes behaviours, including environmentally responsible behaviours among tourism agents. Information obtained indicates that there is a high level of education among respondents. Thus, respondents are most likely to understand and conceptualise on coastal tourism development.

4.2 General findings of the Research

The research collected quantitative and qualitative data separately from tourists and key informants (tourism operators and government agencies) respectively.

4.2.1 Findings from Questionnaires

The research gathered data from 45 tourists in the study area through questionnaire survey.

4.2.1.1 Experience with Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

The first category of the questionnaire required tourist participants to highlight their experiences with coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. Tourist experiences with coastal tourism involved number of times the coastal areas were visited and activities engaged by tourists in the region.

Table 4.4: Responses Regarding Number of Times Respondents Visited the Coastal Area

N=45			
Period of visit	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
0-5 Times	5	11.1	11.1
6-10 Times	20	44.4	55.5
11-20 Times	10	22.2	77.7
More than 20 Years	15	33.3	100.0
Total	45	100.0	

Data presented in Table 4.4 shows the number of times respondents visited the coastal areas as tourists based on a sample of 45. The majority (44%) of the respondents had visited KwaZulu Natal Province more than 20 times. Although no comparative analysis of tourist destinations was made in this research, data presented in this table shows that a significant number of tourists prefer KwaZulu

Natal as indicated by their frequent visit to this destination. Drawing from data presented in Table 4.1, above, tourism destination centers in KwaZulu Natal are frequently visited by tourists who enjoy a diverse of facilities and services offered in the area.

Table 4.5: Responses Regarding Activities Engaged by Respondents in the Coastal Area

N=45			
Activity	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Recreational Activities	33	73.3	73.3
Cultural experiences	2	4.4	77.7
Nature-based	10	22.3	100.0
Total	45	100.0	

From Table 4.5, 33 participant, constituting 73.3%, reported visiting KwaZulu Natal for recreational activities, 2 participants (4.4%) visited the destination for cultural experiences while 10 participants, constituting 22.3%, reported that they visited the area for nature based activities. Data presented in this study show that the majority of the participants enjoyed recreational activities in KwaZulu Natal Province.

4.2.1.2 Factors Influencing Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

Participants were also asked to highlight factors influencing coastal tourism development in KwaZulu Natal Province. Understanding these factors was important in order to determine the mitigatory factors for sustainable development of coastal tourism in the region. Specifically, the research focused on investigating what motivated tourists to want to visit the coastal area (*Table 4.3*) as well as aspects that

need improvement to enhance sustainability of coastal tourism in the area (Table 4.4).

Table 4.6: Responds Regarding What Motivate Respondents to Visit the Coastal Area

N=45			
Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Natural Beauty	10	22.2	22.2
Cultural Attractions	2	4.4	26.6
Recreation Facilities	28	62.2	68.8
Sustainable Tourism	4	8.9	77.7
Eco-Tourism	1	2.2	79.9
Total	45	100.0	

Data presented in Table 4.6 indicate KwaZulu Natal offers a diverse of attractions which motivate tourists to visit the area. 10 participants (22.2%) were motivated by the natural beauty of the destination centers, 2 participant (4.4%) were attracted by cultural heritage of the area while recreational activities motivated 28 participants, constituting 62.2%, to visit the destination. The table also show that 4 participants (8.9%) and 1 participant (2.2%) visited the area because of sustainable tourism and eco-tourism respectively.

Table 4.7: Responses Regarding Suggested/Recommended Improvements for Sustainability of the Coastal Destination

N=45			
Suggestion	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Destination Certificates	5	11.1	11.1
Community Engagement	15	33.3	44.4
Environmental Education	10	22.2	66.6
Climate Change Mitigation	15	33.3	99.9
Total	45	100.0	

The researcher obtained a number of strategies which can be used to improve the sustainability of coastal tourism in the study area. From Table 4.7, community engagement and climate change mitigation are strategies suggested by an equal number of participants, 15, constituting 33.3%. Ten (10) participants, constituting 22.2% of the total sampled participants suggested that the local community and tourists must be educated on environmental issues which can help to promote sustainable coastal tourism in KwaZulu. Some participants, constituting 11.1% suggested that tourists frequently visit the area should be given destination certificates to motivate them to continue visiting the area. These strategies, if effectively implemented, can go a long way in promoting sustainability of coastal tourism.

4.2.1.3 Challenges of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

Another objective of the research was to examine challenges and barriers hindering sustainable development of coastal tourism in the study area. This is significant in minimising environmental impacts, addressing policy and strategy gaps, understanding and mitigating threat, and ensuring sustainable livelihoods for local

communities. This research objective was addressed by asking respondents to report challenges faced and how they impact their overall experience as tourists.

Table 4.8: Responses Regarding Challenges Encountered by Respondents in Coastal Areas

N=45			
Challenges	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Cultural Insensitivity	10	22.2	22.2
Pressure on resources	30	66.7	88.9
Environmental concerns	5	11.1	100.0
Total	45	100	

Table 4.8 shows a number of challenges encountered by tourists as they visit KwaZulu Natal Province. 10 participants (22.2%) reported facing cultural insensitivity as a challenge, pressure on resources was indicated by 30 participants (66.7%) as another challenges while 5 participants, constituting 11.1% faced challenges concerning the environment. Thus, data shown in Table 4.5 shows that the majority of the tourists complained about limited facilities and resources which caused pressure on accessing limited resources.

Table 4.9: Responses Regarding Impacts of Challenges on Respondents' Experiences in Coastal Areas

N=45			
Impacts	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Interruptions to activities	20	44.4	44.4
Threats to health	5	11.1	45.5
Disruption of travel plans	12	26.7	72.2
Threats to safety	8	17.8	90.0
Total	45	100.0	

From Table 4.9, participants agreed that the challenges faced in the destination sites of KwaZulu Natal have a number of implications in their experiences. The majority of the participants 20, constituting 44.4%, associated some challenges with interruption of activities, 5 participants (11.1%) said that the challenges were health threatening, while 8 participants (17.8%) agreed that their safety was being threatened by some of the challenges faced in the area. The same table also shows that their travel plans were being disrupted by uncertainty events within the destination area.

4.2.1.4 Economic Impact of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

The researcher was interested in understanding the economic impacts of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. Such information is of significance in determine the extent to which coastal tourism contribute to the economic growth of the region, as well as understanding visitor trends and their economic implications. Specifically, the research focused on investigating how tourists spend money during their visits to various destination centers in the region (Table 4.7).

Table 4.10: Responses Regarding How Tourists Spend Their Money in Destination Centers

N=45			
Events	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Activities (KZN alone)	25	55.6	55.6
Accommodation	15	33.3	88.9
Dining	4	8.9	97.8
Other services	1	2.2	100.0
Total	45	100	

Data presented in Table 4.10 show that 25 participants, constituting 55.6%, spend their money on recreational activities, 15 participants (33.3%) paid for accommodation while 4 participants, constituting 8.9%, reported that they spent their money on dining facilities. Data presented in this study show that the majority of the participants spent their money on recreational activities in KwaZulu Natal Province.

Table 4.11: Responses Regarding Impacts of Coastal Tourism on Local Economy

N=45			
<i>Question: Do you believe coastal tourism has positive impacts on local economy?</i>			
Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Yes	35	77.8	77.8
No	10	22.2	100.0
Total	45	100.0	

From Table 4.11, 35 participant, constituting 77.8%, responded that coastal tourism has positive impacts on the local community while 10 participants constituting 22.2% responded that coastal tourism has negative impacts. Data presented in this study show that the majority of the participants appreciated the positive impacts of coastal tourism to the communities in and surrounding the coastal region of KwaZulu Natal.

4.2.1.5 Sustainable Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

Promotion of sustainable coastal tourism development is crucial in any coastal tourism area. In the context of KwaZulu Natal Province, the research advocate for sustainability of coastal tourism. This has prompted the researcher to want to establish is there are any frameworks or interventions to promote sustainable coastal tourism development in the region. The research investigated tourists' awareness of conservation efforts and sustainable tourism practices implemented their preferred destination centers (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12: Responses Regarding Tourists Awareness of Conservation Efforts and Sustainable Tourism Practices in KwaZulu Natal

N=45			
Conservation Initiative Cumulative	Frequency	Percentage	
		(%)	(%)
Yes	40	88.9	88.9
No	5	11.1	100.0
Total	45	100.0	

From Table 4.12 40 participant, constituting 88.9%, reported that they were aware of sustainable tourism practices in KwaZulu Natal while 5 participants (11.1%) were unaware of the conservation efforts used to promote sustainable coastal tourism in the destination area. Awareness of conservation efforts and sustainable tourism practices is crucial in this research as it promotes sustainable tourism development.

Regarding the importance of environmental conservation and sustainable tourism practices in tourism destinations, respondents highlighted a number factors which contribute to the significance of these practices. Together, these factors promote the sustainability of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province and even beyond.

Table 4.13: Responses Regarding Significance of Sustainable Tourism Practices

N=45			
Factor	Frequency	Percentage	
Cumulative		(%)	(%)
Makes tourism a positive force	10	22.2	22.2
Protect the environment	15	33.3	55.5
Supports local economies	18	40.0	95.5
Improve brand image	1	2.2	97.7
Minimise negative impacts	1	2.2	99.9
Total	45	100.0	

Table 4.13, shows that participants acknowledge the significance of sustainable tourism practices in promoting coastal tourism development in KwaZulu Natal. Out of total of 45 sampled participants, 10 participant (22.2%) agreed that sustainable tourism practices makes tourism a positive, 15 participant (33.3%) reported that these practices protect the environment while 18 participants (40%) indicated that sustainable tourism practices help in support local economies. Thus, basing on data presented in this table, players in tourism should emphasise much in the use of sustainable tourism practices in order to boost the local economies, protect the environment and make tourism a positive force.

4.2.2 Findings from Interview Guides

The nature of the research enable the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. This section presents qualitative results obtain through interview guides for tourism operators and government agencies or non-governmental organisations separately. The use of interview guide in this research allowed for the gathering of in-depth insights into the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal. Interview responses also add value to questionnaire responses.

Tourism operators were involved in this research in order to provide insights into visitor destination selection, and offer perspectives on key challenges, contributing to coastal tourism governances. These operators were also considered since they are directly participate in community-based tourism development and collaboration within the tourism sector. Responses obtained from tourism operators were coded and categorised into themes derived from research questions.

Theme 1: Current State of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

This theme required participants to shade light on the current state of coastal tourism in the region. Specifically, was interested in understanding the main attraction centers and unique selling points of the coastal area for tourists. In their responses, tourism operators reported that a variety of attractions and services were available for both domestic and international tourists.

“We are dedicated to providing unique nature-based tourism experiences in KwaZulu Natal, showcasing the rich biodiversity and cultural heritage of the region. Our tours offer a hopeful approach to conservation, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the natural beauty of the area while contributing to its preservation”.

“Our focus is on promoting domestic tourism in Durban, the vibrant heart of KwaZulu Natal. We aim to highlight the significance of the city as a center of attraction, offering a diverse range of experiences for both local and international visitors”.

“We have been actively involved in advancing heritage tourism in KwaZulu Natal, particularly through the development of tourist attractions such as the KwaZulu Natal Battlefields Route, which incorporates historically significant sites like Isandlwana and Rorke’s Drift”.

Similar findings were also obtained in a different in-depth interview with another tourism operator;

“Our company is dedicated to leveraging the rich heritage and historical significance of KwaZulu Natal. We do this through the development of tourist attractions such as the KwaZulu Natal Battlefield Route aimed at providing visitors with immersive experiences that highlight the region’s historical importance”.

Theme 2: Impacts of Environmental Factors to Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

Coastal tourism is greatly affected by environmental aspects, such as climate change and extreme weather events, which hinder its sustainable development. In this regard, the researcher was interested in unearthing the impacts of these factors on coastal tourism from the perspectives of tourism operators. These factors have a direct or indirect implication on the performances of tourism operators in KwaZulu Natal region. When asked to report on the extent to which environmental factors like climate change and extreme weather events impacted their operations, participants presented diverse responses.

“Climate change and extreme weather events have had a significant impact on our tourism operations in this region. We have observed a rise in extreme weather events such as coastal flooding, heat waves, and changes in tidal activity, which directly affected the natural environment and infrastructure that support our tourism services”.

“The changing climatic conditions due to climate change have posed severe environmental challenges for the tourism industry in KwaZulu Natal. These challenges have influenced visitor destination selection and have led to a re-evaluation of our approach to providing sustainable and resilient tourism experiences”.

“The impacts of climate change, including increasing severity and intensity of extreme weather events, have led to critical shifts in the global tourism industry, affecting emerging tourism regions such as Africa, including our own

KwaZulu Natal Province. I think understanding these implications is fundamental for adapting our services to the evolving environmental conditions”.

When asked to elaborate how they manage to continue operating in the coastal tourism despite their vulnerability to the effects of climate change and extreme weather events, participants responded that;

“We are in a business, and we have to find lasting solutions to this problem. We have implemented sustainable practices that prioritise environmental conservation and resilience in the face of climate change. This include promoting eco-friendly activities and minimising our carbon footprint to mitigate the impacts of climate change on our tourism operations”.

Different strategies were employed by different tourism operators to mitigate the effects of climate change in tourism industry. In another interview, a participant highlighted that;

“To adapt to the changing climatic conditions and extreme weather events, we have invested in infrastructure and technologies that enhance the resilience of our tourism services. This proactive approach allows us to continue providing exceptional experiences to visitors while mitigating the effects of climate change on our operations”.

“Mitigating the effects of climate change and extreme weather events requires a collaborative approach. Thus, collaboration with local communities and stakeholders has been instrumental in developing adaptive strategies to address the impacts of climate change on tourism in this area. By working together, we aimed to ensure the sustainability of our tourism offerings and minimise the disruptions caused by extreme weather events”.

Environment factors have far reaching impacts on coastal tourism are complex, encompassing both negative and positive effects. It is, therefore, to consider

sustainable tourism practices and environmental conservation efforts to mitigate the negative impacts and preserve the natural beauty and resources of coastal tourism

Theme 3: Opportunities of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

The research focused on exploring the contribution of coastal tourism to the development of the region as well as the local communities. Specifically, this theme focused on economic contribution of coastal tourism. Participants highlighted that the tourism sector was solely responsible for the economic growth of the region as well as for the livelihood of local communities.

“Coastal tourism plays a pivotal role in the economic development and livelihoods of local communities in KwaZulu Natal. Our tourism businesses contribute to job creation and stimulate local economic development, providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for the coastal communities”.

A significant number of the participants highlighted that coastal tourism has the potential to create employment for a number of people and also on the other hand tourism crisis can see mass scale unemployment leading to social consequences.

One tourism operator said that;

“When undertaking tourism development the supply and demand concept will force the cost of basic products and services and real estate to increase rendering them inaccessible to the local population resulting an increase in the cost of living”.

Tourism operators who took part in this research reported that they employ a number of employees who are dependent on the coastal tourism besides their other profession like fisheries, agriculture and so on. So, it is clear that tourism in the coastal regions is a significant way of earning. One of the tourism operator opined that;

“At our own beachfront boat cruising business, we have managed to get 5 employees trained in whale watching hence increasing the quality of skills of the employees.”

The realization of the importance of coastal tourism to the global economy, and the resulting impacts on coastal communities along with their physical, socio-economic and cultural environments has led towards sustainable tourism (Burke et al., 2011). This has been accentuated by the increasing tourist demand for more responsible and environment friendly options. The economic contribution of coastal tourism to the coastal region was also acknowledged by another tourism operator who had this to say;

“The potential of coastal tourism to unlock sustainable socio-economic development is significant. Coastal tourism generates multifarious benefits for local communities, there by contributing to the overall well-being and livelihoods of the indigenous communities in KwaZulu Natal”.

Coastal tourism is intricately linked to the livelihoods of the communities in coastal areas. The aspect of coastal tourism contributing to livelihoods of local communities was strongly emphasised by the majority to the participants. In fact, participants agreed that local community depend on coastal tourism as their source of diverse livelihood activities.

Tourism proved to be one of KwaZulu Natal Province’s main economic driver. The research noted a number of contributions made by coastal tourism to the local economy. During in-depth interviews with both tourism operators and government agencies, the researcher posed a question regarding strategies used by local communities and other stakeholders involved in tourism to maximise economic benefits of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal. Responding to this question, one government agent suggested that;

“Maximisation of economic benefits of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal requires the involvement of small business sector which is even identified as a key tool for economic growth. I think there is need to strongly support and promote small businesses within the coastal tourism sector in order to contribute significantly to the economic growth of the region”.

The study also exposed the need to advocate for the promotion of sustainable socio-economic development. This strategy is based on the realisation that coastal tourism has the potential to generate multifarious economic benefits for the local communities. One government agent said;

“As key promoters and stakeholders in tourism, we need to emphasise much on sustainable practices and community involvement that can lead to long-term economic gains of coastal communities”.

A number of strategies were pointed out as being used in KwaZulu Natal to maximise opportunities and benefits of coastal tourism to the socio-economic development of the region. The study revealed that the government in collaboration with non-governmental organisations were engaged in capacity building initiatives to educate players in tourism about sustainable tourism practices. These organs also enforced tourism regulations to ensure compliance with environmental and social standards. This was reportedly done to safeguard coastal resources and promote their sustainable utilisation. This was exposed by one government agent who said;

“As the government of South Africa, we are collaborating with various stakeholders interested in tourism to coordinates efforts targeted at promoting sustainable coastal tourism in all coastal areas across the country, including KwaZulu Natal”.

The same participant further indicated that their joint-operations involved raising awareness about the importance of preserving coastal ecosystems, promoting responsible tourism behaviours, and advocating for the rights of local communities

dependent on coastal resources. Above all, the research found out that community engagement and empowerment was used as another strategy to maximise the economic benefits of coastal tourism. One tourism operator elaborated that;

“The Southern Durban Community Environment Alliance [SDCEA], an NGO advocating for sustainable tourism development is working directly with coastal communities to empower them through capacity building, training, and the establishment of community-based tourism initiatives”.

The research found out that NGOs contribute significantly to the sustainable management of coastal resources and activities by involving local communities in decision-making processes.

The research found out that observing regulatory frameworks governing the tourism industry was necessary to maximize the opportunities and benefits of coastal tourism to the socio-economic development in the province. One government agent opined that;

“Adhering to standards spelt out in international conventions that affect the coastal tourism industry is key in maximizing opportunities to prolong the life span of the trade”.

Another participant stated reason for adhering to coastal tourism regulatory frameworks and said that;

“It compliance and adherence to regulatory frameworks is necessary in an effort to make coastal tourism a more sustainable venture”.

The participants highlighted that they follow the major conventions that are related to their specialty areas. Participants highlighted that major conventions which include the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982) and Agenda 21, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are conversant to be followed as

strategy to maximize opportunities. The Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78) which concerns climate change and other aspects of pollution contain key concepts which are helpful in running the tourism sector efficiently. .

Some participants highlighted that though these agreements are good, there is often a gap between theory and practice. The findings are consistent with the study results by UBC Fisheries Centre (2004) which highlighted that Conventions like CBD, adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, outlines specific guidelines to establish a sustainable tourism industry but lacked consistent monitoring and evaluation systems. The overall goals of the convention are conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources

Theme 4: Challenges of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

The results of the research point out to the views of participants who opined that the impact of coastal tourism posed serious challenges for the coastal community and their livelihood. The negative impacts on the coastal environments resulted from the tremendous pressure on limited local resources, and increased or unwanted invasion of natural areas. The impact on water, food and energy resources are extreme as they are primarily for personal consumption and are heavily abused. Tourists have been cited for abusing lighting and air cooling systems, swimming pools and golf courses.

“As tourism operators, we are much concerned about the abuse of some of the tourism facilities like lighting systems, swimming pools and golf course by some tourists. The illegal short-term vacation rental by tourists in this coastal

area have led to excessive lighting and use of heat pumps for air conditioning, impacting the local environment”.

The research found out that participants highlighted that coastal tourism resulted in land degradation and land-use change, habitat and biodiversity loss. These challenges and mishaps were realized directly from the construction of tourist facilities and infrastructure through the clearing of mangroves, wetlands, and beaches, and the extraction of building materials. Some participants cited that due to increased intrusion in the sensitive coastal ecology and in case of beach or shoreline tourism development, like the construction of ports and resorts on the beach, the destruction of natural barriers and changes to sediment flow patterns, stress coastal erosion.

The findings of the research established that coastal life was being severely threatened by tourists who wish to indulge in local cuisine, resulting in market competition with the local community. The quality and quantity of water resources were certainly degraded by pollution through over withdrawal and abuse. One participant highlighted that if the tourist population balloons, often the local sewage infrastructure proves that there is no such capacity to bear with the demand in use of sewer system by tourists, and on the other hand it is also directly affected by cruise tourism which contributes to an increased amount of waste and other pollutants.

One tourism operator opined that;

“Eco-cruises’ are environmentally destructive as they enter into the highly sensitive ecological niche. Also they create cultural pollution, which is intangible and ignored so far”.

Participants agreed that uncontrolled and regulated coastal tourism construction is always primarily responsible for the destruction of aesthetic value of physical beauty of the coast. This challenges is worsened by a tendency of coastal construction and

developments to move closer to the water mark to create more attraction for tourists. It remains the duty of the local government authority to lay down concrete ways to regulate the system.

Tourism always go hand in hand gloves with air travel hence tourism operators and government agencies pointed out that though the services are good for convenience, mobility contributes to an increase in global carbon dioxide emissions and climate change resulting in sea-level rise and the loss of popular beaches. One government agent highlighted that;

“We have learnt over the years that increased ground and water transportation can lead to severe local air pollution and acid rain has negative impact on health and environment.

Another government agent opined that;

“Noise pollution is another important result of increased air, ground, and water traffic that can lead to health challenges like hearing problems and deafness within coastal communities.”

From the findings of the research, it emerged that coastal tourism activities had bearing on government expenditure. This was necessitated by uncontrolled tourism development which turned out to be a catalyst for environmental damage, and repairs cost local populations and government more than they were really gaining from that industry. One government agent suggested that;

“Tourism firms in the Durban Beachfront need to take into consideration the challenges the activities pose to the natural environment”.

Influx of tourists can always alter the traditional culture of the local community to render vulnerable changes, posing risk to the loss of a community's structure and indigenous identity. This view point was concurred to by most participants. The view

accords with a finding by UN Atlas of the Oceans (2014) which pointed out that intra-community conflicts between generations, genders, races, and classes, and can make local resources inaccessible to the native population.

The low-budget sector of international tourism and domestic and regional tourists, in particular, offer appropriate entry points for the start-up and growth of locally owned SMEs. One tourism operator made the important observation that;

“Governments interested in promoting poverty-alleviation through tourism need to recognise that people from poorer communities who do not have the skills, networks or resources to cater for higher-end tourists can often provide goods and services to lower-end tourists and they can do this by utilising local resources rather than needing outside capital”.

The research established that one of the challenges of coastal tourism is its vulnerability to climate change. Government agencies who participated in this research agreed that coastal communities reliant on tourism were vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as sea-level rise, flooding, and coastal erosion. These environmental changes were directly threatening the livelihoods of individuals engaged in tourism and related industries. This observation was made by a government agent who said;

“Rising level of the Indian Ocean have caused a devastation of local livelihoods in tourism and even in agriculture. This catastrophe directly impacted coastal communities and their economic activities”.

Theme 5: Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development in KwaZulu Natal Province

Sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts. In order to promote a sustainable tourism a number of approaches are involved including formulating strategies to

attract and retain market share while promoting social and economic development objectives for specific tourism destinations. The current research established a number of strategies, policies and interventions used in South Africa to promote and retain the sustainability of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

The research found out that the strategies for sustainable tourism in Kwazulu Natal should be realized through collaborative approaches. Government agencies and tourism operators in coastal tourism cited that a sustainable strategy is necessary to formulate a sustainable coastal tourism management plan for mitigating the process of degradation of coastal community considering the physical environment, local economy and culture. The local industries not related to the coastal tourism need to be included in the process of minimising the threats of coastal and marine tourism.

One government agent opined that;

“A holistic policy for sustainable development involving policy and decision makers, and developers and managers for NGOs, and other organisations and the private sector need to be mapped out”.

Main players in coastal tourism highlighted that there must be a balance between conservation and people, addressing the demand of the local community for easy access to necessary services and ability to manage their own natural resources, ensuring their livelihood and fair distribution of profit and resources including tolerance of different cultures.

Some participants highlighted that education on carbon emissions is vital in minimising the threats of coastal and marine tourism. Offsetting carbon emissions was found to be a useful education concept to be taught to players in the industry.

One tourism operator highlighted that;

“It is critical that the public, particularly managers and their employees be cultured in undertaking sustainable environmental practices. Few are aware of how their actions, including travel and leisure decisions, impact on the environment”.

Limited knowledge of how one can mitigate against negative environmental impacts such as offsetting carbon emissions remains a challenge to be overcome by the firms that operate in the trade. Another tourism operator alluded that;

“We plan to offset carbon emissions by conscientising our clients to travel less during visits, use public transport and walk whenever possible”.

The government of South Africa was also working towards sustainable tourism development. This idea was exposed by one agent who said;

“Recycling and purchasing carbon offsets to support forestation is part of the agenda we have set in to motion so as to minimise negative impacts associated with their actions”.

The need to promote sustainable tourism development in KwaZulu Natal was emphasised by both tourism operators and government agencies. The research found out that observing regulatory frameworks governing the tourism industry was necessary to maximize the opportunities and benefits of coastal tourism to the socio-economic development in the province. One government agent opined that;

“Adhering to standards spelt out in international conventions that affect the coastal tourism industry is key in maximizing opportunities to prolong the life span of the trade”.

Another government agent stated reason for adhering to coastal tourism regulatory frameworks and said that;

“Compliance and adherence to regulatory frameworks is necessary in an effort to make coastal tourism a more sustainable venture”.

The participants highlighted that they follow the major conventions that are related to their specialty areas. Participants highlighted that major conventions which include the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982) and Agenda 21, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are conversant to be followed as strategy to maximize opportunities. The Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78) which concerns climate change and other aspects of pollution contain key concepts which are helpful in running the tourism sector efficiently.

Some participants highlighted that though these agreements are good, there is often a gap between theory and practice. Adoption of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal was reported as a way of promoting tourism. One participant highlighted that they are aware of the long term physical, socio-economic and cultural environments that govern the operations of the coastal tourism sector. The realization of the importance of coastal tourism to the global economy, and the resulting impacts on coastal communities along with their physical, socio-economic and cultural environments has led towards sustainable tourism.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The results are discussed in line with the themes, The nature of coastal as well as inland based tourism in Kwazulu Natal, The significance of the Ocean/Blue economy as an alternative paradigm for development in the tourism sector, Challenges facing both coastal as well as inland tourism, Strategies that can be taken to maximize the opportunities and benefits of coastal and marine tourism to the socio-economic development in the province, Strategies that can be taken to minimise the threats of

coastal and marine tourism to the socio-economic development in the province and Impact of the adoption of Coastal tourism as a way of promoting sustainable tourism in South Africa.

4.3.1 The Nature of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal

The study shows that Durban beach tourism is can be affected by climatic and environmental variables. Durban is the largest city in KZN in a warm sub-tropical climate with hot and humid summers (average temperature 28°C) and mild winters (average temperature 23°C) an ideal beach tourism destination. The results agree with the finding by Hyman (2014) who asserts that beach tourism is extremely sensitive to climatic and environmental variables. In the context of this study, the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Master Plan (Department of Economic Development and Tourism, 2012, The Ethekewini Municipality (2011) reported that the value of the economic impact of tourism conducted at Durban Beachfront on the region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 8% per annum .

Beach tourism is a primary tourism development knot and it also forms the gateway to the rest of the province. Durban's Central Beachfront area is a key tourism destination and is also one of the main recreational spaces for local residents. Durban beachfront is among the highly ranked main tourist attractions places in the country. the Tourism Master Plan which indicates the focus on improving the Durban experience aimed at making Durban the beach destination The DEDT (2012) indicates the vision for KwaZulu-Natal in making Durban internationally famous as Africa's top beach destination which the primary focus area being the Durban beach experience. Bob and Maharaj (2015) state that Durban's Central Beachfront area is a key tourism destination and is also one of the main recreational spaces for local

residents. Odhiambo and Van Zyl (2012) state that the Durban beachfront is ranked as South Africa's 6th main tourism attraction in the country

4.3.2 Prospects and Opportunities for Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

Results of the study indicate that economic development in Durban receives a substantial contribution from tourism. This is supported by Sharpley (2014: 37) who states: "Tourism represents one of the world's largest discretionary transfers of wealth, thereby providing a source of income, foreign exchange, government revenues and employment, business and infrastructural development and, hence, wider economic growth and development in destination areas".

In the face of fragile economic growth, macro-economic tensions, and high unemployment, the tourism sector has remained relatively resilient in recent years and has proved to be a strong pillar for other sectors. Frey and George (2015) indicate that tourism has the potential to create global environmental effects linked to increased growth. Study found out that the growth in tourism has several implications for the economy which include inflow of foreign currency and employment benefits (Saarinen, 2006).

The Durban Beachfront plays a critical role in effecting a multiplier effect in the South African economy. Overall, the local multiplier effects of small-scale forms of tourism directed at domestic tourists can be strong, as stronger linkages with the local economy are more likely than with higher-end, mass tourism. This form of tourism can also result in a wider spread of economic benefits in local communities, as formal qualifications are not needed to run such enterprises and individuals (including those from marginalised groups) with little capital or training can provide

the desired services or products. The discussion isolates two different pathways for the economic inclusion of marginalised groups in coastal and marine tourism, including women and youth. These are: as suppliers of direct inputs to tourism accommodation services linked to high-end or middle-range accommodation establishments catering mainly (but not exclusively) to the demands of international travellers; and as direct participants by establishing small-scale tourism businesses targeting budget tourism, such as accommodation for international backpackers or for domestic or regional travellers, as well as targeted niche tourism markets such as eco-tourism, adventure tourism or culinary tourism.

4.3.3 Challenges Facing Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

Though coastal tourism has the potential to create employment for a number of people and help uplift the standards of living, but in lean seasons and other tourism crises can see mass scale unemployment leading to social consequences (UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, 2006). During tourism development the supply and demand concept will force the cost of basic products and services and real estate to increase rendering them inaccessible to the local population resulting an increase in the cost of living (UNEP Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics, 2006).

The results of the study show that the impact of coastal tourism is manifold and delicate for the coastal community and their livelihood. The negative impacts on the coastal environments result from the tremendous pressure on limited local resources, increased or unwanted invasion of natural areas and serious conflict between tourism and other sectors (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2014). The impact on water, food and energy resources is extreme as they are primarily for personal

consumption and are heavily abused by tourists in hotel and food plazas along with excessive lighting and air cooling systems, swimming pools, golf courses, etc. (Gohori & Mawere, 2022).

Land degradation and land-use change, results habitat and biodiversity loss are realized directly from the construction of tourist facilities and infrastructure through the clearing of mangroves, wetlands, and beaches, and the extraction of building materials (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2014) or due to increased intrusion in the sensitive coastal ecology. A noteworthy example is the decreases in sea turtle nesting directly related to an increase of tourist flow along the nesting beaches (Gohori & Mawere, 2022). In case of beach or shoreline tourism development, like construction of ports and resorts on the beach, the destruction of natural barriers and changes to sediment flow patterns, accentuates coastal erosion (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2014).

The study points out that Local fish stocks can become severely threatened by tourists who wish to indulge on local cuisine, resulting market competition with the local community (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2014). Water resource is certainly degraded qualitatively by pollution and quantity wise through over withdrawal and abuse. Often, the local sewage infrastructure has no such capacity to bear with the tourist population, particularly during the peak season for the tourists, and on the other hand it is also directly affected by cruise tourism producing an increased amount of waste and other pollutants (Burke et al., 2011). Even widely campaigned so-called 'eco-cruises' are environmentally destructive as they entering into the highly sensitive ecological niche. Also they create cultural pollution, which is intangible and ignored so far. Water pollution, through time, produce eutrophic conditions and algal blooms, changes in salinity and siltation patterns, posing threats

to plant and animal health, and undesirable aesthetics (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2014).

Unregulated and uncontrolled tourism construction is always primarily responsible for the destruction of the aesthetic value of physical beauty of the coast and it always has a tendency to move closer to the water mark to create more attraction for tourists. Diving or snorkeling or engaging in other water-based activities are always responsible for coastal ecosystem and biodiversity loss, when tourists make their access to sensitive areas (Gohori & Mawere, 2022).

Tourism development with an increase in air travel for more convenience and mobility contributes to an increase in global carbon dioxide emissions and climate change resulting in sea-level rise and the loss of popular beaches like Maldives, Mauritius and Caribbean. Also, increased ground and water transportation can lead to severe local air pollution and acid rain has negative impact on health and environment (Gossling, 2002). Noise pollution is another important result of increased air, ground, and water traffic that can lead to hearing problems and even deafness (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2014).

The absence in equity in benefits within the local community may sometimes result in financial losses and increased local poverty (Yunis, 2016). Thus, uncontrolled tourism development is a catalyst for environmental damage, and repair can cost local populations and government more than they would really gain from that industry (Yunis, 2016).

The global trend and reality is that tourism investors and developers create pressure on government to spend public money on improving infrastructure and services

essential for the industry, promotion campaigns, including tax breaks and other financial incentives (UNEP Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics, 2006).

Influx of tourists can always alter the traditional culture of the local community to render vulnerable changes, posing risk to the loss of a community's structure and indigenous identity, intra-community conflicts between generations, genders, races, and classes, and can make local resources inaccessible to the native population (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2004).

4.3.4 Impacts of Coastal Tourism on the Local Economy, Environment, and Communities in KwaZulu Natal Province

The study found out that coastal tourism significantly contributed to the local economy of KwaZulu Natal Province through job creation, revenue generation and business developments. The findings concur with the KwaZulu Natal Tourism Authority (2021), which reported that coastal tourism directly and indirectly employs over 100, 000 people in the province. These jobs span a range of sectors, including accommodation, food, and beverage services, transportation and recreational activities. It emerged that the employment opportunities generated by tourism contributed to reduced unemployment rates, improved livelihoods, and subsequently enhanced the overall standards of living for the local community.

The economic contribution of coastal tourism to KwaZulu Natal was greatly appreciated by the participants who took part in this research. The findings of the current study revealed that coastal tourism generated substantial revenue for KwaZulu Natal Province. Similarly, South African Tourism (2021) exposed that in the year 2020, ZAR 2.9 billion which is approximately equivalent to USD142 million was earned by the province from international tourist spending. The revenue support the

local businesses, infrastructure, and public services, thus, stimulating economic growth and diversity within KwaZulu Natal Province. On another note, the research established that coastal tourism nurtured the growth of various businesses in the province, ranging from hotels and resorts to restaurants, souvenir shops, and tour operators. These businesses provide opportunities for entrepreneurship and contribute to the expansion of the local business ecosystem (Yunis, 2016).

The research also established the environmental impacts of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. In this case, participants cited both positive and negative effects of coastal tourism on the environment. Participants agreed that coastal tourism supported conservation initiatives, in which marine ecosystems were protected. In a study conducted by Njau and Mkiramweni (2019), it was reported that the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, benefited from tourism revenues. This initiative was put in place as a way of enabling its conservation and promoting community development projects. Through coastal tourism, an awareness was raised about the importance of environmental conservation among visitors and locals alike. According to Yasu, Banos and Hazael (2018), educational programs, guided tours, and nature-based activities can promote responsible behaviour and encourage sustainable coastal tourism practices.

In terms of the negative effects of coastal tourism, the research noted that coastal tourism resulted in habitat degradation. Degradation of habitat as a result of coastal tourism is not a new phenomenon in KwaZulu Natal. The results are in tandem with Yasu et al., (2018) who reported that unplanned tourism development resulted in habitat destruction in the fragile coastal ecosystems of Kenya. In this research, overcrowding, pollution, and improper waste management practices degraded beaches, coral reefs, and other natural resources in the coastal region of KwaZulu

Natal. A study conducted by UNESCO (2023), revealed that overuse and inadequate waste management have led to beach pollution and degradation in Durban Beachfront, a popular tourist destination in KwaZulu Natal.

The findings of the current research revealed that coastal tourism influenced the social fabric and well-being of local communities in KwaZulu Natal Province. Participants highlighted that coastal tourism resulted in preservation of the local culture and tradition. According to the participants, cultural festivals, craft markets, and cultural heritage sites provided opportunities for communities to showcase their tradition, generate pride and preserve intangible cultural heritages. UNTWO (2022) reported that cultural events attract tourists who are interested in experiencing the local culture, providing opportunities for communities to share their traditions and promote cultural preservation. The study noted that the coastal region of KwaZulu Natal possessed rich cultural heritage sites and museums that educate visitors about the local history, customs, and traditions. The findings are supported by UNESCO (2023) who exposed that tourists gain insights into cultural importance of the area as they visit heritage sites. This promotes appreciation and respect for local traditions.

4.3.5 Strategies to Promote Sustainable Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

To maximize the opportunities and benefits of coastal and marine tourism to the socio-economic development in the province, it is necessary according to the results of the study to observe regulatory frameworks that govern the particular industry such as adhering to standards spelt out in international conventions that affect the coastal tourism industry. This is necessary in an effort to make it a more sustainable

venture. The participants highlighted that they follow the major conventions that are related to their specialty areas.

Participants highlighted that dictates of major conventions which include the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982) and Agenda 21, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which some participants said they are conversant with should be followed as strategy to maximize opportunities. Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) the study found that a few participants were really knowledgeable in the Convention. The managers highlighted that the cruise ship industry placed more value on the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78) which concerns climate change and other aspects of pollution (UBC Fisheries Centre, 2004).

Some participants highlighted that though these agreements are good, there is often a gap between theory and practice. The findings are consistent with the study results by UBC Fisheries Centre (2004) which highlighted that Conventions like CBD, adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, outline specific guidelines to establish a sustainable tourism industry but lacked consistent monitoring and evaluation systems. The overall goals of the convention are conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources

The study found that the strategies for sustainable tourism in Kwazulu Natal can be realized through collaborative approaches. Managers in coastal and marine tourism cited that a sustainable strategy is necessary to formulate a sustainable coastal tourism management plan for mitigating the process of degradation of coastal

communities considering the physical environment, local economy and culture, and must include the local industries not related to coastal tourism. This concurs with Burke et al., (2001) findings which point out that there should be a holistic policy for sustainable development involving policy and decision-makers, and developers and managers from GOs, NGOs, and other organisations, the private sector, and the local and native communities during formulation of a tourism development plan.

Main players in coastal and marine tourism highlighted that there must be a balance between conservation and people, addressing the demand of the local community for easy access to necessary services and ability to manage their own natural resources, ensuring their livelihood and fair distribution of profit and resources including intercultural tolerance. Yunis (2006) reiterates that eventually, sustainable tourism is certainly a balance between the tourism industry and the local community to protect the destruction of assets on which the coastal tourism is really dependant.

As part of initiatives to minimise the threats of coastal and marine tourism, offsetting carbon emissions was found to be a useful education concept to be taught to players in the industry. Reid et al. (2010) state that the majority of the public are still not convinced that they should undertake sustainable environmental practices. Few are aware of how their actions, including travel and leisure decisions, impact on the environment. Furthermore, there remains limited knowledge of how one can mitigate against negative environmental impacts such as offsetting carbon emissions. Among the few respondents who stated that they plan to offset their carbon emissions, various ways to do so were identified which included travelling less during the visit, using public transport and walking whenever possible, would recycle, and purchasing carbon offsets to support forestation. These findings support Lee *et al.*'s

(2012) research which shows that some tourists exhibited concern for the environment and try to minimise negative impacts associated with their actions.

The study found out that coastal tourism can be adopted to promote sustainable tourism in South Africa. One participant highlighted that they are aware of the long term physical, socio-economic and cultural environments that govern the operations of the coastal tourism sector.

The realization of the importance of coastal tourism to the global economy, and the resulting impacts on coastal communities along with their physical, socio-economic and cultural environments has led towards sustainable tourism (Spenceley, 2008). This thought process again accentuated by the increasing tourist demand for more responsible and environment friendly options (Sharpley, 2006).

The study found out that the Durban Beachfront is one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing elements of international tourism, portraying the need for upgrading existing infrastructure. Local economic benefits from the arrival of cruise ships can impact a range of onshore businesses, including small retail, catering, transport, ground handling and handicraft enterprises. However, a more 'responsible' cruise tourism sector is necessary to ensure sustainable development in host destinations, including opening up greater opportunities for local entrepreneurs. The dominant business model of international cruise enterprises is directed at maximising on-board expenditures, often with minimal time in destinations. This approach reduces local expenditures and opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

The impact of the adoption of Coastal tourism as a way of promoting sustainable tourism in South Africa reveals that cruise passenger expenditure is far lower in both relative and absolute terms than that of international tourists who use local

accommodation. Overall, the all-inclusive cruise ship model of tourism, which is expanding in IORA states, is not creating sufficient local linkages because cruise ships provide most services on board. By contrast, other variants of coastal tourism offer firmer and more secure entry points that enable local people to participate in the globalised tourism industry.

4.5 Summary

The chapter focused on presentation of findings for data relating to competitive advantages associated with coastal and marine tourism as an economic component in Durban Beachfront. The next chapter highlights the summary, conclusions, recommendations and resolutions.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

The study explored the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. The chapters of the thesis are summarised as follows.

Chapter one presented the rationale of the research. The chapter presented the background that inspired the study. KwaZulu Natal Province's prospects and challenges in coastal tourism have never been researched. Coastal tourism sector in KwaZulu Natal Province have potentials for development despite being faced with some challenges which tend to hinder sustainability of the sector. The study assess the state of coastal tourism, opportunities, challenges, impacts on local economy, environment and communities, as well as existing policies and strategies to promote sustainable coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. The aim of the research was to explore the prospects and challenges faced by coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. In order to accomplish the research aims and address gaps detected in coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal, the researcher formulated five research questions. The first research question allowed the researcher to collect data on tourism attractions and services available in KwaZulu Natal region. With the second research question, the research paid attention on opportunities realised as a result of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal. The third question focused on challenges faced by coastal tourism in the region with particular attention on environmental issues, infrastructure limitations, seasonality and socio-economic impacts. Research question four sought to explore the contribution of coastal tourism to economic, environmental, and community development while on the fifth and last research

question the researcher focused on collecting data relating to policies, regulations and strategies used to promote sustainable coastal tourism development in KwaZulu Natal Province.

Chapter two delineated the global, continental and national historical of coastal tourism. The concepts discussed in this section of the research correlated to themes derived from research objectives presented in chapter one. The theoretical framework guiding the research was also addressed in this chapter. The Tourism Area Life Cycle [TALC] framework was used in exploring the prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. This theoretical framework was relevant in the current research as it focus on life cycle of tourism destinations.

Chapter three focused on presenting the methodology of the research. A mixed-research approach in the form of a descriptive design was used in this research. To answer the research questions, 45 tourists, 15 tourism operators, and 6 government agencies were chosen from the study area. Participants were selected using simple random and purposive sampling technique. Questionnaires and interviews guides were used as data collection instruments. Quantitative data gathered through questionnaires were presented and analysed using frequency table. Themes derived from research questions were used to present and analyse qualitative data collected through interviews.

Chapter four presented, analysed and discussed data from questionnaires and interviews. Tourism destinations in KwaZulu Natal Province were frequently visited by tourists. Participants indicated that they frequently visited the coastal area for recreational activities and nature based activities. A diverse of factors motivated tourists to visit the coastal area of KwaZulu, chief among others the natural beauty of

the destination centers, cultural heritage and recreational facilities. Sustainable coastal tourism can be promoted through community engagement, climate change mitigation strategies, environmental awareness campaigns, and provision of destination certificates to regular tourists as a way of motivating them to continue visiting the coastal area.

Coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal contributed to job creation, stimulate local economic development, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the coastal communities. Despite these notable opportunities, coastal tourism was reportedly affected by environmental aspects, such as climate change and extreme weather events, which hinder its sustainable development. There is need to promote sustainable tourism development in KwaZulu Natal Province. To do this, participants suggested that players in coastal tourism should consider balancing conservation and livelihoods, addressing the demands of local community for easy access to necessary services and ability to manage their own natural resources, ensuring their livelihood and fair distribution of profit and resources including tolerance of different cultures. By and large, there is need to comply and adhere to tourism regulatory framework with an effort to make coastal tourism a more sustainable venture.

5.2 Conclusions

The following important points were recognised as the conclusions of the findings in the present research on prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. The presentation of the conclusions of this research emphasises specifically on state of coastal tourism, opportunities, challenges, and strategies to promote coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.

In KwaZulu Natal Province, tourism destinations and services are available which are frequently visited and enjoyed by tourists. These tourism attractions and services contribute much to the economic development of the coastal area and the well-being of people living in the area. Coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province contribute significantly to job creation, revenue generation, and livelihoods of the local community. In the contrary, coastal tourism in the region has posed a lot of negative impacts. The research noted environmental aspects associated with coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province. These aspects include the contribution of coastal tourism to climate and extreme weather events. These factors together with some others reportedly hindered sustainable coastal tourism development in the region.

A number of strategies and interventions were suggested as a way of promoting sustainable coastal tourism development in KwaZulu Natal Province. The results of the research revealed that players in tourism including government officials, non-governmental organisations should come to address the challenges of coastal tourism and promote its sustainable development within the region. There is need for formulation of holistic policies for sustainable tourism development. However, much emphasis was put in compliance and adherence to regulatory frameworks in order for these policies to service the purpose to which they are formulated.

5.3 Recommendations of the study

As indicated in the findings of this study, coastal tourism brought about a lot of opportunities and positive economic impact in KwaZulu Natal Province. For these reasons, there is need to for interventions and strategies to enhance its sustainability within the province. In order to promote sustainable tourism development in KwaZulu Natal, the following suggestions are made.

5.3.1 Recommendations for Local Community

- Community-based tourism initiatives should be promoted in and within the coastal region of KwaZulu Natal. There is need to encourage the development of tourism activities that involve and benefit the local community, such as guided tour, cultural experiences, and handicraft production. Local communities should take pride in local traditions and heritage, and actively engage in preserving and showcasing them to visitors.
- Raise awareness among the community about the importance of preserving the environment, including coastlines, and biodiversity. Responsible waste management, recycling, and energy conservation in local businesses and households is important among community members as a way of implementing sustainable practices.
- Community involvement in coastal tourism is important in promoting sustainable tourism development. Community members should engage actively with visitors, share their knowledge and experiences, and promote a positive image of the community. There is need to facilitate partnerships between local businesses, tourism authorities, and community organisations to collectively address challenges and work towards sustainable solutions
- Tourism service providers should ensure access to reliable utilities, healthcare facilities, and emergency services, prioritising the well-being and safety of both the community and visitors.

5.3.2 Recommendations for Tourism Operators

Through an analysis of the findings, this research presents actionable recommendations to guide tourism operators in KwaZulu Natal in overcoming challenges and maximise the prospects of coastal tourism.

- Tourism operators should develop a comprehensive tourism development plan that balance economic growth, environmental protection, and cultural preservation. In so doing, they should implement sustainable practices such as waste management systems, energy-efficient infrastructure, and water conservation measures.
- Diversification of tourism products and experiences is of paramount importance for sustainable coastal tourism development. Tourism operators, are therefore, encouraged to identify and invest in niche markets to attract a wide of visitors.
- Tourism operators should develop a targeted marketing strategy that highlights the unique features and attractions of the coastal region. This can be done through utilisation of digital marketing platforms, social media, and online travel agencies to reach a wider range of audience and increase visibility.
- Accessibility of the coastal region of KwaZulu Natal plays an important role in sustainable coastal tourism development. Efforts should be made in improving transportation infrastructure, including road networks and public transportation systems, to facilitate easy access to coastal areas and attractions. Tourist facilities and amenities should be upgraded in order to enhance visitor experiences.

5.3.3 Recommendations for the Government and Non-Governmental Organisations

Coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal region boasts natural beauty, cultural heritage, and diverse attractions, though a plethora of challenges hinder its full potential. The research presents recommendations to guide the government of South Africa and Non-governmental organisations concerned with tourism in addressing these challenges and maximise the prospects of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal region.

- The government should consider developing a comprehensive coastal tourism policy that aligns with sustainable development goals, balancing economic growth, environmental preservation, and social inclusivity. Clear guidelines and regulations for coastal tourism development should be established, to ensure compliance with environmental protection measures and cultural heritage preservation.
- The government in collaboration with responsible non-governmental organisations should invest in infrastructure development, including transportation networks, roads, ports, and airports, to improve accessibility to coastal areas and attractions in KwaZulu Natal region.
- The government authorities should engage in public-private partnerships to leverage resources, expertise, and investments for sustainable coastal tourism projects. There is need to collaborate with neighbouring provinces and countries to develop cross-border tourism initiatives that enhance regional connectivity and tourism circuits.
- Coastal conservation and environmental management efforts should be strengthened by establishing protected areas, promoting sustainable fishing

practices, and preserving fragile ecosystems. The government is encouraged and expected to implement environmental management strategies to mitigate the impacts of tourism activities.

5.4 Future Research

The research on prospects and challenges of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province provided valuable insights into the current state of the industry. However, there are several areas that warrant further investigation to deepen our understanding and provide more comprehensive recommendations. There is need to investigate the potential impacts of climate change on coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal, including sea-level rise, changing weather patterns, and increased frequency of extreme events. Adaptation strategies to mitigate these impacts such as coastal zone management, infrastructure resilience, and community awareness and preparedness should be explored.

Further researches can also focus on tourist behaviour and preferences in coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal, including motivations, travel patterns, activities and satisfaction level. Future research in coastal tourism can also focus on assessing the impact of tourism on traditional culture. Influx of tourists poses a risk to the loss of a community's structure and indigenous identity, intra-community conflicts between generations, genders, races, and classes, and can make local resources inaccessible to the native population.

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APPENDIX A

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ORIGINALITY REPORT

9%	5%	6%	2%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1 "New Directions in South African Tourism Geographies", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2020
Publication 1%

2 wedocs.unep.org
Internet Source 1%

3 repository.up.ac.za
Internet Source 1%

4 Mgadle, Aphelele. "An examination of climate change impacts on coastal tourism in Durban, South Africa", Vaal University of Technology (South Africa), 2024
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7 Moeller, Maricki. "Battlefield Tourism in South Africa With Special Reference to Isandlwana & Rorke's Drift Kwazulu-Natal", University of Pretoria (South Africa), 2023
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APPENDIX B: LETTER OF PERMISSION



The Manager

Durban Undersea Club

08 April 2017

Dear Sir / Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH IN YOUR ORGANISATION WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 2019-2020

The above matter refers,

I am a Doctoral candidate in Management Sciences (Tourism) at Durban University of Technology. I am carrying out a research project in tourism management as a partial fulfilment towards the Doctoral degree requirements. My topic is entitled '*Prospects and Challenges of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa*'. I am seeking for permission to undertake my study in your organisation.

The research is aimed at promoting coastal tourism through the identification of strengths in this sector of the industry. As such, there is also need to check on how other tourism related industries perform and what are the challenges facing these organizations.

The data collection will be done in the following manner and design:

- (i) Questionnaire survey for tourists;
- (ii) Interviews with tourism operators, government agencies and non-governmental organisations in tourism industry.

Your consent to undertake the research will be greatly appreciated.

For further discussions relating to this study please feel free to contact me or my supervisor.

Yours faithfully

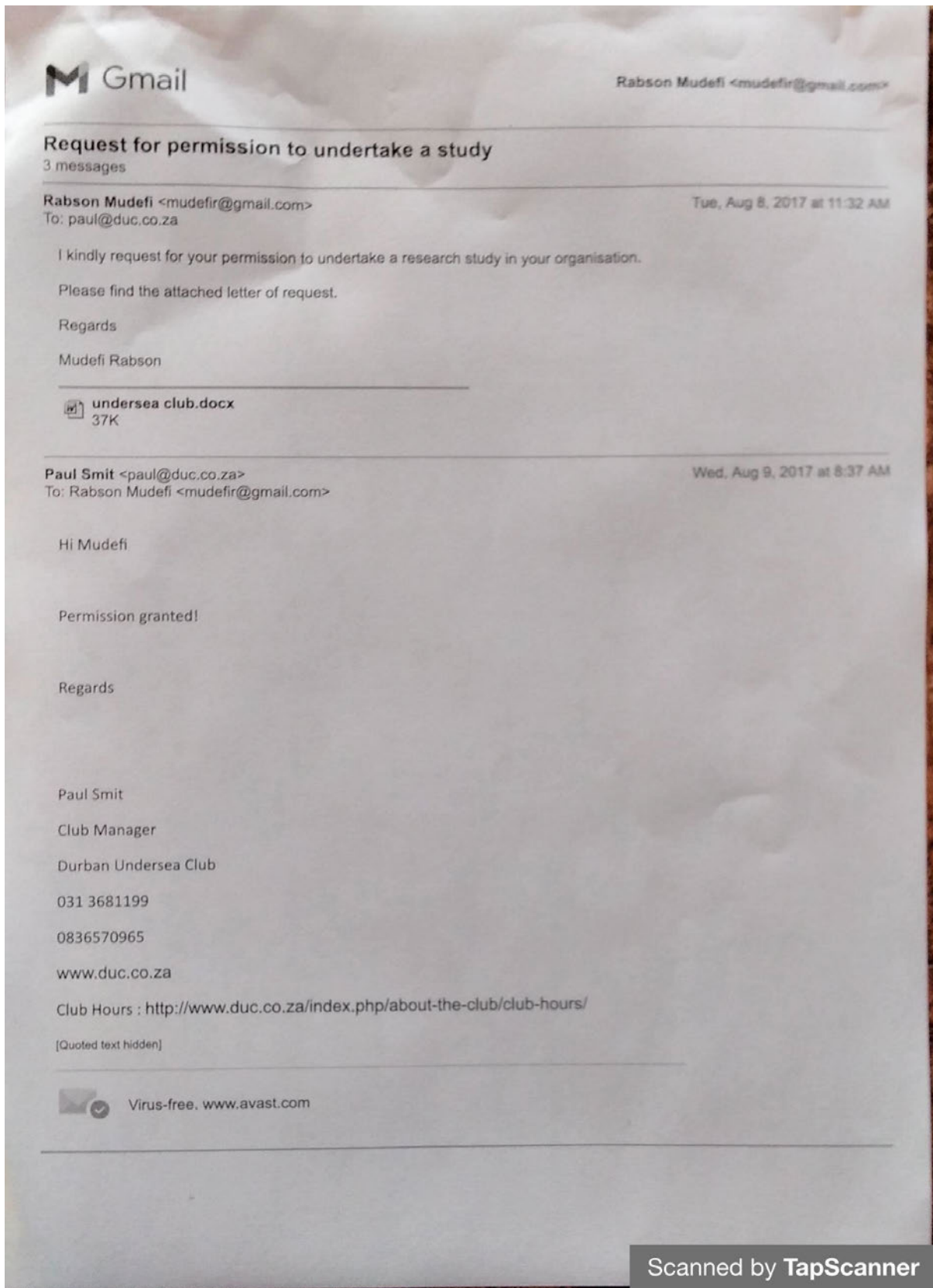
.....

Mudefi Rabson

Doctoral candidate in Management Sciences (EcoTourism).

Email: mudafir@gmail.com

APPENDIX C



APPENDIX D: LETTER OF INFORMATION



Dear Participant

My name is Mudefi Rabson. I am a registered PhD student in Management Sciences (EcoTourism) at Durban University of Technology. I will be carrying a research in your area (The Durban Beachfront) on “**Prospects and Challenges of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa**” The research is part of the requirements for the completion of my studies.

The purpose of this study to explore the potential of coastal tourism in the Province of Kwazulu Natal in South Africa. The main thrust of the research is to exploit on the opportunities and challenges of this sector of tourism by coming up with mechanism which promote sustainable coastal tourism development.

The research will employ questionnaire survey and interview guide as the main data collection instruments. Participation in this exercise is voluntary. There will be very minimal risks or discomforts to the participants during the research exercise. Please note that you are free to withdraw from the research anytime during the course of the research without prior notice. The results of the study will benefit the community, the nation as a whole in promoting sustainable coastal tourism in South Africa as a nation.

There will be no remunerations during the research exercise but no costs of the study will be expected to be covered by you. There are no injuries envisaged during and after your participation in the research.

In the event of any problems or queries kindly contact the researcher, Mudefi Rabson; +263 773 905 385

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

.....

Mudefi Rabson

Doctoral candidate in Management Sciences (EcoTourism).

Email: mudafir@gmail.com

Contact numbers: +263 773 905 385/+263 775 142 869

APPENDIX E: CONSENT LETTER



Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, **Mudefi Rabson** about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

I, **Mudefi Rabson**, herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Mudefi Rabson

Doctoral candidate in Management Sciences (EcoTourism).

Email: mudafir@gmail.com

Contact numbers: +263 773 905 385/+263 775 142 869

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TOURISM OPERATORS



Introduction

- Introduce yourself and the purpose of the interview.
 - Explain that the focus is on understanding the perspectives of tourism operators regarding coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province.
1. How would you describe the current state of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province from the perspective of your operations?
 2. What are the main attractions and unique selling points of the coastal areas for tourists?
 3. In your experience, how have environmental factors such as climate change and extreme weather events impacted coastal tourism in the region?
 4. Have you observed any specific challenges or opportunities related to environmental sustainability in coastal tourism?
 5. How does coastal tourism contribute to the local economy, and what are the key economic benefits and challenges associated with your operations?
 6. Have there been any notable changes in tourist preferences or behaviours that have affected coastal tourism in recent years?
 7. How do you engage with local communities, government agencies, and other stakeholders to promote and sustain coastal tourism?
 8. Are there any collaborative initiatives or partnerships that have been particularly successful in enhancing the prospects of coastal tourism?
 9. What are the primary factors that influence visitors' decisions to engage in coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province?
 10. Have you observed any shifts in visitor preferences or demands that have influenced your operations?
 11. What are the key challenges that you have encountered in operating within the coastal tourism sector, and how have you addressed or mitigated these challenges?
 12. Are there specific opportunities or untapped potentials that you believe could further enhance coastal tourism in the region?

13. What are your expectations for the future of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province, and what strategies do you believe will be crucial for its sustainable development?

14. Are there any specific improvements or developments that you would like to see to support the growth of coastal tourism?

15. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences and perspectives on coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province?

Thank you for your time and valuable insights.

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES/NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS



Introduction

- Introduce yourself and the purpose of the interview.
 - Provide a brief overview of the research project and its objectives.
1. Can you describe the role of your agency in the development and regulation of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province?
 2. What specific responsibilities does your agency have in relation to coastal tourism?
 3. How would you describe the current state of coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province?
 4. What are the key attractions and challenges associated with coastal tourism in the region from the perspective of your agency?
 5. Can you outline any existing government policies or initiatives aimed at promoting and managing coastal tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province?
 6. How does your agency collaborate with other governmental bodies and stakeholders to support and regulate coastal tourism?
 7. What measures has your agency implemented to ensure environmental conservation and sustainability in relation to coastal tourism?
 8. Are there specific challenges or concerns regarding environmental impact that your agency is addressing?
 9. How does coastal tourism contribute to the local economy, and what strategies are in place to maximize its economic benefits?
 10. What efforts are being made to ensure that coastal tourism positively impacts the communities in the region?

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY FOR TOURISTS



Introduction

.....

Section A: Demographic Information

Age:.....Years

Gender: Male/Female

Nationality:

Occupation:

Section B: Experience with Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

1. Have you visited the coastal areas of KwaZulu Natal Province for tourism purposes before? Tick [] the appropriate response Yes [] No []
2. If yes, how many times have you visited in the past 5 years?
3. What activities did you engage in during your visit? (E.g. beach activities, cultural experiences, wildlife tours, etc.)

.....
.....
.....

Section C: Factors Influencing Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

4. What motivated you to visit the coastal areas of KwaZulu Natal Province? (E.g. natural beauty, cultural attractions, accessibility, etc.).
5. What improvements would make you more likely to visit again or recommend the destination to others?

.....
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.....

Section D: Challenges of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

6. Did you encounter any challenges during your visit to the coastal areas of KwaZulu Natal Province? (E.g. infrastructure, safety, environmental concerns, etc. Tick [√] the appropriate response. Yes [] No []

If 'Yes', specify;

7. How did these challenges impact your overall experience as a tourist in KwaZulu Natal?

.....
.....
.....

Section E: Economic Impact of Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

8. Did you spend money on accommodations, dining, activities, or souvenirs during your visit? Tick [√] the appropriate. Yes [] No []

9. Do you believe coastal tourism has a positive impact on the local economy? Tick [√] the appropriate response. Yes [] No []

Section F: Sustainable Coastal Tourism in KwaZulu Natal Province

10. How important is environmental conservation and sustainable tourism practices to you when visiting coastal areas?

.....
.....

11. Are you aware of any conservation efforts or sustainable tourism initiatives in KwaZulu Natal Province? Yes [] No []

If yes, specify; the conservation efforts

Thank you for your time.