



**FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMPETITIVE
ADVANTAGE
OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN DURBAN:
A STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

Present tourism issues for the city of Durban include not being perceived as a value for money destination, which points towards a lack of awareness, knowledge and advertising of the city, as well as the tourism offering that should be made available to tourists. More worrisome is the decline in visitor numbers; along with insufficient tourism information available to tourists online. This study was therefore undertaken to determine which factors contribute to or detract from Durban's destination competitiveness. To provide the answers, stakeholders in the tourism industry participated in this mixed methods study. The concept of competitiveness, within the tourism industry in Durban, emerged from the study through various themes.

Factors critical to tourism competitiveness were identified, along with Durban's current tourism marketing mix factors, in order to identify the role of the marketing mix in improving Durban's destination competitiveness. In addition, Durban's tourism industry performance was assessed from a stakeholders' perspective and marketing actions recommended that are best suited to improving the performance of these critical success factors.

The data analysis shows Durban to have competitive factors such as warm weather during the year and coastline but, some areas are found to require improvement, while other areas need serious attention. In addition, managers and employees generally shared the same opinions on most factors, with the findings emphasising Durban's need to become a more competitive destination, be sustainable and contribute to the country's economy.

Destination competitiveness is complex and multifaceted. Developing Durban's destination competitiveness would recognise long-term sustainability and economic success, in addition to improvements to the city as a destination. This study has endeavoured to assist tourism stakeholders in Durban, by establishing the city's competitiveness factors, from a stakeholder perspective. This study, therefore, not only strives to draw attention to the research problem but also paves the way to improve Durban's destination.

DECLARATION

I, Sacha Maharaj, declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted previously for any degree at any university.

Researcher

S. Maharaj

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Durban Tourism Industry

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LIST OF ACRONYMS/ ABBREVIATIONS

CPT	Cape Town
DMO	Destination management organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resources
ICC	International Conference Centre
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
JHB	Johannesburg
KZN	KwaZulu - Natal
NDT	National Department of Tourism
SA	South Africa
SAT	South African Tourism
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TKZN	Tourism KwaZulu-Natal
TQM	Total quality management
UK	United Kingdom
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
USA	United States of America
WEFTT	World Economic Forum for Travel and Tourism

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The role of the marketing mix, in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination, is identified through this study, with the marketing mix principles used to measure and assess various factors relating to competitiveness. The purpose of establishing tourism competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective is significant for tourism stakeholders, as these factors would assist in increasing the number of domestic and international tourists to the city, thus improving the economy of Durban.

The study also relates to various destination competitiveness models and factors of those models in relation to the marketing mix principles. Numerous reports from, among others, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), South African Tourism (SAT), National Department of Tourism (NDT), including Durban Tourism, Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (TKZN) and The Chamber of Commerce, along with the Ethekewini Municipality were analysed and it was established that Durban's tourism competitiveness needs to be measured.

The visitor strategy researched and developed by MacFarlane (2012: 6) further supports the need for this study, as it indicates Durban's present tourism issues, including whether Durban is seen as a value for money destination; lack of awareness; lack of knowledge and advertising of the city; the tourism offering; and decline in visitor numbers; along with insufficient tourism information available to tourists online.

As stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 2), tourism competitiveness involves the delivery of improved and valuable merchandise and services. Therefore, Durban needs to achieve competitive advantage, and offer superior

experiences to those of other destinations, as well as overall attractiveness. As highlighted by the KwaZulu-Natal's (KZN) master plan by the Provincial Department of Economic Development and Tourism (2012), Durban has the potential to become Africa's Miami.

South Africa's (SA's) competitiveness was measured, with issues such as security and safety, education about service, training and the development of skills, in addition to right to use, promotion of unique products, improved value for money offerings and upgrading of infrastructure, highlighted by Lubbe (2015: 10-11). These factors influence and impact SA's tourism competitiveness, which stakeholders including government need to address. Du Plessis, Saayman and van der Merwe (2017: 2) indicate the importance of SA and product owners gaining knowledge as to which factors contribute to SA's competitiveness and what has changed over the last 12 years. This is supported by Ferreira and Perks (2016a: 121), who indicate that SA has not realised its full tourism potential yet. Therefore, identifying Durban's strengths and weaknesses would assist stakeholders in improving the city's competitiveness and economy.

The UNWTO's (2011a: 94) global tourism policy and practice suggests that one of the main themes linked to destination development is that of destination competitiveness, since it influences destinations' long-term sustainability and profitability. A range of factors that affect destination competitiveness are identified by UNWTO (2011b: 97), including branding, image, price and productivity, in addition to macro-economic policy, investment, share of the market and visitor satisfaction. Moreover, other factors include strategy, safety, quality of experiences and originality, along with human resources (HR) training.

Jonker (2003: 13) states that destinations the world over are finding that tourism has evolved into business that is propelled by science, innovation and technology and severely competitive; making competitive advantage a

necessity. The author also indicates that as 'a catalyst' for future social and economic development, tourism holds immense promise. This factor supports Durban's need to establish its tourism competitiveness. Buhalis, Longi, Mariani and Vitouladiti (2014: 269-272) highlight the fact that a major trend among tourism destinations, is increasing competition, with international tourism's contribution to emerging economies, such as Africa, expected to increase in tourist numbers substantially.

Destination marketing and tourism have, as stated by Amaranggana and Buhalis (n.d.: 2), become increasingly competitive worldwide, underlining the need for destinations to differentiate their products and develop innovative products that are unlike those offered by other destinations (Buhalis and Michopoulou 2011:147). The study also reveals the necessity for destinations to increase their visibility and assess individual destination's strengths and weaknesses.

Kozak (n.d.: 1) indicates the need for destinations to measure their competitiveness and analyse their effective factors and indicators so they may identify their weaknesses and strengths. It is also pointed out that consumer trends have changed over the years and consumers today are more knowledgeable and experienced when making a destination choice.

According to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 19), it is an established fact that tourists will first decide on a destination and only then will they pay for a holiday. In addition, there is an extensive selection of destinations for tourists to choose from; consequently, destinations ought to focus on and market their uniqueness.

The first step in achieving destination competitiveness, as explained by Jonker, Heath and Du Toit (2004: 1), is to establish the success factors and forces that shape that particular destination's tourism competitiveness.

Stakeholders would thus be enabled to capitalise on strengths and improve on weaknesses, ensuring sustainable growth.

This study will establish the marketing strengths and weaknesses of Durban as a destination to assist stakeholders in improving the city's tourism competitiveness. This should also contribute to an increase in tourist numbers to the city, which would lead to economic improvement and sustainability.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 15) recognise the constantly evolving nature of competition at the destination, requiring destination marketers to understand the nature of competition and sustainable tourism. The authors also stipulate the importance of destination management. The effects of the macro-environment on tourism destinations provide both opportunities and many challenges, specifically considering that the manner in which the tourism system functions affects destination competitiveness.

It is noted by De Jager (2009: 1) that consumers are better educated and more affluent, and able to access more information, seek unique activities and tailored experiences, and experience diverse cultures, while further expressing a need for unique experiences. The study also reveals the need for better quality goods and services. A destination's ability to deliver experiences that are memorable for the tourist is vital (Kolb 2006:51).

Tourist destinations need to convince consumers of varied, unique benefits (Crouch n.d.: 73). Other contributing factors in a competitive tourism destination's management and marketing are its location, safety, cost and interdependence, as well as destination image and carrying capacity. Moreover, there are many built and natural resources in Durban that ought to be used in marketing the city, to compete globally with other cities.

As highlighted by the World Economic Forum for Travel and Tourism (WEFTT) Competitiveness Report (2015: 5), development of the travel and tourism industry continues more rapidly than the global economy. Countries performing well and improving their competitiveness are responding to new trends, such as specific and new tourist preferences, the increasing significance of online services, and marketing by means of mobile internet. Additional competitiveness factors highlighted are that job opportunities, at all skills levels, result from a strong travel and tourism sector, with the resulting international level collaboration and public-private sector partnerships.

It is stated by Calitz and Cullen (n.d.: 1) that the identification of trends in destination marketing of cities is a vital element of the growth of a city that leads to economic development. As stated by Fu and Murray (2014: 843) cities need to focus on improving marketability in comparison to world-class cities by enhancing their distinctiveness, as cities are now a part of the new urban race. According to Richards (2014: 119), cities can distinguish themselves through creative tourism and intangible competitive advantage. The research indicates the need for tourism destination competitiveness in cities (Luh, Kung and Tan 2013:153), which supports the necessity of assessing Durban's marketing mix factors that will, in turn, assist in improving Durban's competitiveness.

For the purposes of this research, reference will be made to cities and countries. Referred to by the UNWTO Global Report on City Tourism, (2012: 6) as relatively large, permanent, urban settlements, cities may be situated within a country or geographical region. Reference is made to the destination, the tourist and tourist perceptions in this study. Optimistic and confident tourist perceptions or positive word-of-mouth are vital to return visits for any tourist destination.

Cities are further described by UNWTO (2015: 2) as vibrant epi-centres of culture and commerce, and it is stated that at present, half of the planet's

population are resident in cities, with some of the greatest tourism destinations in the world comprised of cities. They attract more visitors annually, impacting local economies positively through job creation, while stimulating foreign exchange and promoting investment in infrastructure that benefit residents and visitors alike.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The 2013/2014 visitor statistics (Durban Tourism 2015: 3-17) indicate that there was a decline in international and domestic visitor numbers to Durban and a decline in visitor spend to the city. The established marketing mix factors will assist Durban as a city, to achieve economic sustainability, to become a preferred destination of choice, thus ensuring that tourism sustainability is achieved. There is also a lack of knowledge of how competitive Durban is as a destination and how well Durban performs according to tourism competitiveness, with the additional lack of knowledge regarding factors to be improved to increase tourism competitive advantage.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The study's overall aim is to establish Durban's tourism competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective.

1.4.1 Research Objectives

Arising out of the problem statement, the research objective is to:

Identify the role of the marketing mix in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination.

Sub-objectives

- Identify factors critical to tourism competitiveness.
- Identify Durban's current tourism marketing mix factors.
- Assess the performance of Durban's tourism industry from a stakeholder perception.

- Recommend appropriate marketing actions to improve performance of the critical success factors.

1.5 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The study's contribution is to the sustainability and development of the Durban's tourism industry, through the measurement of the city's marketing mix factors and assessment of the performance of Durban's tourism industry. Using the recommendations of appropriate marketing actions established in this study, stakeholders of Durban's tourism industry, which include governmental organisations, Ethekewini Municipality, academia and tourism businesses, along with other related businesses can increase tourist numbers, thus improving spending by tourists, resulting in a positive impact on the city's economy.

A UNWTO Global Benchmarking for City Tourism Measurement report (2015: 5) states that cities are significant to their residents and to tourists who choose to visit them, and are competing in a fierce global market, therefore, they need to monitor and evaluate their progress. By the year 2030, five billion people are expected to live in cities and those city dwellers seem inclined to visit other cities when travelling, as evidenced by the 47 percent increase in city trips, worldwide, over the last five years. Li and Roberts (2010) examine non-performance effects on brand loyalty, and the results confirm that, Durban would benefit as a city to assess its marketing performance and improve its performance as a destination of choice.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study has as its purpose to identify the marketing mix role in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination, through determining factors critical to tourism competitiveness as well as Durban's current tourism marketing mix factors, assessing the performance of Durban's tourism industry from a stakeholder perspective, and recommending appropriate marketing actions to improve performance of the critical success factors.

This study will involve using the service marketing mix principle, which is comprised of the seven marketing P's, plus various destination competitiveness models. The framework for the study will be the seven marketing P's comprised of product, price, place, promotion, process, people and physical evidence. Booms and Bitner (1981:23) found that the 7P extended marketing mix is a tool used by service businesses and marketers to help determine the success of a service company; it includes key factors that influence buyer behaviour, customer satisfaction and the customer experience. These factors consist of physical evidence, participants and process, in addition to the more traditional 4Ps of product, price, place and promotion, and influence buying needs, customer satisfaction and customer experience.

The seven marketing mix components were used in this study to measure tourism stakeholder perceptions and Durban's performance as a tourism destination. Furthermore, the marketing mix components were also compared and measured against various destination competitiveness models and studies, as the models demonstrate best practice.

The marketing mix principles were evaluated against three international competitiveness models, the first of which Crouch and Ritchie (2003:63) developed on an international level, and which has as its focus, the tourism competitiveness factors of the destination. These must be sustainable, emphasise prosperity in the long-term, as well as attributes of industry levels, and attractiveness of tourism destinations.

The second model was Dwyer and Kim (2004:2) integrative model, which deal with a destination's natural factors of production or the resources that lead to the destination being perceived as attractive, thus highlighting comparative advantage.

Developed by Heath (2002:339), the third model was created to enhance Africa's sustainable tourism competitiveness. This model focuses on determining a set of indicators to identify the weaknesses and strengths of varying destinations, which governments could employ to increase tourist numbers and tourist expenditure, as well as positive impacts on a socio-economic level.

Two tourism competitiveness studies have been conducted in SA. The first phase of measuring SA's tourism competitiveness was done by SA Tourism (SAT) in 2005, with the first component of the second phase of measuring the tourism competitiveness of SA conducted in 2015 by Lubbe (2015), which focused on determining a set of indicators to measure competitiveness. The second component of the second phase was the identification of determinant factors against SA according to stakeholder perspectives, with the third component of the second phase that of measuring the country against its main competitors, where competitiveness is concerned, from the source market's perspective.

The marketing mix components were also compared to the Competitiveness Index factors of the World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism (WEFTT), between 2013 and 2015 to measure factors relative to South Africa in comparison to other countries used in the study. The factors were comprised of policy regulations and rules, environmental sustainability, security and safety, and hygiene and health, as well as infrastructure, climate change, attractions and HR. These factors of the WEFTT report are referred to in this study as they are significant competitiveness factors against which SA has been assessed and compared.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN SUMMARY

1.7.1 The Mixed-Methods Approach

The research methodology adopted for the study consisted of combining qualitative and quantitative methods, employing a mixed-methods approach.

The mixed method used in this study is concurrent triangulation, with quantitative and qualitative techniques both used to attend to the measuring of the marketing mix principles with employees and senior tourism managers of the tourism industry. Using concurrent triangulation allowed for the conclusion of meaningful, rich conclusions to questions. As highlighted by Biddix (2009:9), two or more methods characterise concurrent triangulation when confirming, cross-validating or corroborating study findings. The purpose of cross triangulation ensures that quantitative as well as qualitative methods are employed; negating a weakness by making use of one method with another's strength.

1.7.2. Quantitative research

Quantitative research consists of data analysed in terms of numbers and quantity. The quantitative approach used in this study was the use of a survey questionnaire as measurement instrument, administered to 400 employees of Durban's tourism industry. Of the 400 originally distributed surveys, 308 surveys were completed.

1.7.3. Qualitative research

Qualitative research is more open and responsive to the subject at hand. The qualitative approach used in this study involved the interviewing of senior managers of the tourism industry in Durban, with 30 senior managers selected across the different sectors of Durban's tourism industry, of which 23 agreed to be interviewed. The questions used during the interviews pertained to the marketing mix principles.

1.7.4 Questionnaire Design

1.7.4.1 Survey

The questionnaires were designed using the seven marketing mix principles, namely place, price, distribution, promotion, process, people and physical evidence. The factors and questions pertaining to the marketing mix factors

also pertained to elements included in the various competitiveness models expanded upon in Chapter 2. Closed-ended questions were designed and a 5-point Likert scale response range used.

1.7.4.2 Interviews

The interviews were designed using the seven marketing mix principles, namely place, price, distribution, promotion, process, people and physical evidence. The questions were open ended.

1.7.5 Population and Sampling

In order to establish Durban's competitiveness factors, the target population comprised tourism stakeholders across the different sectors from Durban's tourism industry.

1.7.5.1 Interview population and sampling

Purposive sampling was the sample technique used for the study's qualitative aspect, with an element of judgement, as senior managers across the different sectors and organisations had to be chosen.

A cross-section of respondents was chosen across the different sectors of Durban's tourism industry, from both the public and private sectors. Of the 30 senior managers selected, from government, accommodation, retail and transportation sectors, only 23 were willing to be interviewed.

1.7.5.2 Survey population and sampling

These stakeholders included senior employees who work frontline with tourists from Durban Tourism, TKZN, SAT, and the Ethekewini Municipality, in addition to the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, and the NDT, as well as hotels, tour operators, travel agents, and airlines, along with coach, and rail companies, and tourism academics. The sample technique used for the quantitative aspect of the study was convenience sampling due to the availability of staff members at the time.

1.7.6 Data Collection and Analysis

The gathering of information and the facilitation of the data analysis process are referred to as data collection.

1.7.6.1 Survey Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher administered the survey questionnaires to frontline staff and was also assisted by Human Resource managers and managers in certain organisations. The researcher made appointments with various companies for the administering of the surveys. The completed questionnaires were edited and coded through data capturing, making them easier to manage and interpret. The survey results were analysed with the use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS-22.0), allowing the results to be presented as plotted as graphs and written conclusions.

To establish face validity for this study, a pilot survey was conducted, while reliability was assessed via Cronbach's Alpha.

1.7.6.2 Interview Data Collection and Analysis

Face-to-face interviews were arranged by email with managers, subject to their availability. A pilot study which comprised of fifteen respondents was undertaken to establish reliability and validity of the interview questionnaire, with senior managers from a hospitality and tourism organisation selected as respondents for the pilot. The researcher analysed the responses from the interviews into theme discussions.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was delimited to employees and senior managers of Durban's tourism industry only, which means that the results cannot be generalised to SA's entire tourism industry.

Tourists' perceptions were not included in the study, as the focus of interest was what industry stakeholders (other than 'customers') felt about Durban's competitiveness.

The study used the marketing mix principles as a framework for identifying relevant factors of destination competitiveness. However not all destination competitiveness factors were measured, only those directly related to the marketing mix, as this was the study's main focus.

1.9 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

- Keyser (2009: 6) describes a *destination* as “a defined spatial area made up of a mix of tourism resources, created facilities and support services and infrastructure that are managed, marketed and consumed under a single brand identity.”
- *Destination competitiveness* is defined by Keyser (2009: 6) as “the ability of a destination to provide satisfactory visitor experiences, while simultaneously maintaining and expanding the standards of living of its population.”
- Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 20) state that, “comparative advantage signifies the natural endowment in production factors of a destination, otherwise known as those resources that result in a destination being perceived as attractive.”
- As highlighted by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 23), “competitive advantage concerns a destination's capability to effectively utilize resources.”

1.10 SUMMARY AND DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

The study consists of five chapters:

Chapter 1: Study Outline

This chapter offers an overview of the study into Durban's destination competitiveness, along with a background of tourism competitiveness at

national and provincial level. The motivation for the study, the problem statement, the primary and the secondary objective, as well as a brief summary of the research methodology are also discussed.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The theory and concept of destination competitiveness are outlined on a global, national, provincial and city level in this chapter. The marketing principles are also explored, in the context of Durban. This chapter focuses on the tourism industry in Durban. The conceptual framework of the marketing mix is used to identify gaps in the tourism industry in Durban. Specific reference is made to journals, published sources, internet sites and various reports from governing bodies.

Chapter 3: Research Design

The research methodology appropriate to the study is identified and elaborated on. The sampling technique is described and the population identified. It provides an account of qualitative and quantitative methods used in the study. This chapter, furthermore, sets out how the data was collected, providing insight into the questionnaire, its administration and the techniques used to analyse the results. In addition, a review of the reliability and validity of the research investigation is provided, highlighting areas where errors may have occurred.

Chapter 4: Evaluation of Results and Findings

The investigation's findings are stated and discussed, with detailed analyses of the results, accompanied by numerical tabulations, presented in this chapter. Presentations are both descriptive and inferential, indicating the extent to which the findings are statistically significant. Quantitative and qualitative findings are synthesised as per the mixed methods approach, to provide overall findings and conclusions to meet the study objectives.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations

This chapter details and presents the summary and conclusions from the literature review in Chapter 2, followed by conclusions from the research study. Moreover, this chapter provides conclusions based on the study findings, founded on the interpretations of the results pertaining to Durban's tourism competitiveness. Recommendations and ideas for additional research are also put forward.

1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

An outline for the study has been provided by introducing the need for Durban to be a competitive destination, while stating how the marketing mix principles would be used to identify Durban's competitiveness. The research problem and objectives and a summary of the research methodology were provided.

Increasing Durban Tourism's international and domestic arrivals, as well as repeat visitors, would be possible by determining Durban's competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective. Durban, as a competitive destination, cannot only rely on sun, sea and sand but must also focus on service quality, cleanliness and the ambience of the destination, as well as unique experiences. The next chapter offers a detailed review of the study topic analysis of destination competitiveness and marketing mix elements.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS AND MARKETING MIX ELEMENTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

While the topic under research and the background to the aim and objectives were introduced in the previous chapter, a review of literature on the topic under study will be presented in this chapter. The chapter commences with a comprehensive overview of the need for Durban to be a competitive destination on a global platform, the significance of city tourism, as well as typologies of destination competitiveness models and theories, factors and indicators of Durban's tourism competitiveness and market performance. The chapter explores the analysis of global competitiveness reports, destination competitiveness studies and destination marketing strategies used in this study, to determine Durban's tourism competitive advantage. Tourism policies, strategies and destination competitiveness reports are, however, used from SA, as Durban is a city in a province in the country.

Determining the city's competitiveness factors, from a stakeholder perspective, will assist Durban Tourism in increasing tourist numbers to the city, thus increasing the economy. Being responsible for the marketing of the city, Durban Tourism would have to ensure that the indicators and determinants of Durban tourism competitiveness are established. Crouch (2011: 28) finds that a destination's attractiveness may stay the same; however, the changing nature of the competition requires continual reassessment of a destination's ability to compete. Tourism is one way by which Durban, as a city, can make a positive contribution to the economy. Thus, Durban needs to focus on city tourism.

2.2 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CITY TOURISM

The UNWTO (2012: 6 -14) global report on City Tourism finds that cities are constantly changing and growing and therefore, provide new opportunities for

local economic growth and are the key element to reducing poverty. The report highlights that cities should offer diverse and flexible products to achieve social and economic objectives and should also have the ability to bring changes and new patterns to their urban landscape. This is due to cities creating relationships by connecting people, as tourism is a key support and economic driver, where urban infrastructure maintenance, income and employment are concerned.

As emphasised by this report, cities are constantly growing and changing, and need to offer visitors the expected experiences, services and products, even though these experiences and products, to adapt to an increasing demand, are constantly changing. This would necessitate cities making constant investment in conservation and promotion, as well as infrastructure, benefiting local residents and tourists, in the long run. The global report on City Tourism (UNWTO 2012: 6 -14) states that the focus of cities must be on the improvement of their competitiveness and the quality of life of their citizens', which signifies managing both economic, as well as social and environmental climate complexity.

Cities need to focus on their product offerings, thus providing substantial revenue and added value for residents. Many cities face the challenge of increasing tourist arrivals, improving the quality of life for its residents, developing competitive sustainability and accessibility, and measuring the economic impact of cities, as well as reducing the impact on the natural environment. The city of Durban must focus on its product offering in attracting tourists to the city.

Consistent with Tourism Towards 2030, which contains an assessment of future tourism trends by the UNWTO, an increase of 3.3 percent generally, from 2010 to 2030, is expected in the number of international tourist arrivals, worldwide. This indicates approximately 43 million additional international tourist arrivals annually, achieving a total of 1.8 billion arrivals by 2030.

A Global Benchmarking for City Tourism Measurement report by the UNWTO (2015: 5) states that cities are significant to their residents and to tourists who choose to visit them, and are competing in a fierce global market, with the need to monitor and evaluate their progress. By the year 2030, five billion people are expected to live in cities and those city dwellers seem inclined to visit other cities when travelling, as evidenced by the 47 percent increase in city trips, worldwide, over the last five years.

Nine cities around the world were discussed in the UNWTO report (2015), with Cape Town being one of the competing cities. The nine cities jointly expressed that their priority areas consist of planning and governance, economic impact, marketing and promotion, as well as HR, cultural and natural heritage, and responsible tourism, including modernisation and visitor experience.

Cities are also poles of tourism attraction and are, hence, significantly interested in being competitive. Durban as a city can make a positive contribution to the economy by improving its tourism industry, which would improve the city's competitiveness, thus making a positive contribution to the economy through the increase in domestic and international tourists visiting the city

2.3 THE NEED FOR DURBAN TO BE A COMPETITIVE DESTINATION

To achieve competitive advantage for its tourism industry, Dwyer and Kim (2003: 369) state that the overall appeal and tourist experience offered by any destination has to be superior to other destinations, resulting in the need to measure the overall competitiveness of a destination.

Poon (1993: 291) suggests modern tourists are more quality conscious and more difficult to please. The author further states that, in order to consider a destination as competitive, the environment has to be prioritised by the destination, while ensuring tourism grows into a top sector and marketplace

distribution channels are fortified, so that a dynamic private sector can be built. Rather than focusing on mass tourism, Durban Tourism should concentrate on the concept of new tourism, using niche marketing, which focuses on clearly-defined market segments. This approach could ensure sustainability and an increase in tourism numbers that leads to economic prosperity by identifying factors and indicators of destination competitiveness.

There is, in addition, a decline in the number of visitors at traditional tourism destinations (Crouch and Ritchie 2003: 10). Los Angeles, as with Durban, has lost its gloss over the years. By contrast, cities such as San Antonio and Santa Fe have significantly enhanced their competitive situation, by adopting strategic marketing. Cities such as Rome, Athens, Troy and Sparta have effective levels of competitive advantage, due to effective use of their natural and man-made attractions and activities, while mega-cities around the world, such as London, New York and Paris, have become major tourism destinations (Crouch and Ritchie 2003).

Comparative advantage entails a destination's natural attributes in production factors, signifying resources that are the result of a destination being seen as attractive (Crouch and Ritchie 2003), while a destination's capacity to effectively utilise those resources signifies its competitive advantage. Durban has many natural attractions, such as its coastline, along with numerous man-made attractions, yet these attractions are not effectively utilised to ensure the city is a competitive destination. Consideration should be given to Durban's economy, infrastructure, natural capital, and fundamental attractors, in order to be a competitive destination.

Keyser (2009: 6) explains that a destination can be a predetermined, three-dimensional area made up of an assortment "of tourism resources, created facilities and support services and infrastructure that are managed, marketed and consumed under a single brand identity". Destination competitiveness is explained by the author as a destination's ability to "provide satisfactory visitor

experiences, while simultaneously maintaining and expanding the standards of living of its population”.

Durban needs to assess its tourism competitiveness because it would assist the city in improving areas that require attention and making the city a preferred destination, as tourists have a variety of destinations around the globe to choose from.

2.3.1 Durban’s Tourism Industry

MacFarlane (2012: 6), who focuses on Durban’s visitor industry strategy and current tourism concerns, is concerned, for example, with the city being a destination considered to offer value for money, delivery and supply, promotion, consequence, information and entry. Problems identified were lack of visitor demand, poor and uncertain prognosis, declining revenue and business closures and over 7 000 potential jobs lost over a period of five years.

The 2013 and 2014 statistics of Durban’s tourism sector (Durban Tourism 2015:3-17), states the following as significant to Durban’s tourism competitiveness. Durban Tourism, as a company, strives to understand the different markets and market trends, develop, innovate and improve, as well as collectively deliver a memorable visitor experience for the city of Durban and keep abreast of all global challenges. It is shown by the 2013/2014 statistics (Durban Tourism 2015: 3-17) that 70.8 percent of domestic visitors to KZN visited Durban; this indicates a significant drop in domestic and international visitors between 2009 (80.4 percent) and 2013 (70.8 percent).

Domestic tourist spend, between 2009 and 2013, also dropped by R600 000.00 per annum, with the average number of bed nights dropping from six nights in 2009-2011, to an average of two bed nights in 2013. The statistics indicate that 600 000 domestic visitors visited Durban in July 2013, and 570 000 visited Durban in December 2013. The main purposes for domestic

visitors to Durban were indicated as 'visiting friends and relatives' at 5 336 000, and 'holiday' at 1 125 000.

In addition, the number of foreign visitor arrivals in Durban in 2009 was 700 386, which dropped to 599 779 in 2013. The total foreign visitor spend was R5.7 billion in 2011 and this fell to R4.5 billion in 2013. Foreign visitors, in 2013, travelled to Durban for the following purposes: 40.40 percent visited friends and relatives, 29.70 percent visited for holiday purposes, 8.20 percent visited for business travel and 3.50 percent visited for shopping purposes. The total number of foreign bed nights spent in 2013, amounted to 480 000 nights. The average length of stay by foreign tourists between 2009 to 2013 remained at about six nights. During July 2013, the number of foreign tourists that visited Durban was found to be 80 000, with 77 000 in December 2013 and 76 000 in January 2014. International source markets for Durban include the United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK), Germany and other European countries, followed by Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Malawi.

The number of visitors and profiles for 2014 is, furthermore, indicated at 2 377 765 day visitors, 5 001 582 overnight tourists, with a total number of 7 379 346 visitors, up by 12.8 percent from 2013. The origin of domestic visitors is found to comprise 87.7 percent, with foreign visitors at 12.3 percent. The length of stay for domestic visitors was, on average, 3.7 nights and 5.1 nights for foreign tourists. During Winter 2014, 1 052 845 domestic, overnight visitors stayed in Durban and 1 177 615 during off-peak seasons.

The Easter 2014 period had 242 305 foreign visitors and 142 759 during Winter, with Durban's economic impact from tourism for the 2014 festive season up by 20 percent. The total festive season (calculated from 1 December 2014 to 6 January 2015) had 406 159 day visitors, and 1 044 409 overnight visitors, with a total of 1.45 million visitors. The origins of overnight visitors were identified as: KZN – 11 percent; Gauteng – 49 percent; USA – 15 percent; Zimbabwe – 13 percent; Australia – 12 percent; and Zambia – ten

percent. The purpose of the visits was found to be: leisure – 66 percent; business – 15 percent; shopping – one percent; visiting friends and relatives – 15 percent; conferences – two percent; and other – one percent. The total direct expenditure was R3.1 billion for the 2014 festive season.

The above statistics indicate a decline in international and domestic tourist numbers to Durban; Durban Tourism needs to address the reason for the decline, in order to make Durban a competitive destination.

2.4 TYPOLOGIES OF DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS MODELS AND THEORIES

2.4.1 Destination competitiveness factors

Destination competitiveness models and reports are available on international, national and provincial level. Factors such as attractions, events, safety, and security, as well as culture, history, mix of activities, infrastructure and climate, may contribute to or influence the determination of Durban's competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective. Dwyer and Kim (2003:370) state that, in tourism, competitive advantage depends on a variety of factors, including investments, to produce an attractive destination or product, ensuring quality standards, levels of access, and sufficient supply, in addition to effective promotional strategy and demand.

The marketing concepts of product, price, place, promotion, process, people and physical evidence will be employed to determine Durban's competitiveness from a stakeholder perspective. It is reported by George (2011: 263) that the marketing mix includes all these components, with the various elements of the marketing mix factors also related to destination competitiveness.

Any tourism destination has its assets as a basis, which consists of infrastructure, allowing tourists to gain access to a country, as well as natural vistas and cultural heritage. Assets, such as natural treasures, require a

significant amount of financial outlay, with regard to conservation where natural treasures are concerned, and maintenance regarding physical infrastructure that loses value over time.

In order to manage inbound tourism flows and achieve advantage over rival countries, destination managers and policymakers should develop long-term plans; additionally, there is a need to distinguish and leverage expertise that result in their destination being distinct and unique. These factors must include distinguishing characteristics that create a strong and stable growth record in the inbound tourism industry.

With the agency to guide tourism, where resistance against interim shocks is concerned, and priming the industry for long-term stability, policymakers in SA can focus on specific areas that make leading countries noticeable, when compared to underachieving contemporaries. Highly-competitive tourism destinations' policies and sector-development strategies have proven to be successful in enduring downturns in the economy and preparing for additional instability ahead (Dwyer and Kim 2003: 369).

There is a need for SA to align its policy focus by identifying significant areas of tourism opportunities and the recognised core competencies. These distinguishing aspects are distinctly different and reaffirm a blend of worldwide travel experiences and requirements, which vary from re-establishing visitor trust, following phases of uncertainty, and upholding price competitiveness in an indecisive market and its surrounds, to ensuring that sustainability is a successful element, while turning the desirability of tourism into flourishing destination development. The goal of tourism policymakers in SA should be to engender a climate that is positive for tourism, and directly link businesses within the tourism sector to the economy in general, thus strengthening the economy or infrastructure expansion.

Policy rules and regulations in the tourism sector must have a well-defined emphasis on long-term tactics for tourism development. The minimisation of minor, existing barriers to entry, with regards to infrastructure or visa regulations, are what propels private-sector investment, (Crouch and Ritchie 2003), while also contributing to the empowerment of local communities' participation in the tourism value chain, in addition to establishing cooperation across borders, with other destinations.

Price competitiveness is stated by the WEFTT Competitiveness Report (2013: 8) as an essential segregator across numerous dimensions. The report points to exchange rate fluctuations at a macro level as a key and erratic factor influencing travel behaviour. Consequently, pricing for inbound tourism needs to be made more flexible by tourism planners, easing access to a country by tax reduction, should it be necessary. This highlights that local investment and entrepreneurship should also be supported with financial incentives, for instance, investment aid or further measures of support.

Leveraging a destination's diverse culture, history, and natural scenery is vital (WEFTT 2013: 9). A destination such as Durban can thus use its rich culture and history to its advantage, as environmentally sustainable tourism source markets. Policymakers in SA, which is a developing tourism destination, should prioritise sustainability in the long-term, to uphold cultural and natural assets, due to "green consumerism" in developed markets having become a buying power worth mentioning, as explained by the WEFTT report (2013: 9).

Destination competitiveness factors are discussed in various models on an international and national level. There are common and different competitiveness factors in the various models that destinations may use to determine their own competitiveness.

2.4.2 The conceptual model of destination competitiveness

Distinctive characteristics of the conceptual destination competitiveness model are recognised (Figure 2.1). Areas include resources and supporting factors, attractors and core resources, destination management, as well as destination policy development and planning, amplifying and qualifying determinants, along with competitive and comparative advantages.

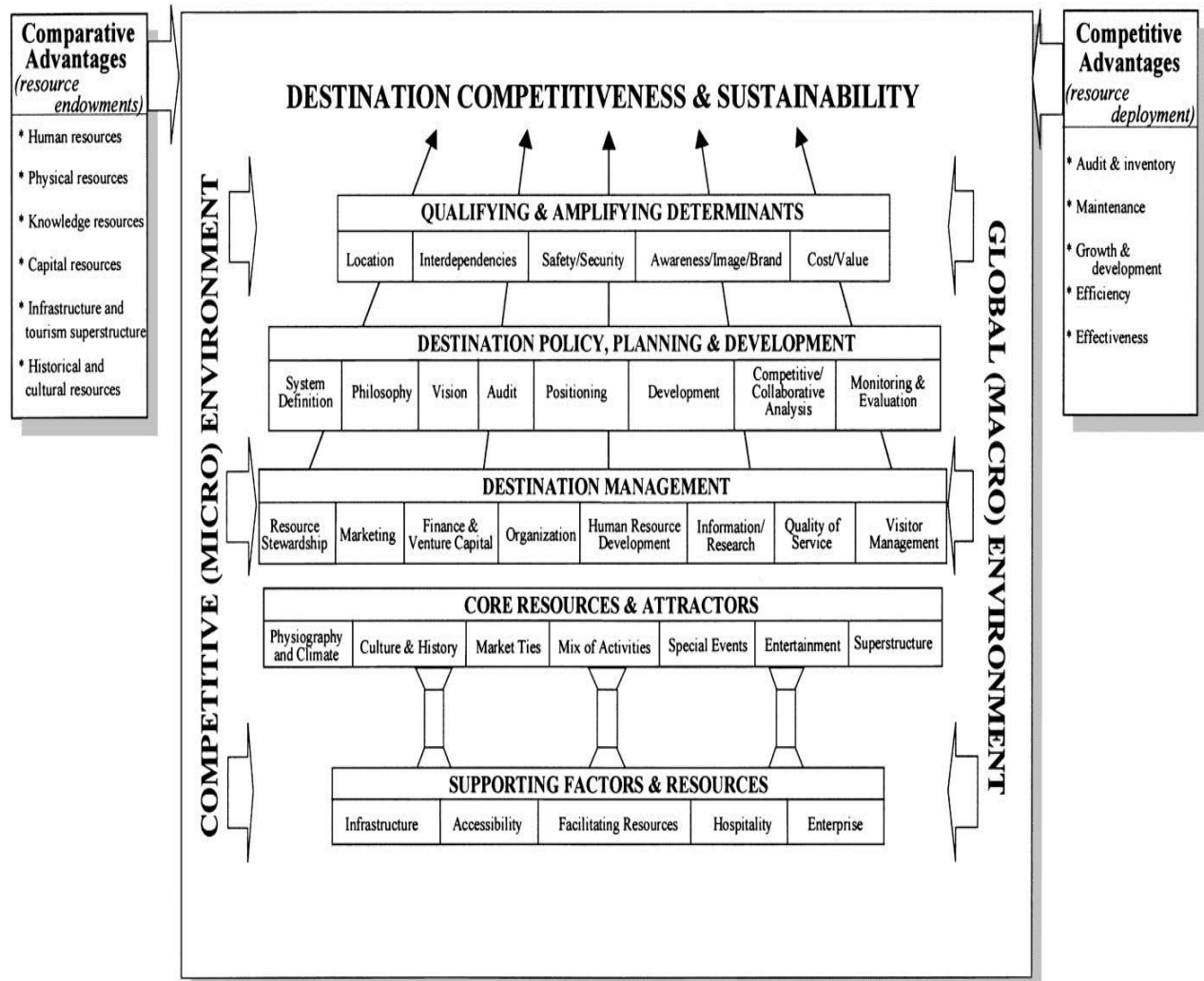


Figure 2.1: The conceptual model of destination competitiveness

Source: Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 63)

Comparative advantages of a destination are illustrated by the model to form the basis of destination competitiveness; these advantages are its competitive advantages and resource endowments that arise from the ability of a

destination to effectively position and implement its resources. The model also indicates that global forces, which are both macro- and micro-environmental and competitive, impact the tourism system's functioning at the destination. Supporting factors and resources influence both the tourist's destination of choice and the destination's appeal. Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 130) report that resources and supporting factors are the foundation of a competitive destination. Should a destination's resources and supporting factors appear or prove to be insufficient, poor tourist appeal and satisfaction will be created.

Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 110) further state that the greatest challenge facing tourism stakeholders at a destination, is the fact that consumers have an extensive diversity of destinations from which to choose; making a destination's core resources and attractors imperative. Furthermore, Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 183) confirm that destination management is the key to preserving a balanced, competitive advantage, assuring economic profitability, while circumventing factors that detract from its competitive position.

Parameters that define the potential of a destination are comprised of determinants that meet and amplify requirements. Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 223) found that these determinants are factors of competitiveness that regulate, restrain, lessen, and filter, as well as amplify, support, enrich and intensify all other determinants' impacts.

2.4.3 The Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness

The model proposed by Dwyer *et al.* (2004: 92) indicates a general model of destination competitiveness that takes firm and national competitiveness theories into account, along with the main aspects of destination competitiveness (Figure 2.2). Destination management is indicated as a critical element of the model, which includes industry and government.

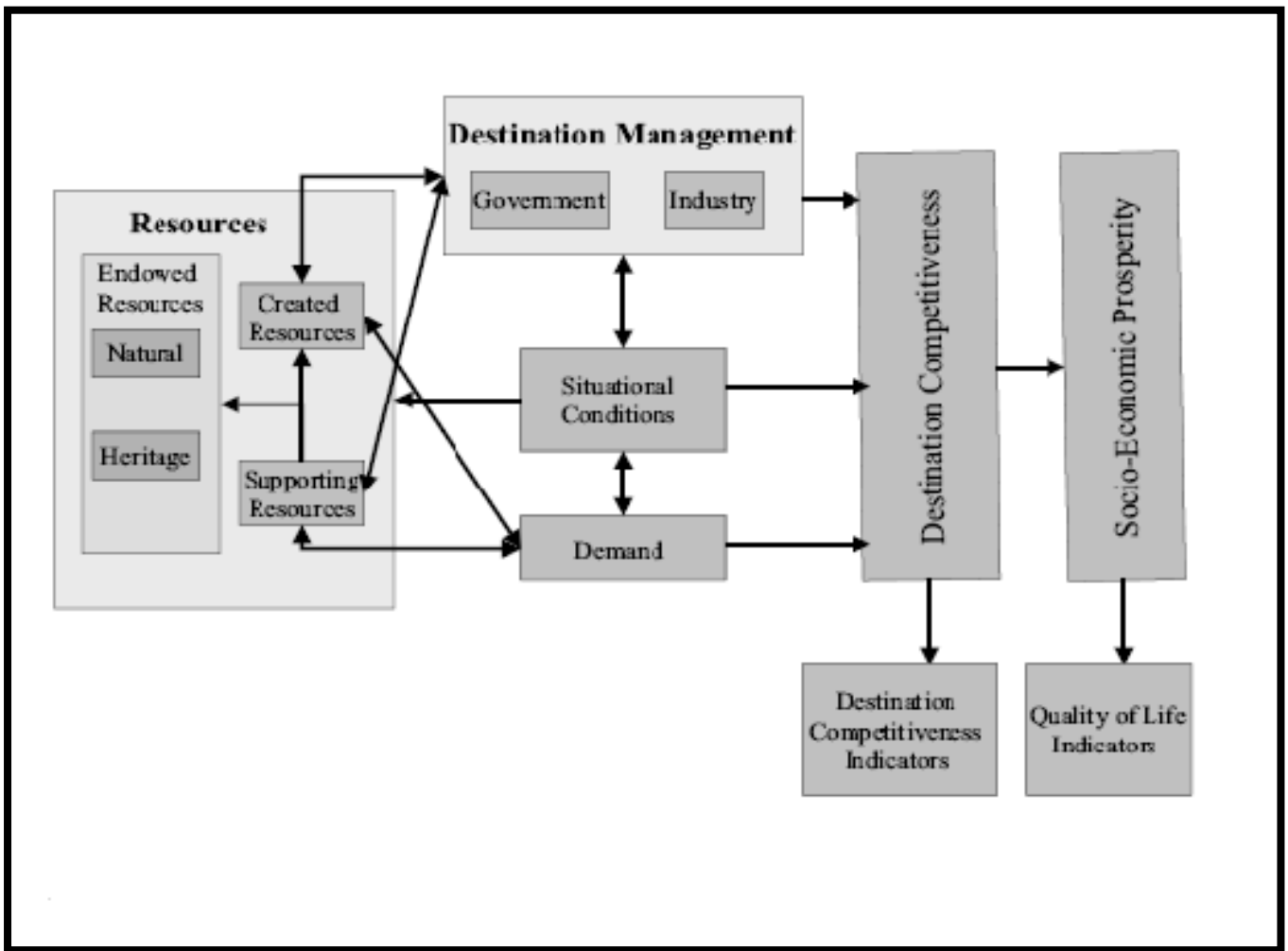


Figure 2.2: An Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness

Source: Dwyer *et al.* (2004: 2)

The integrated model indicates that resources consist of endowed (heritage) and natural resources, which include both created and supporting resources. The model also indicates how destination competitiveness and socio-economic prosperity influence the interaction of destination management with the demand for tourism and situational conditions. There is a set of indicators for each aspect of the model by which destination competitiveness is measured.

2.4.4 A model to enhance Africa’s sustainable tourism competitiveness

The tourism environment is shown by Heath (2002: 327) to have become more and more dynamic and competitive. Changes, such as consumer preferences and macro environmental changes, are altering the face of tourism with new challenges continually being posed. Figure 2.3 focuses destination competitiveness success indicators. These indicators would assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses of a destination and also assist in drawing higher tourism numbers, spend and positive environmental, social and economic impacts.

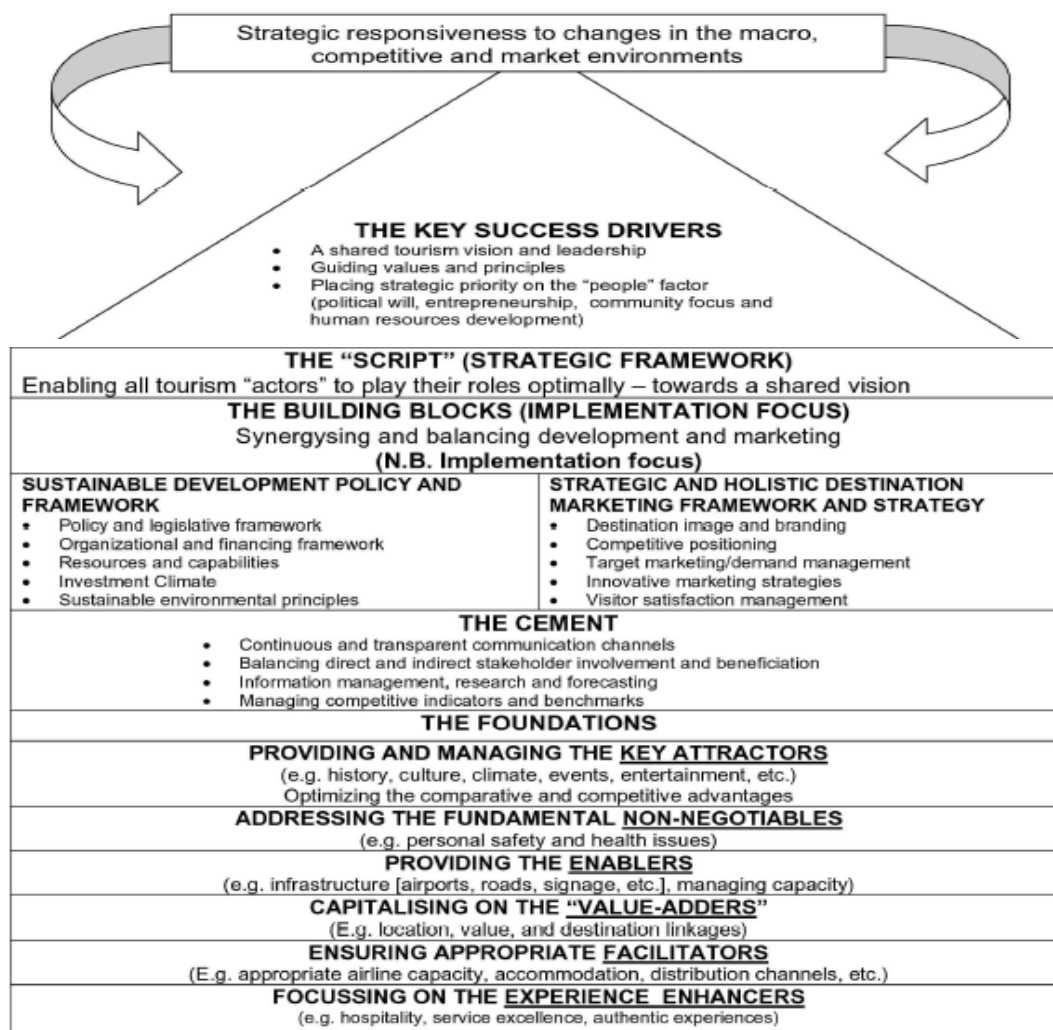


Figure 2.3: A model to enhance Africa’s sustainable tourism competitiveness

Source: Heath (2002: 339)

2.4.5 South Africa’s Tourism Growth Strategy and Global Competitiveness

The report by SAT (2008-2010), concerning its competitiveness, refers to the growth strategy started in 2001, and the Global Competitiveness Project, which was done consecutively, in two phases in 2003 and 2004. This guide also includes the tourism marketing strategy for SA. According to this report, SAT’s main focus is on sustainable Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and job creation, in addition to redistribution and transformation, by means of six key objectives. The objectives are to increase tourist volumes and spend, improve geographic spread and seasonality patterns, as well as extend tourists’ length of stay and encourage transformation. When developing a long-term strategy and competitiveness, Durban Tourism needs to adopt the six objectives illustrated (Figure 2.4).

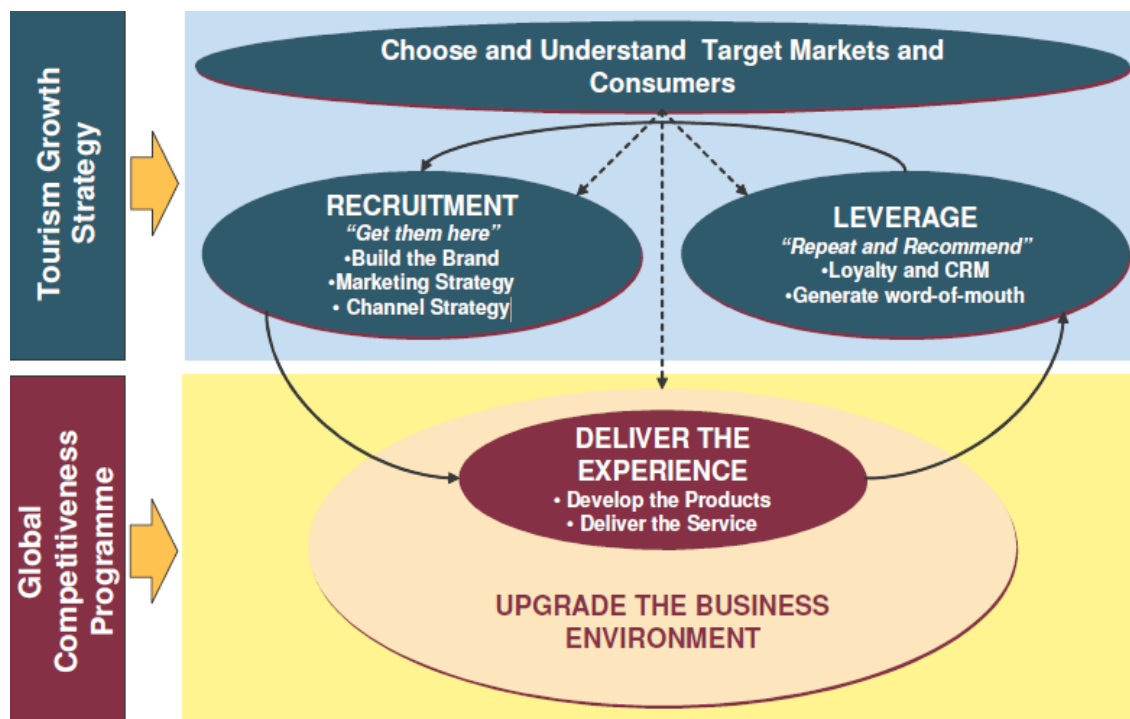


Figure 2.4: South Africa’s Tourism Growth Strategy and Global Competitiveness

Source: South Africa’s Tourism Growth Strategy and Global Competitiveness Report (2007: 5)

SAT focuses on maintaining present purchasing patterns through current travellers and market segments. It suggests that existing consumers ought to be stimulated to visit SA for longer; for new experiences, offerings and purposes. In addition, SAT hopes to win segments and consumers from competitors to SA, while persuading low-frequency or non-travellers to become repeat visitors, or converting short-term visitors to long-term visitors. This document (SAT 2008-2010) also sets out business and event traveller growth, domestically and internationally. SAT's key objectives are to have tourists' length of stay, volume, and spend increased, in addition to improving geographic spread, taking advantage of seasonality and promoting transformation.

2.4.6 Measuring SA's Competitiveness as a tourist destination

Input from SA Tourism stakeholders is reflected in a study by Lubbe (2015). As indicated in Tables 2.1 and 2.2, Lubbe (2015: 6) maintains that measuring SA's unique competitiveness as a tourist destination would involve evaluating the following indicators: SA's product offering, safety and security, mobility and infrastructure, and ease of access, along with value for money, public perception, service education and training, as well as skills development, upgrades and upkeep of public and private sector infrastructure. The study by Berendien (2015) concludes that safety and security is the most pressing issue in SA's tourism industry, followed by the upgrade of infrastructure, prices and ease of access. The most suitable set of indicators and factors of destination competitiveness (Tables 2.1 and 2.2), relevant to SA, are identified.

Table 2.1: Input from Tourism Stakeholders in SA

Burning issues in the Tourism Industry	
Improve safety and security Service education and training, skills development Ease of access (Open Skies/Clear Visa regulations) Promote unique products/variety of offerings Improve value for money offering - (overpriced luxury accommodation, airfares and air travel to Africa, airport tax too high) Upgrade/upkeep of general infrastructure (energy, water, roads, public transport)	
Private Sector – Getting it Right	Private Sector – Getting it Wrong
Marketing Quality product offering/world-class facilities Service delivery focus Improvements: New technology/internet use/upgrades on buildings Good value for money Diverse product offering Staff training and upliftment	High costs/overpricing Fragmentation/no information sharing Lack of staff training and empowerment/low pay Lack of vision/training for operator on the vision No collaboration with public sector Apathetic/not registering with existing structures Not implementing sustainable business practices/quality standards
Public Sector – Getting it Right	Public Sector – Getting it Wrong
Marketing Infrastructure development Partner with private sector Good policies/standards Websites Prioritising tourism as economic growth point	Marketing focus on current source countries only No action against crime Poor leadership/lack of guidelines ad policies Inadequate education and training Bad public transport Slow service delivery

Source: Lubbe (2015: 6)

Table 2.2: Factors and indicators to measure competitiveness as tourist destination

Uniqueness of SA's Product Offering	Safety and Security	Mobility and Infrastructure	Ease of Access	Value for Money	Public Perceptions
Climate	Tourist safety	Exchange rates	VISA regulations	Exchange rates	Tourism branding and image
Wildlife	Ebola	Service quality	Other entry requirements	Service quality	Environmental management
Wine and food	Health risks	Cost of airfare	(e.g. vaccinations)	Cost of airfare	Socially responsible establishments and practices
Sport participation (golf, surfing, mountain biking, etc.)	Bribery and corruption	Cost of airline taxes	Long haul flights	Cost of airline taxes	
Fauna and flora	Crime		Access to Africa via South Africa		
English is widely spoken			Border control		
Adventure tourism					
World heritage sites					
Beaches					
World class shopping/entertainment					
Friendly people					
Recent history					
Hiking					
Conference and meeting facilities					
Sport events (attending)					
Cultural diversity					
History					

Source: Lubbe (2015: 6)

2.4.7 Tourism KwaZulu-Natal's Tourism Competitiveness

TKZN has also contributed to research on investing in marketing for destination competitiveness, which investigates the macro-environmental factors in the provincial tourism sector, integrated and strategic destination marketing strategy and framework, as well as strategic and integrated responses.

The aim of TKZN's strategy was to establish KZN as a globally competitive tourism destination and one of Africa's leading tourism destinations by 2012 (TKZN 2008: 3), through focusing on the following indicators: increase of foreign and domestic tourists; increase tourism expenditure; increase of geographic spread; service excellence and destination image improvement; demand-driven and responsible tourism accessibility and development; strategic leadership; an enabling environment; and transformation.

According to TKZN (2014: 5), there was an increase of tourist numbers in the domestic and foreign visitor sectors to the province between 2009 and 2013. In 2013, KZN had 5.4 million domestic visitors and close to 850 000 foreign visitors.

2.4.8 Conclusion to Model Typologies

The various models by Crouch and Ritchie (2003:63), Dwyer and Kim (2004:2), Heath (2002:339) and phase one and phase two of the SAT Competitiveness study, (2007:5 and 2015:6) demonstrate all the factors of the marketing mix principles. Each of the marketing mix principles will now be discussed and reference will be made to the models where applicable.

2.5 FACTORS AND INDICATORS OF DURBAN'S TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS

The marketing mix principles were used to identify Durban's competitiveness factors. The various factors of marketing are discussed and related to the various destination competitiveness models discussed in the previous section (2.4).

2.5.1 Product

A product, according to Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 224), can be described as anything that would satisfy a need in the market, whether for acquisition, attention, consumption or use. Because of its nature and characteristics, a tourism product offering may be described as a tourism offering. Durban's

tourism sector is made up of transportation, accommodation, attractions, and events. Within these broad sectors, there are various sub-sectors that contribute to Durban's tourism industry. Visser (2009: 149) states that the tourism environment is not only becoming more and more dynamic and competitive where destinations are concerned, with a further need to position tourism products effectively against competition, there is also a need to identify tourism product competitiveness.

A core product is highlighted by Bowen, Kotler and Makens (2014: 240), as what a consumer is actually purchasing. The purchase depends on individual customer preferences. Chadwick and Jobber (2013: 308) maintain that the core element of a company is its product offering, therefore, Durban's product offerings are vital, as these create destination appeal, which is the core reason for tourists coming to Durban.

Due to products and services becoming more commoditised (Armstrong and Kotler 2013: 225), organisations need to distinguish their offers further than merely manufacturing products, the delivery of services created, and managing customer experiences. Figure 2.4, which focuses on delivering the experience and product development that, the study based on the Tourism Industry Global Competitiveness Programme in SA 2005 – 2010 shows stakeholders from the tourism industry have indicated that Durban lacks quality accommodation, diverse activities, cultural activities, and world heritage sites, world class beach resorts and adventure tours development, as well as that of family resorts, theme parks and tours.

2.5.1.1 Core resources and attractors creating destination appeal

Durban's competitiveness is dependent on its core resources, comprised of the destination and its attractors, sustaining factors, resources, policy, planning, and development. A destination's awareness and image can either merely meet the criteria or augment its competitiveness. The core resources and attractors, representing a pulling force, provide for a memorable

destination experience. According to Ali, Hussain and Ryu (2015: 85) tourists expect memorable and satisfying experiences to be provided by service providers who then receive financial benefit as meeting customer expectations encourages repeat business. Resources should not be substandard or limited and when this is the case, considerable restrictions are placed on the abundant fundamental 'resources and attractors', along with the ability to attract tourists.

Tourism perception surveys for Summer, Winter and Easter, conducted by Durban Tourism (2014: 1-3), have found the following negative perceptions from tourists: six percent complained about bad driving, poor roads, unsafe parking and taxi drivers; 8.2 percent complained about security, rudeness, bad service and transgressions of the bylaws; 4.5 percent complained of a lack of accommodation, theft and vagrants on the beachfront; 7.6 percent complained of bad customer service, poor roads, and crime and grime; while eight percent complained about robbery and the behaviour of taxi drivers. Tourist perceptions are important. The above statistics indicate that Durban needs to address the causes of tourists' negative perceptions.

Tourism stakeholders in Durban must focus on core offerings, which should emphasise consumer needs, based on the main reason a tourist visits a destination. George (2011: 263) states that the anticipated offering is about the specific benefits and features that are part of the product offering, including the brand name and design, quality, and styling of hotels and hotel rooms. Durban's core offerings are tourist attractions, cultural sites, beaches, entertainment, transportation, restaurants, infrastructure, travel services, and accommodation. Expected product offerings for Durban as a destination include the purchase of souvenirs and tours, along with restaurant visits, entertainment, accommodation and transport.

The offering of a tourism product is designed based on the destination's core resources, such as natural resources, infrastructure and superstructure,

including traffic, and transportation (Radišić 2010: 765). This study stipulates the importance of a product development strategy that must be continually enriched.

Crouch (2011: 28) corroborates that attractors and core resources are major competitive elements that aid in defining a destination. Core resources and attractors can also be described as attractions and are the fundamental factors influencing a visitor's decision to stop at a destination. With reference to George (2011: 266), the author states that conceptualising the offering allows tourism stakeholders to assess their competitive advantage and consumer appeal.

The core offerings of travel agents would be their offered tourism services and bookings. Destination landlords, such as the Ethekewini Municipality, are the structural landlords. Dahl, Prebensen and Vitterso (2013: 240) indicate that tourist resources are value adds to the environment, which enhance a tourist's experience - therefore value creation is vital for tourism product development.

An 'augmented offering' designates add-ons that are part of the product offering, which may affect the purchasing decision (George 2011: 265). Durban's augmented product features and benefits include streets, buildings, friendliness of locals and health and safety issues, as well as service levels. The city's infrastructure, such as the buildings and streets, are in need of a revamp in the central business district and surrounding areas. For tour operators and travel information offices, atmosphere, location and operating hours are crucial.

Core resources and attractors have to be enhanced by means of supporting factors; when efficient and effective transportation systems are fully functional, as well as safe and clean, a destination is considered as competitive. A competitive advantage is created by easily accessible attractions, wherein operating sectors within tourism are answerable for unforgettable experiences

of high quality. On the whole, it is important that visitors consider themselves as guests.

2.5.1.2 Infrastructure/Superstructure (Comparative advantage - resource endowment)

Due to the nature of the tourism offering or 'product forming the basis of the tourism sector', it can be regarded from a destination's viewpoint as an amalgam of individual products and experience opportunities that combine to form a total experience of the area visited.

As stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 20) and illustrated in Figure 2.1, infrastructure is a part of comparative advantage, which concerns differences in the endowment of factors of production which can be natural or created. A destination's infrastructure and superstructure are its created assets that support its economic activity.

It is imperative that a destination's disadvantages and advantages are identified and explored, with a further need to make those attributes that are likely to have the most valuable impact the focal point (Deng, Maumbe, Selin and Zhou 2015: 72). This statement supports the need to identify the factors of Durban's product competitiveness.

Infrastructure is recognised in resources and supporting factors (Figure 2.1). A destination's infrastructure is said by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 132-134) to include its road, rail, sea, and air transportation, electricity and water supply, telecommunications, as well as medical facilities, safety and protection services. Other supporting factors include retail, shopping, food stores, garages and vehicle maintenance. Basic infrastructure at a destination is supported by government and supporting infrastructure is supported by the public and private sectors.

Ellingson (2013: 1) maintains that tourism infrastructure can be defined as any product or service that enhances or facilitates the experience of a tourist visiting a city. The public tourism infrastructure in Durban includes the King Shaka Airport, the beaches, Ushaka theme park, and Moses Mabidha stadium, as well as the Golden Mile, Suncoast casino and the Durban International Conference Centre (ICC). The private sector tourism infrastructure includes accommodation, restaurants and transport.

Destination competitiveness is highlighted by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 132) as a function of the ability of both public and private sectors to provide and maintain infrastructure that sustains tourism development and the needs of the travel trade and its customers. The quality of a destination's infrastructure is vital and dependent on citizens, government and policymakers.

Durban's 2010 strategy (Ellingson 2013: 3) focused on positioning Durban as Africa's premier sport and tourist destination. Therefore, the municipality engaged in the upgrade of the Kings Park sport precinct and the redevelopment and integration of the Durban beachfront. According to Heath (2002: 339), highlights that infrastructure is in the category of enablers (Figure 2.3) upon which successful and sustainable tourism can be based.

The WEFTT report states that SA ranked in 63rd position in 2013 and in 63rd position in 2015, out of 140 countries, where ground transport infrastructure is concerned. This includes rail/road quality, which takes roads, railroads and ports in the national transport network into account, along with easily reached conveyance to major tourist attractions and business centres. Nonetheless, the face of public transport in Durban has been changed, by introducing the People-Mover bus service, which operates every 15 minutes, in and around the city.

Other infrastructure changes include the Moses Mabidha Stadium, which offers a sky-car, adventure walk, and bungee jumping, along with hospitality

offerings, such as weddings, conferences, and meeting venues, as well as product launches.

The central beachfront development included the following: integrating the beachfront by providing amenities for a diverse range of beach users, greening by adding flora and fauna, and enhancing safety through environmental design, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. The promenade is now an activity node with dedicated parking, improved lighting and landscaping. All the clutter on the Durban beachfront has been cleared away, enhancing safety through environmental safety and design. There was also dune rehabilitation done on the Durban beachfront, along with the development of a precinct from Moses Mabhida Stadium to Suncoast casino and the beachfront, thus allowing tourists a safe walking path.

Other featured upgrades have included building the King Shaka Airport, which is three times larger than the old airport, and offers direct international flights between London, New York, Beijing and Dubai. This airport is set to grow its services and access. It was highlighted by the WEFTT Competitiveness report 2013 and 2015, that SA was ranked in 43rd position in 2013 and 48th position out of 140 countries in 2015 for air transport infrastructure. Air transport infrastructure allows accessibility to and from countries. For this factor, the number of kilometers, seats, departures and operating airlines, for both domestic and international flights, are measured. The only international airline operating from Durban at present is Emirates. Ellingson (2013: 1) states that the development of public tourism infrastructure projects is a catalyst for private sector investment.

Tourist concerns are centred on a destination's safety, cleanliness, design, ease of use and availability. For example, should a destination's airport be large, it could present uncertainties to a tourist who may not understand the language of the signage at the airport or may experience difficulty in purchasing a rail ticket at the vending machine. Other infrastructure

uncertainties include drinking water quality at a destination or making a long-distance phone call.

The integrated model by Dwyer *et al.* (2004) (Figure 2.2) emphasises tourism infrastructure as a created resource, while infrastructure is in the category of supporting factors and resources. Infrastructure quality affects a destination's competitiveness, which may attract or deter tourists and influence destination choice. As an example, Russia's infrastructure is perceived as poor in comparison to Japan's infrastructure, which is perceived as clean, safe and reliable.

Dwyer *et al.* (2004) state that, while there is no tourist pulling power caused by general infrastructure, tourism infrastructure, which includes themed attractions, accommodation, transport facilities and other tourist related services, does influence the tourist experience. This also indicates that infrastructure is an important predictor of perceived trip value and destination quality. Decrop (2009), in the analysis of destination choice sets, agrees with the importance of tourism infrastructure and its range of impact.

As highlighted by the WEFTT Competitiveness report 2013 and 2015, SA ranked in 54th position in 2013 and in 40th position out of a 140 countries for tourist service and infrastructure.

With easy, reachable transportation to significant business centres and tourist attractions being one of the factors considered in determining Durban's competitiveness factors, the condition of roads, railroads, and ports is important. Moreover, the accommodation infrastructure, established from hotel room numbers, and the presence of major car rental companies, is vital to Durban's competitiveness.

Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 125) state that tourism superstructure includes a destination's facilities or buildings that serve the hospitality and tourism

sectors' interests or needs, which include restaurants and hotels, as well as visitor attractions and information centres (Figure 2.1). Tourism infrastructure can be unique to a destination, for example, Ushaka theme park is unique to Durban. Tourism superstructure can be unique and distinctive in nature, so that it becomes a must-see for tourists, such as the Taj Mahal in India.

As referred to by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 126), functional elements of a destination's superstructure include its theme parks, accommodation facilities, airports, and convention centres, as well as unique sites and restaurants. Enhanced built elements include museums and unique office buildings, while enhanced natural or normal elements include churches, historical landmarks and natural wonders.

The SAT Growth Strategy and Global Competitiveness report (2007), as highlighted in Figure 2.4, focuses on delivering the experience that comprises a combination of multiple interactions in SA. Page 28 of this report indicates that basic infrastructure is in place in SA, but, there is a lack of tourist infrastructure. As highlighted in Table 2.1, Input from Tourism Stakeholders in SA (Lubbe 2015), infrastructure development in the public sector of SA is improving, nonetheless, SA has poor public transport. Burning issues in the industry (Table 2.1) include general infrastructure upkeep/ upgrade, which includes energy, water, public transport and roads. Infrastructure was one of the agreed indicators and determinant factors to measure the competitiveness of SA as a tourist destination (Table 2.2).

Furthermore, the WEFTT report ranked SA 54th of 140 countries in 2013 and 40th in 2015 with regards to tourist service infrastructure. According to Jonker, Heath and du Toit (2004: 345), the development of infrastructure is of critical importance, as it impacts directly on product. When a destination's infrastructure is good, it will contribute to a destination being more attractive.

Infrastructure and tourism infrastructure have featured prominently and its contribution to destination competitiveness, highlighted in Figures 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and Tables 2.1 and 2.2, indicates the research need for Durban to assess its infrastructure, to distinguish itself as a competitive destination.

2.5.1.3 Attractions

According to Dwyer and Kim (2003: 377-378) endowed resources include unspoiled nature, fauna and flora, while cultural resources comprise heritage, historic, and a variety of cuisine. Created resources are made up of a destination's accommodation, transport, visitor accessibility and convention (Figure 2.1). The authors have also indicated that a destination's core resources are the primary reason why inbound tourism takes place. Factors such as accommodation, attractions, and scenery, according to du Plessis (2002: 5), contribute to the tourist destination choice. This statement is supported by Zhou (2005: 25), who maintains that scenery, attractions and entertainment are pull factors to a destination.

Landmarks at destinations are also important. These include airports, convention facilities and stadia that enhance a destination's image. In addition, the physiography, history and culture of a destination supply the prospective visitor with an attracting force that is both essential and powerful. The physiography of a destination, such as land sensual factors, are comprised of climate, landscape, and scenery, while a destination's cultural and historical factors provide for visitors' intellectual satisfaction.

A destination's physiography either provides competitive appeal or generates barriers. In the case of Durban, there is a favourable climate all year round, which is attractive to its niche market, with the city known also for its "sun, sea and sand". It is noted that other competitive factors include scenery and climate.

An analysis of the cooperation between tourist attractions by Butler, Weidenfeld and Williams (2011: 595), finds that attraction establishments have cooperative-complementary relationships, which require an understanding of specific features. Joint marketing of attractions can result in lower advertising costs; this can be accomplished by a careful analysis of tourist typologies, climate, seasonality, accessibility and environmental settings (Connell, Meyer and Page 2014). Thematic similarities among attractions, such as beaches, landscapes and joint ticketing arrangements, can thus be accomplished, while stakeholders can also use the same suppliers and engage in complementary arrangements and specialised services.

a) Natural/Endowed resources

Physiography and climate are highlighted as a core resource and attractor (Figure 2.1). Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 111) point out that climate and terrain are factors beyond destination managers' control and set natural parameters which endow a destination with competitive appeal or create a barrier. Durban's warm conducive weather all year round creates an appeal to tourists and is an advantage. A comfortable climate is the baseline of attractiveness for most tourists, which indicates that a destination can build a competitive advantage around climate.

Another significant factor that underlies the competitiveness of national travel and tourism (WEFTT 2013: 9) is that of natural resources. Countries that can offer travellers access to natural assets have an evident competitive advantage. Various environmental attractiveness measures are utilised, such as the quantity of natural World Heritage sites, as per UNESCO; the natural environment quality scope; the country's fauna abundance, calculating all known animal species; and the proportion allocated to areas that are nationally protected.

According to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 112) the physical environment comprises the flora, fauna, vegetation, wildlife, as well as rivers, lakes, oceans, and scenery, including mountains, contributes to a destination's appeal and competitiveness. Destination managers need to ensure sustainability of natural attractions and control visitor numbers.

In the destination competitiveness integrated model (Figure 2.2), Dwyer *et al.* (2004: 381) explain that a destination's natural resources define the environment framework that tourists enjoy. These include a destination's flora, fauna, scenery and physical assets. A destination's natural resources endowment is vital for visitor satisfaction and varied forms of tourism.

Inherited attractors (Figure 2.3) include natural attractions that can be included in providing and managing key attractors, which is a component of destination competitiveness. Heath (2002: 338) states that the environmental framework within which the visitor enjoys the destination, is defined by a destination's natural attractors. According to Lubbe (2015: Table 2), determinant factors and indicators of SA's competitiveness as a tourist destination, from a tourism stakeholder perspective, are founded on the country's unique product offering, which includes its beaches, mountains, climate, flora, and fauna, wildlife and natural heritage sites.

The WEFTT 2015 report highlights SA's ranking, with regards to natural resources, as 17th of 140 countries in 2013 and 22nd in 2015. This indicates a deterioration of perceptions and shows the need to sustain the country's natural resources. The natural environment is important, as it contributes to the attractiveness of a location. Therefore, the enhancement of environmental sustainability is vital in ensuring a destination is attractive. Countries must monitor their carbon emissions and percentage of endangered species (WEFTT 2015).

In illustrating experience delivery and product development (Figure 2.4), the Global Competitiveness Programme for the Tourism Industry in SA (2005 – 2010), further underlines the need for the improvement of natural attractions, as indicated by tourism industry stakeholders.

Naidoo, Munhuran and Seegoolam (2011: 86/95) assessed visitor satisfaction at nature-based tourism attractions in Mauritius. Findings of their study indicate that visitors to these areas were satisfied with tangible offerings and natural resources. Respondents in the study by Naidoo *et al.* (2011) also indicated that staff were not knowledgeable enough to react to consumer requests; therefore, staff training in the tourism sector as set out by the CATHSSETA (2014), plays a crucial role in service delivery. There was, in addition, a lack of signage and brochures, overcrowding, with little to no transport, as well as language barriers at these attractions. Respondents indicated they wanted more amenities, such as food and beverage outlets and gift shops.

It is maintained by Bowen *et al.* (2014: 241) that facilitating products are used along with the core product; for example, attractions such as Ushaka have different activities accessible at a single venue. A further consideration is highlighted by Björk, Ram and Weidenfeld (2015: 110), who verify that place attachment and authenticity show a positive correlation, as determined by Tsai (2012). Where visitor attractions are situated with significant heritage experience value they are regarded as authentic. It is noted in the description of 'supporting products' that these are products that are extra, and are offered to enhance the core product's value.

b) Created Resources

Competitiveness is determined by created resources, which as Dwyer and Kim (2003: 381) show, include cultural and heritage attractions, such as theme parks. Tourism infrastructure of a destination is vital in attracting inbound tourism (Figure 2.2); this includes themed attractions, transportation,

convention centres, and shopping facilities, as well as entertainment and food outlets. The tourist infrastructure lack or level would influence the tourist experience. The provision of tourism infrastructure, according to Dwyer and Kim (2003: 381), is an important destination quality predictor and contributes to the apparent worth of the trip.

It is highlighted by the WEFTT report that SA ranked 81st of 140 countries in 2013 and 62nd in 2015 with regards to ICT readiness. Communication network systems, such as telecommunications and internet connectivity, are vital to tourists.

From a tourism stakeholder perspective, the uniqueness of SA's product offering includes shopping, entertainment, conference facilities and events (Table 2.1), and as Lubbe (2015) points out, these are determinant factors and indicators of SA's competitiveness as a tourist destination.

Heath (2002: 338) shows that created attractors of a destination determine destination competitiveness, which includes events, shopping, range of activities and entertainment (Figure 2.3). The greater the competitiveness of these attractors, the greater the attractiveness. Seasonal constraints of a destination may be disabled when there is an extension of the seasonal experiences' available range.

The focus on delivering the experience and product development (Figure 2.4), in the study based on the Tourism Industry's Global Competitiveness Programme for SA 2005 – 2010, shows that stakeholders from the tourism industry specified the need for the improvement of natural attractions as well as a need to develop quality accommodation.

2.5.1.4 Special Events

Special events are a component of core resources and attractors (Figure 2.1). Events and special events at a destination add competitive advantage and

make a destination unique. Mega events and hallmark events are, however, limited, with the Comrades Marathon between Durban and Pietermaritzburg as examples. Events provide a unique experience to both residents and tourists.

High levels of media attention result from events, as stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 120), which could help to create, build or enhance a destination's awareness and image. With ongoing annual events, destination managers can build awareness and reputation to a must see event, at a steady pace.

Holden (2013: 5) states that Durban has the advantages of being a friendly city, offering cultural diversity, great beaches, numerous, accommodation facilities with the hotels on the beachfront, as well as an integrated sporting precinct, and a multitude of activities and attractions. The author states that events are the best way to market services and products of Durban's tourism. Events contribute to upliftment of the city's economy; drawing many visitors, while showcasing specific attractions and cultures. Therefore, the aim should be to position the city as Africa's Premier Sport and Event destination.

Factors that can help make an event a competitive core attractor, according to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 121), include the array of goals, satisfying basic needs, a festive spirit, and the event's authenticity, quality, uniqueness, and tradition, as well as hospitality, flexibility, symbolism, and tangibility, along with affordability and convenience.

Advantages of eventing, according to Holden (2013: 8), are to maintain national and international focus that must showcase Durban as a preferred destination, thus encouraging private sector investment and job creation. When a destination offers special events, the dynamics and distinctiveness created result in a destination being memorable. The destination

superstructure is perceived as a destination's fundamental characteristic, while the strength of a destination is its primary appeal.

Events are a part of created resources (Figure 2.2). Dwyer and Kim (2003: 382) find that it is internationally recognised that a valuable economic contribution is made by events and festivals to the tourism destination, while additionally contributing to the creation of employment, which impacts significantly on an economic level. It has been highlighted (Figure 2.3) that events are a key attractor and Heath (2002: 335) agrees that events contribute to the competitive advantage of a destination. The impact of events has a substantial short-term effect on visitor numbers, while also having a long-term promotional effect. Conferencing, as part of events, has been shown (Table 2.1) as a determinant and indicator to measure SA's competitiveness as a tourist destination (Lubbe 2015: 6).

As a component of the tourism product, events are highlighted (Figure 2.4) as a need for development to enhance SA's tourism competitiveness. Destinations must develop their own mega- or hallmark-event, with high levels of media attention assisting to create, build or enhance awareness and image. Ongoing, annual events provide the opportunity to build destination awareness and are drivers for destination competitiveness and sustainability. Events should be a "must see", and should be unique to the city; for example, shows by superstars, or international sporting events.

It is stated by Giampiccoli, Lee and Nauright (2015: 283) that special events can be developed and used as a tool by attraction managers to address matters of demand and seasonality. While events add to a tourism destination's fundamental attractiveness, a destination is supplied with an unbroken stream of visitors through mega- and hallmark-events.

2.5.1.5 Entertainment

Figure 2.1 illustrates that entertainment is a core resource and attractor. According to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 124-125), entertainment, such as in Las Vegas, is a distinctive core attractor, with Disney Land, for example, offering a variety of entertainment and activities that attract and retain guests. Destination managers are faced with the challenge of developing the correct typologies of entertainment that would provide their destination with a competitive, sustainable advantage.

Entertainment is a component of created resource (Figure 2.2). Dwyer and Kim (2003: 382) point out that a destination's available amount of entertainment matters less than its perceived uniqueness and quality. Destination competitiveness is described as the level of appropriate entertainment offerings. It is established by Heath (2002: 338) that entertainment is a key attractor and one of the primary reasons why tourists visit a destination (Figure 2.3).

Tourism stakeholders in Durban need to take different product levels into consideration. A core product is what the buyer/tourist is actually buying. Fang and Xu (2012: 250) indicate that tourists' shopping behaviour contributes to revenue and the economy. This makes it vital for tourism stakeholders in Durban to understand these tourist behaviours. Chin, Rasali and Sukati (2012: 522) indicate in their research, on the association between customer decision-making and the marketing mix concerning Palembang travel agents in Indonesia, that price and product are associated with the customer decision. Consumers want high product quality and high customer satisfaction. Product attributes thus contribute to the customer's decision-making process.

Entertainment, according to Lubbe (2015: 6), is a determinant and indicator to measure SA's competitiveness as a tourist destination (Table 2.1). Another component of the tourism product is highlighted (Figure 2.4), as part of the

need for development to enhance SA's tourism competitiveness, namely events; this would also include entertainment.

2.5.1.6 Mix of Activities

Visitors to a destination want to participate in activities and leave with exciting memories. To be considered as competitive, a destination should therefore, offer a broad range of activities. As explained by Reitsamer and Brunner-Sperdin (2015: 1), the tourist destination perception is dependent on destination attributes such as attraction, activities and entertainment, which would contribute to a tourist returning to a destination through positive word-of-mouth.

The mix of activities at a destination is a core resource and attractor (Figure 2.1). Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 118) state that the reason tourists visit a destination is to actively participate in activities to create vibrant memories of what they have done. To make a destination competitive and attractive it is crucial that a wide variety of activities are offered at a destination, allowing for things to do that are memorable.

Attributes of a destination's mix of activities, as Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 118) explain, must reflect the values of the local population, be consistent with the nature and topography of the destination, take local legislation into consideration, and provide activities that are complementary. The marketing mix ought to not only offer activities unique to the destination, but should also offer activities across all seasons, while ensuring that the activities are economically viable. The mix of marketing activities is a component of delivering the experience to enhance SA's tourism competitiveness (Figure 2.4).

The range of available activities is a component of the created resources (Figure 2.2). It is held by Dwyer and Kim (2003: 382) that, the more varied the portfolio of a destination's, services and experiences, the greater its ability to

draw different tourist markets. Seasonal constraints of destinations can be negated through the expansion by tourism enterprises of the available variety of seasonal experiences. According to Lubbe (2015) there is a need to provide and promote unique products and a variety of offerings for each season.

Dwyer and Kim (2003: 383) find that shopping may be perceived as a type of entertainment. In certain countries and cultures, such as the Japanese, gift giving is essential upon returning home. At times, destinations have, marketed themselves as 'shop-over' destinations; these include Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong.

To summarise the mix of activities and entertainment was used to measure the competitiveness of SA as a tourist destination (Table 2.1). Entertainment and activities are a key attractor (Figure 2.3) and as highlighted by Crouch, Huybers and Oppewal (2015: 467), local experience options such as events, festivals, food, wine, sports and outdoor activities have an impact on the tourist's destination choice.

2.5.1.7 Culture and History

As a powerful dimension of attractiveness, culture consists of a destination's history and traditions, which have more of a tendency to attract and act as a pulling power for visitors from elsewhere. A powerful element of culture is high quality, distinctive meals, while the elements of cultural awareness are understood to be the basic elements of daily life, reflected in the good life of residents.

As illustrated (Figure 2.1), culture and history are significant in determining destination appeal and the attractiveness of a destination. It was found by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 116) that history and culture include the handicrafts, traditions, gastronomy, language spoken by residents, their style and dress, architecture, art, and music, along with leisure activities. Durban has many different cultures of people which could be exploited as a key attraction.

Heritage, which includes culture, is a significant part of the endowed resources of a destination (Figure 2.2). According to Dwyer and Kim (2003: 381), prospective visitors are provided with an attracting and basic force by means of culture. Lubbe (2015: Table 2) finds that determinant factors and indicators of SA's competitiveness as a tourist destination, from a tourism stakeholder perspective, rely on the uniqueness of SA's product offering, which includes cultural diversity, history, people, wine and food.

A WEFTT report (2013: 43) shows that each country has cultural resources at its disposal that are another decisive driver of competitiveness in global travel and tourism. Included are the number of UNESCO cultural World Heritage sites, capacity for sports stadia seating, as well as the number of international fairs and exhibitions of the country, as well as a measure of the exports from its creative industries, providing evidence of cultural richness. Jodice, Lacher, Norman, and Oh (2013: 534) maintain that tourists seek local character when visiting a destination, such as experiencing and tasting the local cuisine.

Heath (2002: 338) holds that history and traditions provide a powerful and basic pull in drawing the prospective visitor, demonstrated through his model to sustain Africa's competitiveness (Figure 2.3). Findings by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 117) show that the traditions and history, as well as the appearance of a destination by architecture, tend to have more pull force for visitors from another destination. The gastronomy of a destination that offers distinctive, high quality meals is also regarded as a powerful dimension of destination attractiveness. In this regard, it is significant for destination managers to determine how best to utilise culture as a core attractor for different market segments.

Destination managers also need to focus the elements of daily life, art, museums, and food of residents, as well as elements of residents' work and cultural fragments of the past where religion and architecture are concerned.

The WEFTT report highlights SA as ranked 58th of 140 countries in 2013 and 20th in 2015, where traditions and history are concerned. This shows a vast improvement. Culture is a core resource in tourism and serves as an attractor, with business travel a vital source of generating revenue in the tourism industry.

In terms of delivering the experience and product development (Figure 2.4), as shown by the study based on the Global Competitiveness Programme for the SA Tourism Industry 2005 – 2010, finds that stakeholders from the tourism industry indicated the need for the improvement of natural attractions, with industry beliefs comprising SA's cultural products, lacking authenticity and sophistication.

2.5.1.8 Market Ties

Statistics released in 2015 by Durban Tourism, regarding visitor numbers in 2013 and 2014, indicate that tourists visiting Durban were predominantly domestic tourists that were visiting friends and relatives. Market ties are an element of core resources and attractors (Figure 2.1). Other attractors at a destination according to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 128) find that tourists visit for other reasons, including religious, pilgrimage, sports, and medical, as well as business, education and cybertribe. The dependency certain tourism destinations have on others is either complementary or competitive in nature (Figure 2.2), which is also a marketing tie.

2.5.1.9 Conclusion to Product Section

The establishment of Durban's tourism product is significant as factors, such as core resources, attractions, destination appeal, and infrastructure, along with tourism infrastructure, culture and history, and entertainment, are significant destination competitiveness factors reflected in the models used in this study.

2.5.2 Place/distribution channels

The location of Durban as a destination needs to be carefully considered, as it has road and air access, by which market intermediaries/ tourism stakeholders can connect customers to tourism products. Thus, the competitiveness of a destination is dependent upon efficient marketing channels, as well as accessibility and availability of a destination.

George (2011: 300) explains that tourism offerings are intangible and cannot be delivered from one point to the next, with place describing the location and availability of the offering and the distribution method by the tourism organisation to the consumer. A principal or supplier is described by George (2011), as a tourism organisation a travel agent does business with, and whose offerings it sells. Consequently, tourism stakeholders in Durban need to sell their offerings directly or indirectly to the consumer, using a variety of distribution channels.

2.5.2.1 Accessibility of a destination

As highlighted by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 236), attitudes and interests in other cultures have changed dramatically over the years and people are more curious to know and participate in other cultures. Exploring other cultures' cuisine is an example of this. Improved accessibility gives rise to new markets and increased trading ties. Destinations need to track both source markets and new market trends as well as macro-environment changes. Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 236) further stress that destinations in close proximity may seem familiar to tourists and distant destinations may be perceived as exotic. Destination location in itself governs competitiveness and therefore, destinations seeking to enhance their competitive position need to recognise and understand this group of influences.

Accessibility is a component of supporting factors and resources (Figure 2.1) and involves travelling to and entering the region concerned. Destinations

employ a variety of methods, according to Crouch and Ritchie (2003), for controlling access to visitors and prescribing conditions permitting entry.

A destination's accessibility is dependent upon various factors (Figure 2.2), such as flying time to the destination, cost of obtaining entry, visa, and ease of travel between destinations, in addition to influencing capacity to access transport to the destination. Access is a component of supporting factors.

It is highlighted by Dwyer and Kim (2003: 384) that a destination's accessibility is governed by various influences that include the ease, quality and frequency of transportation access, along with aviation and visa regulations. Destination choice is also affected by a tourist's choice of alternative destinations, which are influenced by transport system inefficiencies.

Visas are used to restrict access to potential visitors, as emphasised by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 134). Furthermore, visas are used to control illegal migration, restrict the rights of employment, and payment of taxes, while being dependent on bilateral agreements between countries. Another way to control access is by airline landing rights. Moreover, these factors are dependent on government. For a destination to have an impact on its accessibility, it needs to be a part of the decision-making.

Ease of access and open skies, according to Lubbe (2015), need to be addressed in SA (Table 2.1). The need for visa regulations, vaccinations, long haul flights and SA border control of access to Africa is illustrated in Table 2.2. According to the WEFTT report 2015, SA ranked 102 of a 140 countries for international openness, which indicates that visa restrictions need to be addressed in SA to encourage travel. Vigolo (2014: 564) found a relationship between a long haul destination and the destination's attractiveness, which influences destination choice. When long haul destinations are attractive, it is a competitive advantage.

A WEFTT report (2013: 49) states that the association between economic growth through tourism and visa facilitation, is gradually being recognised more by national authorities. The UNWTO continues to promote the facilitation of visas through tourism, in support of economic growth and development.

Bowen *et al.* (2010: 234) maintain that products must be accessible. Tourism stakeholders in Durban must, therefore, ensure that visitors are aware of operating hours and have adequate knowledge of their product offering. Providing information about the product offering, such as Durban's attractions and entertainment, makes the city's attributes more accessible to the tourist.

2.5.2.2 Information regarding various distribution channels and marketing intermediaries

The distribution element of the marketing mix is shown by Chadwick and Jobber (2013: 722) to have differential advantages of location, distributor support and guarantees for delivery, as well as computerised record-keeping. The significance to the customer would be convenience, lower costs, effective selling, and less work. Furthermore, Chadwick and Jobber (2013: 632) state that distribution, with the location of services, is an important marketing mix element, which is vital because products ought to be at hand when the customer wishes to buy in quantities that are adequate, at locations that are convenient.

Fyall, Middleton, Morgan and Ranchod (2009: 290) affirm that every distribution strategy's aim is to offer targeted customers ease of access to obtaining information and finalising a purchase. Creating and using distribution channels are essential to providing an effective way of reaching a wider market and generating advance sales.

The various channels are explained by Lumsdon (1997: 187- 188) as direct or indirect, progressively moving from the tourism supplier selling a destination directly to the consumer; the destination travel agent to the consumer, from

the destination supplier to the tour operator to the travel agent, from the destination supplier to the travel agent, to the tour wholesaler and then to the customer.

Tourism stakeholders in Durban must also consider more cost-effective ways of reaching their desired target markets. As Lumsdon (1997: 18) points out, technology is a cost-effective method by which tourism businesses can make themselves known.

Should tourism stakeholders in Durban use travel agents, there is the advantage of specialist knowledge, a nationwide network of outlets, favourable consumer perceptions and the sale of ancillary products. The disadvantage is the brochure wastage, loss of incentives and commission payable to agents, as well as less product loyalty. Pender (1999: 225) also affirms that exploiting information technology by using two-way communication such as with direct marketing allows for the supplier to obtain direct feedback from the marketplace and to reach international markets.

According to Pike (2008: 279), other distribution channels, such as joint ventures and travel trade events, as well as tourism exchanges (Indaba) and trade education, are also effective distribution channels.

2.5.2.3 Availability of information of Durban on Social Media

Important factors for stakeholders in Durban to consider are points of sale, distribution of product, display of goods, and itinerary planning, in addition to arranging transfers, receiving and transmitting sales, marketing intelligence, and promotional activities, as well as assisting with complaints from customers. Additional factors include buying in bulk, sharing risks with demand fluctuation and uncertainties, together with financing part of the transfer of services, branding accreditation systems, and providing a network of the ancillary services.

George (2011: 300 - 301) states that technological developments have made it easier for the consumer to have more contact with the tourism organisation or stakeholder, while tour operators and travel agents are the commonly-used distribution channels that sell individual offerings or bundled packages. Potential consumers using the internet have the option to save information for further research. The internet further allows the guest to interact via the telephone and online, where consumers can also view the various, available options. The advantage of the internet and social networks, is that they are available at all times, allowing customers fast and effective access to a range of information, with the use of a search engine.

Tourism stakeholders in Durban can use the worldwide web as a distribution channel. For example, customers can make online bookings and access information regarding tourism organisations. This may, however, pose a threat to travel agents and tour operators in Durban because consumers can bypass travel agents and book hotel rooms, airline tickets and car hire directly with the supplier.

Another distribution channel available to tourism stakeholders in Durban is that of virtual travel and a variety of print media on the internet that allows customers to make bookings and payment at their convenience. Durban Tourism could partner with Gauteng and Cape Town Tourism and use the same, international distribution channels, which would be cost effective. This principle would involve using the horizontal marketing system, where companies combine their capital and marketing resources to accomplish more.

The number of travel agents has been found by Bowen *et al.* (2014: 340) to have decreased over the years because customers are self-booking travel on the internet.

George (2011: 317-319) states that internet-based booking systems, with facilities to search, compare and buy tourism offerings, have become increasingly popular. The advantage of information and communications technology (ICT) also offers a variety of functions to the tour operator or travel agent, such as extranets, office automation, reservation facilities, and applications for accounting and procurement management, as well as customised internal management applications, knowledge management systems and databases, and electronic data exchange. In addition, there are computer reservation systems, networking and open distribution systems, along with interactive digital television, kiosks and touch-screen terminals.

ICT furthermore enhances consumer satisfaction in several ways, such as providing more information and improved entertainment facilities (in-flight entertainment), improved operational tasks (check-in services), personalised services (guests acknowledged by their names) and improved services (George 2011: 318). The internet can also increase the tourism stakeholder's geographic coverage.

2.5.2.4 Conclusion to Place/Distribution Section

Factors contributing to Durban's place component of the marketing mix include accessibility of the destination, information regarding various distribution channels and marketing intermediaries and availability of information about Durban on social media. These factors are significant destination competitiveness factors, reflected in the models used in this study.

2.5.3 Pricing

The travel and tourism industry's price competitiveness is a significant factor for consideration, owing to the lower costs of some countries that have increased their attractiveness for many travellers. Measuring a country's price competitiveness takes the extent of the country's services and goods' prices into account; such as being more or less expensive, as opposed to elsewhere. This includes: airfare taxes and airport charges (which add to the cost of flight

tickets); the levels of fuel price in comparison to other countries; internal taxation that may impact travellers and the cost of comparative hotel accommodation.

The sum of money that is paid for goods or a service is referred to as its price. As highlighted by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 297), price is described as the amount asked for a service or product in monetary terms or the total number of values traded by consumers, in return for being able to use or have the service or product; it is the only marketing mix element that generates income. Price can also be made use of as a strategic marketing tool for stakeholders of the Durban tourism Industry.

The only direct income generator of the marketing mix, as stated by Chadwick and Jobber (2013: 464), is price because unless price covers costs, the company will make a loss. Price should not be set alone but in combination with other marketing mix elements. When the price is set too high or too low, it could have a negative impact, with regard to destination competitiveness.

2.5.3.1 Affordable destination

According to the WEEFT (2015), related costs in the travel and tourism industry in a country are lowered by price competitiveness, while it increases a country's attractiveness for tourists and investors. Price competitiveness would include airfare tickets, taxes and airport charges, which could increase the price of flight tickets, accommodation and the price of fuel. According to du Plessis (2010: 03) travel and tourism prices are not always straight forward to determine because tourism products have different values to tourists, which include monetary value or the value to satisfy needs.

As identified (Figure 2.4) by the global competitiveness programme for the SA tourism industry (2005-2010: 42), pricing impacts on airfares to long haul destinations that could influence the destination choice of the tourist, as it would affect airfares. This report indicates that airfares remain a barrier to

travel to SA. Individuals visiting friends and relatives normally purchase tickets a year in advance. This report reveals the need to review the tourism focused, international aviation policy.

As highlighted by the WEFTT 2013 and 2015 reports, SA ranked 71st in 2013 out of 140 countries and gained 42nd position in 2015, out of 140 countries, where pricing is concerned. This was measured by ticket taxes and airport charges. The lower the prices of air tickets, airport taxes, accommodation and transport, the more affordable a destination becomes to the traveller.

Price is an element of a qualifying and amplifying determinant (Figure 2.1), while cost is a critical element of competitiveness. Price involves two elements namely, what you pay and what you get. According to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 241) a company has competitive advantage due to it being a low cost producer or having a product that can be differentiated due to its value-added or superior service.

In the context of tourism, the cost would include the goods and services purchased in a destination, such as transport, accommodation and travel insurance, exchange rates, and so on, and would include substitute or complementary products. In the case of tourism destinations, price is complex according to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 241), which includes the tourism service, as well as goods and services, in comparison to other destinations.

Therefore, the tourism price mix includes the total mix of goods. As stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 242), exchange rates influence destination choice, hence a tourist could alter the length of their stay and their spending at a destination. In addition, cost is driven by the destination's macro environment.

George (2011: 287) concurs that price must interact with product offering design, distribution, and promotion. For example, the high price of a hotel room must be reflected in its design, and in building, operating and marketing the

property. The value of the offering must reflect the price and the product's quality must meet the expectations of the consumer. Chadwick and Jobber (2013: 722) state that the price element of the marketing mix can assure a distinctive advantage of lower price, facilities for credit and low interest loans. The value to the customer is a cost of purchase that is lower, improved cash flow and a match between price and quality (or value for money).

The various stakeholders of Durban's tourism industry present a range of offerings at various price levels. For example, airlines have higher prices for business class seats than economy class. Internal factors, such as the overall costs of providing and offering a product, influence an organisation's internal pricing decisions. Price must be coordinated with the actual product.

Bennett and Seaton (1996: 145) mention tactical pricing, which can be used to cater for seasonality, such as peak and trough seasons. This would be useful should sudden market fluctuations occur that are caused by external factors, such as terrorism and ecological disasters, or increased competitive activity; in such instances, discounts and special offers can be introduced.

The most effective manner, in which to measure and evaluate the success of pricing success, is held by Etchner and Prasad (2004) as well as Morrison (2010: 676) to be by means of marketing research. Tourism stakeholders in Durban need to establish whether price or other factors attract new customers. Surveys of non-customers can be done to establish why a new pricing approach does not interest them.

Tourism stakeholders, in particular the airlines, are facing tough economic times, with rising fuel costs that impact both domestic and international travel. With rising fuel costs, the actual cost of transportation and food increases, which consequently decreases the discretionary income of an individual. Discretionary income influences an individual's travel, length of stay and spend in a particular place.

The tourism industry has experienced the effects of global recession, portending tough economic times that have forced customers to demand lower prices and discounts, which affect buying power. Tourism stakeholders need to take external factors into consideration, such as to ensure that staff working directly with consumers, are able to sell more than just one of the company's products.

2.5.3.2 Value for money destination

The tourism industry's capacity does not cover the price of a destination, yet the industry role players need to voice opinions to policymakers in the industry on matters relating to taxation infrastructure. Price competitiveness is a component of situational conditions (Figure 2.2), which includes tourism exchange rates, value for money at the destination, accommodation and air ticket as well as the destination and its package tour prices, compared with competitor destinations.

As stated by Dwyer and Kim (2003: 373), price competitiveness influences visitor flows which may also be high in certain markets. Price competitiveness in tourism is influenced by government, levels of technology and exchange rates. Dwyer and Kim (2003: 397) further highlight that the total cost of a tourism experience influences travel decisions, with the cost dependent upon the prices of, services, goods and transport, to cater to tourists' needs. One of the key challenges facing any tourism destination is that of providing value for money, which depends on the perceptions of visitors, where those prices and that cost's value are concerned.

Lubbe (2015) shows that high costs and over pricing depreciate the value for money offerings, such as airfares, accommodation and airport taxes (Table 2.1). The indicators and determinants were exchange rates, cost of airfare and cost of airline taxes.

It is illustrated by Heath (2002: 339-340) that the segment on capitalising on the value added includes pricing (Figure 2.3). The author also states that increasingly, a key challenge lies in providing value for money. The distance a tourist needs to travel is a further problem and Heath (2002: 346) points out that long-term competitiveness is dependent on healthy investment. Price competition is allowed for by a destination with a diversified portfolio of tourism products, services and experiences.

Bowen *et al.* (2014: 302) emphasise that price must correspond with product design, delivery and promotion, as those are the elements that will influence price. Durban Tourism and tourism stakeholders in Durban need to include price coordination in their marketing strategy. At present, Durban Tourism has no long-term marketing strategy.

Tourism stakeholders in Durban need to consider the costs of the product offering, distribution of the product, as well as promotion and staff costs. When SA experiences an economic recession, the demand for luxury hotel rooms from the domestic market will fall. Therefore, tourism stakeholders in Durban must adapt their pricing tactics, to continue to attract consumers. Haarhoff (2007: 1) finds a general indication that SA tourism products are more expensive than anticipated by foreign tourists who visited the Kruger National Park, Cape Town and Johannesburg, with the findings supported by Hood (2008).

A product's price is established by the consumer as right because it is the final price consumers tend to look at, in deciding whether value for money has been received (Bowen *et al.* 2014: 305). The consumer decides whether an offering's price is affordable and uses price as an indicator of quality, when purchasing tourism offerings. For example, the different types of restaurants in Durban will offer different prices.

Dynamic pricing continually meets the characteristics and needs of individual customers and situations, as explained by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 343), which also has many advantages. Price may be the feature when a discount or voucher is offered; when price is referred to in the message, the service quality and value must match the consumer's expectations. For example, different service levels are also reflected in the price charged for various offerings. However, the people factor of the marketing mix must never be compromised by price. All hotels in Durban must have qualified and experienced staff and regular staff training, in order to meet customer expectations.

It is stated by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 298) that prices are set up through 'customer value-based pricing', which means an item's selling cost is arrived at by considering the consumer's value perceptions, instead of on the cost to the seller. Tourism businesses therefore need to assess customer needs and value perceptions.

Bowen *et al.* (2014: 305) emphasise that the consumer determines whether a product's price is right, as consumers are inclined to examine the final price before deciding whether they have received value for money. Market follower strategies can be used by hotel entrants and less well-established hotels. These hotel stakeholders in Durban would offer similar quality but lower prices, for example, if the Radisson Blu hotels sought to grow their market share in Durban, they could do this by means of exceptional value pricing.

Organisations can attach services and value added features to distinguish their offer and to justify charging prices that are higher, instead of reducing prices to the same as competitors', as highlighted by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 301), thus maintaining customer loyalty by offering services not found elsewhere. Tourism stakeholders in Durban should concentrate on value-adds, such as internet access and musical entertainment at restaurants.

Consumers are apt to equate price with quality when they do not have previous experience with the product, according to Bowen *et al.* (2014: 310). A high price can also, because it limits availability, bring prestige to a product. Tourism stakeholders in Durban should ensure that employees, such as sales and reservations employees, are adequately trained to up-sell products and services. Consumers are very price-sensitive and demand value for money. Therefore, tourism stakeholders need to ensure that prices are chosen in a strategic way that would ensure maximum profit but satisfy the consumer at the same time.

Another aspect raised by Gustavo (2013: 13), is that there must, primarily, be alignment between value for money and the unique preferences and needs of consumers, considering that potential tourism growth is linked to low cost. It is further held by Chin *et al.* (2012: 527) that getting its pricing right, is the most effective and fastest way in which a company will realise its maximum profit.

Bowie and Buttle (2011: 199) state that an unsustainable pricing strategy is where prices are set higher than the quality can justify. As customers recognise poor value for money, the reputation of the business suffers. An example is the old 4- and 5-star hotels in Durban that are no longer as luxurious as they used to be. These properties trade on their historic image. Owners of these hotels have to reinvest in their properties or lower their prices. Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 316) call attention to the fact that economic conditions impact strongly on the pricing strategies of the firm because inflation and interest rates influence consumer spending, perceptions and value of the product.

2.5.3.3 Price influences

Demand levels are dependent on economic conditions and consumer trends, the stage of the product life-cycle, seasonal variations, as well as times of the day that are busier, levels of marketing, and promotional effort. George (2011: 288) suggests that price elasticity can be seen clearly in the tourism industry,

where transport technology has made destinations more affordable and accessible. Durban is an example of a destination that is affordable and accessible to the international and domestic market.

Porter (1980) states that competitive advantage can be established when a firm is a low-cost producer or it can differentiate from other competitors. The question is then what a destination can do to improve and manage its cost competitiveness. Tourism stakeholders in Durban may use various types of pricing, such as cost-based pricing, demand-based pricing (for example, hotels on the beachfront would have a higher price during peak season), competition-based pricing and value-based pricing (for instance, a consumer paying approximately R40 000 for seven days on the Queen Mary cruise liner, which is very luxurious).

Pricing, which is cost-orientated, is affirmed by Bowie and Buttle (2011: 105) as based on the price of a service or product, with an applied margin to establish the selling price. Demand-orientated pricing leads to high prices when there is a high demand and when demand is low, it results in a price reduction (Bowie and Buttle 2011: 106). For example, the prices of commodities increased during the 2010 World Cup as there was an increase in foreign tourists. Skimming and penetration pricing methods can be used when launching a new product that offers customers a new experience. An example might be a tour operator in Durban that offers specialised tours to a niche market, such as a hot air balloon safari, which would result in a new experience and contribute to new features of the holiday.

Dynamic pricing continually meets the needs and characteristics of individual customers' and situations, which also has many advantages, according to Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 343). Durban hosts both international and domestic tourists and needs to accommodate both markets, in terms of pricing.

Organisations can also use discriminatory pricing, which means that tourism organisations can sell tourism products at various prices (Bowie and Buttle 2011: 107, 198). For example, hotel groups can employ market leader strategies, based on high levels of repeat business from a loyal customer base, as well as a strong brand image, where prices are brought into line with the brand's quality positioning. The Oyster Box hotel in Durban, for instance, could substantiate its prices by offering the highest quality customer experience.

It is maintained by George (2011: 293) that discriminatory pricing permits selling the same offering at two or more prices, regardless of whether the costs of the offering are the same. For example, hotels in Durban can charge a lower price during off-peak times and a higher price for the same room, during peak time. In addition, restaurants can offer early-bird prices for meals served between 16:00 and 19:00, when demand is at its highest.

Service perishability signifies adapting of prices to meet fluctuating demand, according to George (2011: 295). There are many price implications in service intangibility: where services are the same, the price will be competitive and not being able to separate the service from the person providing it, means limits being placed on the market that can be served.

Companies with a large market share may be able to afford to set low prices and enjoy market share leadership. Companies that exhibit product-quality leadership can capture the luxury market by charging high prices for high cost products. Tourism stakeholders in Durban need to ensure that their prices are coordinated with product design. Distribution and promotion must also be considered when pricing products and services.

Promotional pricing involves short-term or intermittent reductions in the price of items, so as to entice consumers, with the expectation that they would purchase the product or offering (George 2011: 292- 294). For example, Sibiya

Casino could offer reduced room rates, thus allowing customers to spend more on entertainment, such as live shows and the casinos. Another tactic that can be used in promotional pricing, is product bundling. A product-bundle is the grouping together of various aspects of what a firm offers, in order to be promoted as a package (George 2011: 292). For example, a hotel may sell accommodation, meals and entertainment. This is strategy that promotes the core benefits of a product.

It is also necessary for the price of a product or service to be buyer-orientated. Creative awareness of the target market is required in the price decision, taking into consideration that buyers have different needs and wants.

Baloglu, Erdem and Tanford (2012: 51) state that transparent pricing, itemisation of individual package components and discounts are preferred, when it reduces uncertainty or the price is higher than the alternative. The higher the price, the lower the demand is likely to be, therefore determining the price-demand relationship. When the product is unique and substitute products are hard to find, consumers are less price-sensitive, as the perception has been created that an offering is different from those of the competitors.

The WEFTT reports, with reference to price, sees SA ranked at 71st position in 2013 and 42nd position in 2015, based on ticket taxes and airport charges. When it is considered that lower costs increase the attractiveness of countries, it is observed that the lower the prices of air tickets, airports taxes, accommodation and transportation, the more affordable a destination becomes to the traveller.

Pricing is also influenced by environmental changes which impact on the tourist's choice of destination. Price change would thus impact on the destination's affordability and the destination being regarded as value for money.

2.5.3.4 Conclusion to Pricing Section

Elements of Durban's price competitiveness include price influences, affordability of a destination and being perceived as a value for money destination. Price is an important factor of destination competitiveness, as it is a significant determining factor as to whether a tourist chooses to visit a destination.

2.5.4 Promotion

According to Chadwick and Jobber (2013: 514), marketing managers face a challenge in selecting the correct tools for communication and media channels to deliver their message. The authors state (2013: 722) that the differential advantage from the promotion element of the marketing mix includes that of sales and creative advertising, as well as cooperative promotions, dual selling, inexpensive trial, and expeditious complaint handling. The value to the customer is brand personality excellence, lower costs, direct added value, and problem solving that is superior.

It is reiterated by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 437-438) that the following is included in marketing communication: advertising, public relations, sales promotion, and personal selling, as well as product, price, direct marketing, and place. Different promotional techniques used are: advertising, using the internet, carrying out direct marketing activities, and engaging in sales promotion, as well as generating publicity about the offering using public relations, and persuading consumers to use personal selling techniques.

2.5.4.1 Sufficient promotion of a destination

Durban is currently marketed as Africa's playground by Durban Tourism. This destination is being marketed in three segments, which are leisure, events and business. Branding by Durban Tourism consists of 'Durban the warmest place to be' and 'Durban Africa's Sports, Events and Leisure Capital'. These marketing concepts were introduced shortly before the World Cup in 2010.

Nonetheless, consumer behaviours are changing; they are more empowered and better informed, due to 'the digital wireless age'. The new digital age, as evidenced by information technology advances, with the use of iPads, iPods, smartphones, and the internet, has been the topic of many studies, including that of Buhalis and Gretzel's (2014) eDestination Marketing analysis.

Durban's proposed visitor strategy, as found by MacFarlane (2012: 15), indicates that the proposed solution for Durban's domestic market is to have discrete campaigns, leveraging arrangements for visitor information, and cross online promotions using stakeholders, for example, hotels, car hire companies and events. The strategy indicates that the plan for the international tourist market involves using a common media platform, along with discrete city initiatives, and leveraging agreements with stakeholders, such as SAA and Southern Sun, local promotions with media platforms, as well as local initiatives with media companies, such as the Discovery Channel and National Geographic. The marketing initiatives would be undertaken in conjunction with Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Nonetheless, George (2011: 334) maintains that a clear message must be developed. For example, editorials in a travel magazine should feature the city's main attractions, capturing the attention of leisure tourists. The consumer must then be prompted by a contact number or details of the package, while the editorial must capture the consumer's attention, interest, desire and action. In today's highly competitive business environment, tourism companies in Durban must, according to Madondo (2016: 98), participate in social media to be successful.

A push strategy is a promotional strategy, which George (2011: 335) states uses sales techniques to push the product offering forward. Tourism stakeholders in Durban, such as hotels, the Ushaka theme park and cruise liners, could use more personal selling and sales promotion to encourage

travel agents and tour operators to order, stock and publicise stakeholders' offerings to the final consumer.

Matikiti, Mpinganjira and Roberts-Lombard (2017: 1) maintain that tourism managers must ensure their websites are informative and easy to use. This is supported by Steyn (2015: VIII), who says that to help differentiate destinations from their competition, they must to create effective visual images of what they have to offer and their location because, when making a choice to visit one destination over another, potential tourists rely on mental images.

Conversely, the build-up of demand for a product by consumers, by means of a pull strategy, is a promotional strategy where money is allocated to advertising. Stakeholders, such as tour operators in Durban, could use this strategy to generate consumer demand and pull consumers, by use of television, internet, radio and newspapers.

Destination management includes the marketing of a destination (Figure 2.1), with the destination experience having to be viewed as an essential part of the marketing function.

According to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 189), destination managers should actively determine the specific visitor markets, which can be achieved by reviewing visitor history data and understanding visitor trends, strengths and experiential benefits that need to be determined. Destinations must identify experiences, location and cost. Measuring destination awareness needs to include psychologically specific attributes, attributes common to all destinations and those that are unique (Crouch and Ritchie 2003: 189). Monitoring destination awareness and image is important as it assesses uniqueness to advertising.

2.5.4.2 Destination brand identity/ Image and awareness

A brand can be a term, name, symbol, sign or design (Bowen *et al.* 2010: 237). For example, customers can easily the golden arches symbol of McDonalds. Durban Tourism, which is responsible for marketing Durban, must distinguish Durban from other cities in the world. As consumers become more time-driven, Bowen *et al.* (2010: 236) state that a brand can simplify decision-making by the potential customer. Not only does a brand offer legal protection, in respect of unique aspects or product features, it also signals quality. The importance of destination branding is confirmed by the findings from Blain, Levy and Ritchie's (2011) study, as well as that of Dioko (2015).

Tourism stakeholders in Durban and Durban Tourism need to understand that branding endows products and services with the power of distinguishing it from other products. As indicated by Bakic, Hrabrovski-Tomic, Muhi, and Kovacevic (2010: 17) in their research, mega international trends, such as timeshare, incentive travel, the fast food industry, and theme parks, as well as loyalty programmes, all influence a destination's competitiveness.

In keeping with Dwyer *et al.*'s integrative model (2004: 92), the natural endowment of a destination in production factors, is referred to as comparative advantage, in other words, the resources that add to the destination's attractiveness. Therefore, competitive advantage denotes a destination's ability to effectively use such resources. Durban Tourism is currently not factoring these as long-term goals to be achieved.

Awareness image and brand is a component of qualifying and amplifying determinants (Figure 2.1). According to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 245), the image and awareness of a destination in the potential visitor's mind is a vital factor affecting destination competitiveness. In this regard, destination managers focus on developing strong awareness of the destination in key markets and shaping an enticing and attractive destination image, with which

to attract tourists. An example is the awareness of Durban that would stem from its promotional activity.

As highlighted by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 245), destination awareness and image are driven by a range of influences allowing a favourable image of a destination to amplify the destination's success and competitiveness. When a tourist first starts to consider which alternatives are likely to satisfy their desires and needs, destinations that come to mind most readily would be their first choice.

When the image of a destination is perceived positively in the mind of the tourist, their decision is impacted upon positively, as explained by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 246). For example, first time visitors to China are surprised by the modern, clean character of its large cities. The authors also state that strong images are hard to develop, therefore the destination's present image needs to be assessed. Destinations need to adopt a strong branding approach (Blain, Levy and Ritchie 2011). Campelo, Aitken, Thyne and Gnoth (2013: 1) confirm that destination branding activity ought to be influenced by an in-depth sense of place and positioning of people at the place.

Destination branding is essential and Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 196), support this statement, adding that branding has become a more positive and proactive dimension. The authors point out that branding of experience is powerful (2003: 198), as today's consumer makes choices based on whether a product fits into his or her lifestyle or not. Durban needs to distinguish between its core elements of destination experience and its attributes or activities.

Brands must, as stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 199), convey the message of a memorable experience, product performance and quality of service. Distinctive branding will be based on a distinctive and consistent

message, emotional connection and internationalisation of the brand by employees who work frontline.

Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 210) further highlight that monitoring of trends from target markets and potential markets, for the design and delivery of its promotional programmes and in attracting new markets, is essential. There needs to be monitoring of visitor attractions and the distribution of visitors between attractions to determine any patterns, themes, trends and impact. The findings of Hong, Lee, Jang, and Woo (2009) regarding the revisiting of destinations are supported by Barnes, Mattsson and Sørensen (2014: 121), who state that destination brand experience impacts on revisits and thus requires all-inclusive profiling of different visitors to understand how they experience a destination brand.

Destination marketing is a component of destination management (Figure 2.1). Dwyer and Kim (2003: 385) maintain that the focus of tourism competitiveness should be on long-term appeal to the travel customer through providing unique comparative advantages. Awareness of the destination enhances appeal. It is corroborated by Dwyer and Kim (2003: 386) that activities, which are relevant, include as per the model developed by Baloglu and McCleary (1999), the development of a strong destination image, as well as the creation of a high level of awareness, specific services and products.

Promotion is a component of the marketing building blocks and is a strategic and holistic destination marketing framework and strategy component (Figure 2.3). Moreover, Heath (2002: 347) maintains that destination marketing has become increasingly strategic and focuses on unique comparative advantages, such as careful analysis of the marketplace core values and response to its needs.

The author (2002: 347) further highlights that the creation of sub-brandings from province to national level needs to take place. Lubbe (2015: 6) indicates

the need for SA to promote unique products of a variety of offerings (Table 2.1). Tourism branding and image was one of the determinant factors and indicators of this study.

2.5.4.3 Destination marketing and the use of a variety of promotional techniques

a) Advertising

Any form of promotion and non-personal presentation of services, ideas, or goods that is paid for, is referred to as advertising and is considered a reliable manner of persuasion and the dissemination of information (Bowen *et al.* 2014: 382). Tourism stakeholders can make use of various types of advertising media; for example, newspapers that have different frequency types and target audiences. Other types of media would be the internet that accommodation establishments may use with a mailing list, or computer-generated presentations that may be used by tour operators. Tourism stakeholders could also use radio and television. Advertising on public transport is another good way of creating awareness among local people. Advertisements on Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town are broadcast on an international platform, via National Geographic and Discovery Channel.

It is imperative for tourism stakeholders in Durban to understand that advertising can reach a mass audience, or niche markets, by choosing the media listening or viewing times, and that the message can be repeated several times, which allows for flexibility. The disadvantages are that it is expensive, may have a low response rate, and there is the risk of the message being misunderstood or misinterpreted; this necessitates repeating the message regularly and a lack of credibility, due to the medium chosen, may result (George 2011: 348).

b) Sales Promotion

As highlighted by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 455), a variety of tools with unique qualities are included in sales promotion, these comprise premiums,

contests and coupons, among others. Restaurant owners can, along this vein, offer cultural or new types of cuisine at a low price. In addition, information services officers can have regular product training, or performance and sales incentives can be offered to staff, while hotels can offer staff full use of facilities. Product information must also be shared using newsletters or brochures, with sales promotion used to draw the attention of the consumer and offer incentives that are worthwhile, while product offers can also be highlighted.

c) Public Relations

Public Relations consists of creatively employing both news- and social-events, as well as publications, and community relations that distinguish tourism organisations from each other (Bowen *et al.* 2010: 396). The larger tourism stakeholders, such as cruise-liners, hotel groups and restaurant chains, would have dedicated public relations departments. This department would deal with press relations, product publicity and corporate communication, while also being involved in events. Bowen *et al.* (2010: 402) state that each event offers the prospect of developing a large assortment of stories, for diverse audiences.

d) Personal Selling

George (2011: 360 - 363) avers that the process of communication from person-to-person can be termed as 'personal selling'. This takes place between a sales representative and potential customer, with the sales person learning about the consumer's needs, in order to meet the needs. These needs are satisfied in offering an opportunity to the would-be customer to purchase a product of value. Personal selling is aimed at specific target markets, more information is given to the customer, it is very persuasive, allows for interaction, and builds consumer relationships. The disadvantages of personal selling are that it is expensive to set up, as a sales team is required.

e) Word-of-mouth

Aziz, Jaafar and Sukarno's (2012: 20) research reveals that tourists visiting a specific area in Malaysia make their choices based on word-of-mouth referrals, while the larger hotel groups prefer to use information technology in promoting their hotels. When a visitor has a good experience, he/she will then talk about it to other people, which is a very effective marketing tool, as they are likely to tell their friends and relatives.

f) Direct marketing

It is highlighted by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 531) that the most rapid growth in direct marketing is that of online marketing. The extensive and pervasive use of the internet impacts powerfully on both marketers and buyers in this new digital age. For example, the Tourism Indaba is a good source of direct marketing for stakeholders from Durban's tourism industry.

g) E-marketing

E-marketing is comprised of marketing that makes use of the internet; a tool employed in information, business, selling, marketing and communication. According to Gerritsen and Zeng (2014: 27), social media plays a significant role in aspects of tourism in information search and decision-making behaviours.

The internet has paved the way for the global village, meaning that communication can now reach anyone anywhere in the world, in a matter of seconds. As stated by Amaranggana and Buhalis (n.d.: 553), the use of technology to enrich tourist experiences could increase destination competitiveness.

George (2011: 373) explains that, "e-marketing is the use of information in the process of creating communicating, delivering value to customers, and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organisation and its stakeholders". Advantages of e-marketing are its reach, scope, interactivity,

and immediacy, as well as demographics and targeting, monitoring and adaptability. According to Browning, So and Sparks (2013: 2), online travel reviews are emerging as powerful sources of information affecting tourists' pre-purchase evaluation.

The WEFTT (2013: 265) states that high-quality destination-marketing campaigns are vital. In the progressive, modern-day travel and tourism industry, the online environment has made the planning of itineraries and buying of travel and accommodation possible for small organisations. According to Sevin (2012: 227), Twitter has proved to be an indispensable part of modern day communication, enabling even the smallest organisations to communicate with various stakeholders about travel and accommodation possibilities.

By the year 2020, technology will be characterised by penetration into all aspects of life. Three areas of technology that would influence the accommodation sector by the year 2020 would be robotics, nanotechnology and biometric security. As visitors acquire an increasing number of travel experiences, they are also becoming more sophisticated, more discerning and more demanding (WEFTT 2013).

Durban Tourism's 2013 and 2014 statistics show a decline in Durban visitor numbers, in addition to the city not being in demand, resulting in immense costs on an economic scale, as well as on a social and a community level. Moreover, an absence of available information online is evident, with no effective website for Durban Tourism, where customers can engage in e-marketing. Dean and Glenn (2015: 1) corroborate that social media can provide a pivotal role for destinations and tourism stakeholders to engage with their customers.

To make the exchange of ideas, services and products possible that keep the consumer and organisation happy, George (2011: 377-378) states that e-

marketing involves greater emphasis on online activities for pursuing customer relationships. Considered more efficient than traditional marketing, e-marketing allows customers to, for example, book flights online at their convenience.

E-marketing has, in effect, changed consumer behaviour from companies to 'mouseholders' (consumers). For example, tourism stakeholders could view the number of individuals visiting the website, by placing a counter on the site. George (2011) mentions "Travel 2.0", which consists of online travel guides, planners, travel agencies and travel communities, as well as tourism forums. This is a website built around rich user experience of the internet.

Many individual websites in the tourism industry are designed with links to other tourism stakeholders built in and are shown by Huertas-Garcia, Gázquez-Abad, Forgas-Coll and Casas-Romeo (2014) to be very effective. An example is Trip Advisor, a social networking system that allows travellers to share their experiences, opinions and photographs. This is supported by Dickinger and Költringer (2015: 1836), who maintain that digital information sources impact on the traveller's choice and travel perceptions.

A benefit of social media highlighted by Bowen *et al.* (2014: 293), is being able to listen to what people are saying about an organisation. This would be useful to managers, to know what consumers are saying about their company and their competitors, which would also aid in service recovery, when a customer posts a complaint.

Social media, furthermore, allows consumers to share experiences and chat and has become popular with consumers wanting travel advice, with tourism stakeholders and consumers able to post messages here. Consumers and tourists can also engage in blogging.

George (2011: 391 - 396) explains that blogging is a public comment website. Social media stimulates conversations amongst consumers, with some posts 'going viral', indicating an exceptionally high visitor number to the post and sharing of the conversation. Topics of conversation include consumers' impressions of a destination and awareness of information concerning the destination, this in turn, impacts brand effectiveness, along with both the brand and the visitor experience, while influencing crisis and risk management, as well as visitor services. The digital revolution is influenced by a networked society, smart technology, boredom, and demanding consumers, along with a culture of immediacy, mobile living and maximising behaviour.

Fesenmaier, Law, Pan, and Xiang (2011: 366) state that search engine marketing has become an important tool for online destination marketing, with most travellers now depending on the internet. Search engines are a powerful tool which would help travellers link to stakeholders. The reason for this, is the dynamic relationships among travellers and many stakeholders. Dickinger (2011: 379) finds that the internet has been used by travellers for years, as a channel through which to obtain/access information and now also to produce their own content. Content that is user-generated is apparently very trustworthy, according to the findings of Dickinger's (2011) study, although not necessarily the most informative. It is thus dependent on the type of online channel employed, for varying dimensions of trustworthiness to turn into effective, inclusive, trust drivers.

2.5.4.4 Conclusion to Promotion Section

Elements of Durban's promotion competitiveness include the use of various promotional techniques, sufficient marketing of a destination and destination branding. Promotion is an important component of destination competitiveness as it creates awareness of, and interest in, a destination.

2.5.5 People

The tourist and hospitality industry is a people-orientated industry. Bennett and Strydom (2001: 197) state that the marketing mix's people element denotes the customer, including those customers involved in the delivery of services, and employees. There are two parties involved in tourism marketing, the guests (consumers) and the hosts (the employees/staff who work at the organisations).

The appearance, attitude and behaviour of employees at the tourism organisation should complement the tourism product (Bowie and Buttle 2011: 296-297). It is held by Chadwick and Jobber (2013: 381) that, due to production and consumption of services taking place at the same time, the organisation's staff are vital in shaping the perceptions of customers where product quality is concerned; hence the need for courteous, efficient and motivated staff.

2.5.5.1 Human Resources

HR is a component of destination management, while facilitating resources is a component of supporting factors and resources (Figure 2.1). As explained by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 136), human resources development is vital to destination competitiveness and the role of education and training in the tourism industry is becoming increasingly complex.

Due to the diversity of human resources required to serve a destination being particularly diverse, Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 136) find human resources to be a comparative advantage. The authors (2003: 137) state that exceptional customer service can be delivered by employees who have the appropriate skills and attitudes. There is also a need for educational institutions to play a key role within the tourism and hospitality industry.

The development of human resources is a component of destination management (Figure 2.2). According to Dwyer and Kim (2003: 389), human

resources is a central factor in achieving competitiveness, due to new opportunities brought about by new technologies. Therefore, the training and development of staff is vital.

Human resources is a key success driver (Figure 2.3), requiring that people and HR development must be emphasised. Service education and training, as well as skills development, should also be weighted (Table 2.1), according to Lubbe (2015).

The WEFTT reports in 2013 ranked SA at 132nd position and at 105th position in 2015, for HR with these rankings indicating an improvement. HR can be negatively impacted by poor health, due to communicable diseases, such as HIV. The quality of HR contributes to the economy of a country. This sector takes the levels of health, education and training into account. Upgrading and training of HR is vital. The availability of qualified labour is important to strengthening a country's economy.

Hospitality is a component of supporting factors and resources (Figure 2.1). As stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 139), the friendliness of residents and employees at a destination are important, as tourists are in an unfamiliar environment and expect to be treated with friendliness and hospitality to create and unforgettable experience in the mind of the tourist.

As a component of supporting factors and resources (Figure 2.2), hospitality is confirmed by Dwyer and Kim (2003: 384) to relate to the perceived friendliness of local people, employees and their attitudes.

A WEFTT report (2013: 63) that focuses on travel and tourism as a driver of employment growth in Africa, highlights that growth of tourism is anticipated, for the next 10 years, to escalate by 2.3 percent per year, so that by 2022, it will reach 2.9 percent of total employment. However, various infrastructure and investment challenges are still faced by the industry in the region, which holds

back any advancement. In addition, the report (WEFTT 2013: 63) observes that the change-over “to service economies on the continent, is not as advanced as it is in other parts of the world”. Nonetheless, with eight million direct employees in Africa, the travel and tourism industry is one of the region’s foremost employers, which is in excess of the sectors’ direct job creation in financial services industries, manufacturing of auto and chemical products, mining, and communications.

Hospitality is an experience (Figure 2.3). Heath (2002: 342) holds that attitudes of residents and employees contribute to the experience of the tourist and competitiveness of the destination as illustrated in Table 2, public perception includes hospitality, which according to Lubbe (2015), is an indicator.

The WEFTT report (2013: 57) states that an important role is played by the aviation sector in the global economy, through the provision of connectivity through a speedy, global, transport network. The impact on jobs and the country’s GDP globally is huge, adding in excess of 22 million jobs and US\$1.4 trillion in GDP. In enabling other industries’ growth, the aviation sector also contributes with support of their operations. Air transport is depended on by a substantial percentage of international tourists, with the aviation industry globally supporting 34.5 million jobs within tourism, and approximately US\$762 billion a year contributed to world GDP.

The advantages are much more than a mere ‘economic footprint of aviation’, as air transport’s global connectivity has a positive influence and boosts productivity in the industry and economic growth in the long-term. The development of global connectivity through aviation could be enabled, should government prioritise travel and tourism. This could, in turn, enhance the overall, long-term level of living standards and productivity.

Employees are a vital component of service delivery in any organisation. The role of the employee is, nonetheless, dependent upon the tangibility of the

service, as with the high level of interaction a waiter in a restaurant has with a customer. There are, moreover, various levels of staff in any organisation (Beneke 2004). Staff of an organisation who have frequent contact with customers need to be trained on the organisation's marketing strategies and be well-motivated. They should, in addition, be rewarded on a regular basis.

Several categories among employees in an organisation have been identified by Beneke (2004). On the one hand, the 'modifier group' of people does not work frontline with staff but has frequent consumer interaction, which requires being responsive to consumer needs. Examples of these staff members include receptionists and restaurant floor staff. On the other hand, 'Influencers' may be key drivers of the organisation's marketing strategy, yet they have irregular if any consumer contact. These are people involved in product development and market research. The 'Isolateds' are the category of employees that do not deal with customers or have a great deal to do with the marketing strategy, such as secretaries and administrators.

People spend a large part of their day at work, as stated by Brevis, Cronje, Smit, and Vrba (2007: 295); work is done to satisfy needs and the work done by a person reflects their goals and needs. The result is thus that the organisation is perceived as an instrument, used to satisfy one of the employee's goals. Should the organisation block the attainment of these needs and goals, the employees become unproductive and unmotivated, which makes it essential that managers understand their peers and subordinates.

As Brevis *et al.* (2007: 295) point out, a manager must also understand the personalities of different groups of people, as people are probably the most vital but complex organisational resource. These days, knowledge workers are at the centre of success for many organisations. Managers and employees, therefore, need to ensure continuous updates of their competencies. Due to people also being seen as a social system, they need to work together to

achieve organisational goals; teamwork is important in any organisation. It is thus imperative that a manager ensures employees' abilities match the tasks that need to be achieved.

2.5.5.2 The significance of quality of service standards

Quality of service is a component of destination management (Figure 2.1). As stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 206), there needs to be focus on the overall quality of the service experience by ensuring that tourists are doing what they love during their journey, ensuring that tourists are involved in the service delivery and they gain personal recognition from the service encounter. Advertising plays a vital role in conveying a service rich experience (Crouch and Ritchie 2003: 208). In order to enhance the quality of visitor services at destinations, service standards must be monitored and improved.

It is illustrated that quality of service is a supporting factor and resource (Figure 2.2). Dwyer and Kim (2003: 383) confirm that the service dimension of the tourism experience is vital and that a total quality of service approach to visitor satisfaction must be taken. The authors also state that the perceived quality of tourism services is linked to service experiences.

Service enhancers are shown to be a component of experience enhancers (Figure 2.3). Heath (2002: 342) states that reliable and responsive visitor services enhance a destination's competitive advantage. This can be achieved by the establishment of standards for tourism facilities and performance of personnel programmes to monitor quality of experiences.

According to Lubbe (2015: 7), the need for service education and training skills development (Table 2.1) are necessary, as one of SA's worst attributes is its bad service delivery.

Durban needs to be perceived as a quality destination, which requires constant monitoring of the visitor experience. The fact that the travel trade is governed

by competition to serve customer needs also requires acknowledgement that the desires and tastes of the traditional traveller have changed, from tourists seeking warm, sunny climates for rest and relaxation, to tourists that now seek eccentric or esoteric purposes. Modern day tourists' activities range from visiting archaeological digs, and taking bicycle rides, to attending conferences.

In creating memorable experiences, a clear competitive advantage can be generated, where customer experience, instead of customer service, is seen as a new economic growth characteristic. With entertainment deemed a core resource attractor, it stands to reason why a city would stage theatre productions, as is the case with both Melbourne in Australia, and Durban in SA. Consequently, a significant core attractor is thus tourism superstructure, considering that a destination's appeal is the main reason it is visited.

Customers' role in service delivery is vital to the tourism industry, which is people-dependent. Tourism stakeholders in Durban need to focus on people because people determine the way organisations differentiate themselves. Fuchas and Weiermair (2004: 3) state that tourist satisfaction measures should be put into place, as tourism service quality attributes are crucial at destinations. In addition, according to Formica and Uysal (2006: 4), determinants of tourism attractiveness should be categorised by demand and supply.

George (2011: 436) highlights that consumers are present in a place where service is offered; because of this, they can contribute or detract from the quality of service delivery. Consumers also contribute to the guest experience, for example, a friendly group of people on a bus tour enhances the service experience. Should there be someone who complains all the time, it would detract from the experience, which means the employees on the bus (for example, the tour guide and the driver) must try to satisfy all the tourists, to the greatest extent possible.

The employee-consumer relationship is important, as stated by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 188). This relationship is classified as 'the service encounter'; for example, a guest at a hotel interacts with the employees at reception, the porter's desk, and the restaurant. During these encounters, the guest receives a snapshot of the organisation's service quality.

Excellent or superior service delivery, proportionate to the expectations of consumers, is referred to by George (2011: 437) as service quality. Benefits of service quality are as follows: keeping consumers by offering a quality product and service, to create loyal consumers; or keeping good employees, who are content to be part of an organisation that offers high quality service and takes care of its staff.

The avoidance of price competition can be achieved by ensuring that a quality offering is provided by the organisation, without special offers and price discounting having to be used in attracting customers, relying instead on word-of-mouth advertising and repeat customers. By offering quality products, costs can be reduced, as complementary/ free items do not have to be given away to compensate for bad service.

Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (2006: 336) aver that total quality management (TQM) is a quality management concept used to gain competitive advantage. TQM requires a commitment to the quality of services and products the organisation offers. An added focus is needed on customer satisfaction and determining what level of service consumers expect, and then exceeding customer expectations. An organisation must, furthermore, develop a high level of customer service. Consumer satisfaction and employee performance must, in addition, be measured and controlled (Berry *et al.* 2006).

As referred to by Armstrong and Kotler (2013: 192), customer service can be measured in terms of honouring promises, being accurate with information or finances, responsiveness to consumers' requests, and assurance that

employees have the ability to remedy complaints directly with customers, without the need for management intervention. This also includes treating guests with empathy and knowing their names and preferences, or attending to the service elements that are most evidently noticeable, such as hotel bedrooms and facilities.

Berry *et al.* (2006: 360) discuss five service quality gaps, stating that managing consumer expectations and consumer perception is of vital importance. The organisation's lack of understanding of what the consumer expects is the first gap, with the second being management perceptions of what consumers require. The third gap comprises service quality specifications, which result in the existence of guidelines concerning the performance of a quality service, while the responsible staff offer inadequate service delivery. The fourth gap is made up of the service delivery, when there is a gap that exists in the difference between what was offered and what was promised, in terms of service delivery, such as, what is mentioned in brochures. The fifth gap is the perceived service gap, or how the actual service differs from the perception of that service by consumers.

The ability of a business to generate revenue, according to Kim and McCormick and Ritchie (2012: 12), is directly determined by providing memorable quality experiences to customers. The study concludes that quality domains exist, including local culture, refreshment, and high living. Added to these are relevance, involvement and knowledge, and novelty of the tourist experience.

Crotts, Davis and Mason (2009: 139) state the importance of questioning the following: Guest satisfaction levels; Content of retold experiences; Product or service performance indicators regarding the creation of 'satisfying guest experiences', in comparison to the competition; and in a competitive environment, what the strengths and weaknesses of products or services are.

Tourism stakeholders in Durban must take service levels offered to the tourist into consideration. Tour operators have to carefully consider the visitor experience, when putting together packages for tourists. Bowen *et al.* (2010: 238) confirm that customer interaction with other customers is important, specifically where a stakeholder has a variety of target markets. For example, an airline may choose to put a passenger wearing an overall in the business section of the flight, due to over-booking. This may be a problem, as the business class passenger may not appreciate this situation. Furthermore, restaurant owners must ensure that the atmosphere in their restaurants makes a visitor want to return to their establishment. Factors such as these impact the holiday experience. For example, tourists visiting Durban will want to taste Zulu or Indian cuisine, allowing hotel restaurants to offer and promote Durban's local cuisine to foreign guests.

Today's consumers look for quality services, healthier lifestyles, and heightened attention to the environment, in a modern society. The modern tourist pays particular attention to what they can obtain from a vacation, in particular, the uniqueness in experiences during vacations.

Bowen *et al.* (2010: 236) suggest that customer interaction with the service delivery system is vital and takes place in three phases. The first phase is the joining phase, where customers must be made to feel welcome and comfortable with the choices they have made. The second phase is the consumption phase, where a guest is actually at a hotel or on a flight. It is proposed by Bowen *et al.* (2010: 239) that customers may act as employees, where a guest can help themselves, for example self-check-in services at airports or buffet services at restaurants. Customer service is of vital importance during this phase, as it influences the visitor experience. The third phase is the detachment phase, where the guest is leaving the hotel and efficiency and effectiveness are crucial in helping the client settle their account or assisting with a shuttle service to the airport.

2.5.5.3 Consumer Satisfaction

Competitiveness can also be measured according to how businesses are focused on customer satisfaction. Ekinci, Nam and Whyatt (2011: 1022) find the link between consumer-based brand loyalty and brand equity, in the hotel and restaurant industry, is impacted by consumer satisfaction. The findings of Ekinci *et al.*'s study (2011) suggest that consumer satisfaction is dependent on brand identification, the behaviour of staff, as well as accepted self-comparison.

Kim et al (2012: 12) state that providing quality experiences to tourists is vital. In addition, Kim, Lee and McKercher (2009: 715) hold that tracking tourism destination image perception is vital for destination marketers. This study reveals that tourists' perception of the image of a destination may easily change, in proportion to situations or emotional conditions experienced on a tour itinerary.

Moreover, Dikinger (2011: 378) mentions online channels' trustworthiness, with regards to experience and search tasks that are goal-directed. With abundant information channels on the internet, it is important that tourism stakeholders develop a better understanding as to which online channels can be considered trustworthy. This is seen in the provision of factual and travel-related reports on experiences or information that is reliable.

Crotts *et al.* (2009: 139) maintain that tourism stakeholders must measure guest satisfaction. Questions to be asked include whether guests are satisfied; the content and context of what guests are telling others about their experiences; the level and extent of a property's performance, in comparison to the competition, and its contribution to the creation of satisfying guest experiences; as well as what a property's weaknesses and strengths are. Travel blog narratives (digitised word-of-mouth) are growing very rapidly and are a useful source of information (George 2011: 391 - 396).

Customer-based fair-play for a tourism destination is a concept found by Gartner and Ruzzier (2011: 471) to be vital to the tourism stakeholder. Results of their study show discrepancies in the importance of awareness and loyalty dimensions, between repeat and renewal guests, which is supported by Bosnjak, Hellriegel, Maurer and Sirgy's (2011) post visit research. This kind of information would aid tourism stakeholders in Durban to plan and implement strategies for destination marketing in external markets.

Research conducted by Bendito and Ramirez (2011: 1225) analysed the level of coherence and specialisation of international tourism campaigns and country brands, such as Spain, France, Italy, and Greece, as well as Turkey, Austria and Germany. The campaigns indicate that tourism products, cultural and nature tourism promotion, as well as online promotion, help differentiate each country and special interest tourism.

2.5.5.4 Visitor Management

It is illustrated in Figure 2.1 that visitor management is a component of destination management. As stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 213), tourists are seeking high quality experiences that are memorable. A destination that offers high quality visitor experiences will continually generate high levels of visitor satisfaction, resulting in favourable word-of-mouth advertising, which is essential to competitiveness. The experience is based on the entire journey. Visitor satisfaction is not mentioned in other figures.

As shown by Figure 2.1, organisations are a component of destination management. The destination management organisation (DMO) tourism policy, and the nature of the destination and the funding available, play a vital role in managing destinations. Durban Tourism needs to follow policy and guidelines from national and provincial level, aligning itself with TKZN, SAT and NDT, as a part of the Ethekewini Municipality (Ethekewini Municipality 2014).

The DMO is illustrated in Figure 2.2 to be a component of destination management. As highlighted by Dwyer and Kim (2003: 387) various levels of government are involved in the promotion, regulation, planning, monitoring and coordination. Many factors underlying destination competition are public, thus government has an important role to play in achieving and maintaining destination competitiveness.

Dwyer and Kim (2003: 388) add that the DMO serves as the coordinating body between the public and private sector. The provision of information allows destination managers to better understand customer needs and product development, which requires the monitoring and tracking of visitor stats, perceptions, and satisfaction.

According to Heath (2002: 345), the primary function of the DMO should be to serve as a coordinating body for various public and private sector organisations (Figure 2.3). Structure needs to follow strategy.

2.5.5.5 Conclusion to People Section

Factors established from the people element of the marketing mix are HR, consumer satisfaction, services standards and visitor management, which are significant destination competitiveness factors. The various factors have been discussed in the context of the destination competitiveness model.

2.5.6 Physical Evidence

Physical evidence of the marketing mix includes elements surrounding general tourism infrastructure, infrastructure, climate and attractions, which have been covered in the discussion on the product element. In this section, safety and security and transport sectors of the Durban's tourism industry are examined as physical evidence.

2.5.6.1 Safety and Security

It is highlighted by the WEFTT (2013: 319) that safety and security persists as problematic (SA is ranked 117th out of 140 countries), along with health and hygiene levels (SA is ranked 87th), and the WEFTT expresses concern with South Africans' access and right to use upgraded sanitation. Another negatively ranked aspect is that of human resources, which is impacted by much of the workforce's poor health, in addition to a life expectancy rated low at 52 years (ranked 129th), driven by communicable diseases with high levels, for example, HIV (ranked 137th). As stated by Ferreira and Perks (2016b: 263), there are three main political variables that impact tourism, namely tourist safety, political instability and public turmoil. The study indicates that there has been a decrease in tourist arrivals to SA from 2015.

Safety and security is a critical factor in establishing a country's travel and tourism industry competitiveness, as tourists may be discouraged from taking a trip to countries considered as dangerous, making these countries less attractive. Health and hygiene is also crucial to travel and tourism competitiveness, with access to sanitation and a country's improved drinking water being central to the health and comfort of travellers. Should tourists fall ill, the health sector must be capable of ensuring proper care, as determined by suitable health care facilities being available. According to the WEFTT report (2013: 3-41), human resources is a vital component of the travel and tourism sector. Thus, the future of the tourism and travel sector in SA, along with all other sectors of the country's economy, needs to improve the workforce's health.

A destination with a reputation for high levels of security will, according to Crouch and Ritchie, compromise its safety (Figure 2.1). Tourists need to feel safe where they are. There are three levels of risk that government needs to consider; they are physical, psychological and financial safety. Crime impacts all three levels, with crime in SA having been particularly damaging to the tourism and travel industry. If we take the example of the September 11th

attacks in the USA this saw tourists starting to change their direction for travel to avoid the region.

Safety and security is further threatened by risk of accident and misadventure, walking or driving in a foreign country where cars travel in the opposite direction from the tourist's home country (Crouch and Ritchie 2003: 239). Threats from wildlife, natural disasters and severe weather conditions are safety factors for tourists as well. Destinations that have safe drinking water, infrastructure, reliable emergency services, without health and safety issues, are considered to be safe. Health risk also compromise health and safety.

It is illustrated in Figure 2.2 that safety and security is a component of situational conditions. According to Dwyer and Kim (2003: 397), safety and security is a crucial, qualifying determinant of a destination's competitiveness, with a frequent problem that of terrorist attacks, at some destinations. According to Figure 2.3 safety and security is a non-negotiable. Heath (2002: 340) mentions factors including air traffic control, turmoil, health and security that impact tourists travelling to different countries.

Safety and security needs to be addressed in SA (Table 2.1). Tourist safety, health risks, bribery and corruption and crime are presented by Lubbe (2015: 6), as indicators and determinant of the study (Table 2.2), while highlighting that SA policymakers and stakeholders need to address these elements. It is held by Lubbe (2015: 8) that safety and security requires urgent attention from policymakers, since tourists will be deterred from countries perceived as unsafe.

2.5.6.2 Components of Durban's Tourism Sector

Durban's tourism sector is made up of attractions, accommodation, events, intermediaries, transportation, the public sector and policy. Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2013: 312 - 314) state that the sectors of tourism are interlinked and, to some extent, dependent on each other. The authors point

out that the catalyst for tourist visits is comprised of the attractions of many tourist destinations around the world, with explicit educational experiences that are often pivotal to the creation or the protection of cultural identities, while contributing to the protection and conservation of many attractions, which serve as a vital appeal component. According to Carlisle, Jones, Kunc and Tiffin (2012: 54) innovation and entrepreneurship provide essential value to the advancement and quality of the tourism industry.

Smart tourism is shown by Li, Wang, Zhang and Zhen (2015: 304) to have gained increasing attention, which includes smart information systems, intelligent tourism management and smart sightseeing, e-commerce systems, smart safety and virtual tourist attractions. Tourists prefer tourist attraction home-pages, smart vehicle scheduling, personal itinerary designing, and free WiFi, along with smart cards, intelligent-guide system, crowd handling, and mobile payment, as well as tourist flow monitoring and online information access.

As explained by Cooper (2012: 195), intermediaries are seen as critical to the profitability and competitiveness of both organisations and the destination, due to the fact that the consumer is physically distant from the product itself. Intermediaries include the tourism supplier, such as an airline or hotel, the tour operator, travel agent and the customer. Fletcher *et al.* (2013: 349) maintain that, within the tourism economy, accommodation is the largest and most pervasive sub-sector because a location is required by tourists, to repose and refresh at during their travels.

Tourism and transport are also inseparable because, as Cooper (2012: 219) states, tourism is about “being elsewhere”; therefore, transport bridges the gap between the origin and the destination. Transport, without which tourism cannot happen, can also be seen as an attraction, such as rail travel and cruising. Consistent with Cooper’s (2012: 195, 244) findings, a central role is played by government in the arrangement, management and governance of

the tourism sector. Numerous, iconic tourism attractions, together with coastlines and national parks, as well as heritage attractions, such as monuments that are significant in history, art galleries and museums, are also owned and managed by Government.

Furthermore, Fitchett and Hoogendoorn (2016: 1) confirm that the seasonality of tourism is affected by climate, the tourist's selection of destinations, the available tourist activities and attractions, and the overall satisfaction of a vacation. Therefore, climate change has the potential to reduce the sustainability and long-term viability of global tourism. The climate of a destination is important, as it is a contributing factor to destination competitiveness.

2.5.6.3 Conclusion to Physical Evidence Section

Factors established from the physical evidence of Durban are its tourism industry, safety and security. Elements of general tourism infrastructure, infrastructure, climate and attractions were covered in the product section of the marketing mix, which are significant destination competitiveness factors. The various factors were discussed in the context of the destination competitiveness model.

2.5.7 Process

Determining Durban's competitiveness from a stakeholder perspective would enable the city and its stakeholders to establish a long-term strategy, which the city currently does not have. Strategy, according to Tribe (2010: 5–10), comprises the fashioning of a desirable future, as well as suitable ways that have been designed and tested, ensuring a successful outcome

2.5.7.1 Policy and Planning

Tourism policy and planning is a component of destination planning (Figure 2.1). As established by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 148), the purpose of tourism

policy is to create an environment that provides maximum benefit to the stakeholders of the region, while minimising negative impacts.

Figure 2.2 clarifies that destination policy is a component of destination management. According to Dwyer and Kim (2003: 379), the development of policies and strategies can be achieved through national and regional programmes.

Policy and legislative framework are shown to be a component of sustainable development, with policy framework, being essential (Figure 2.3). Strategic decisions regarding the deployment of resources are essential, as it would ensure the delivery of high quality experiences.

Issues highlighted in Table 2.1 need to be built into government policies, for example ease of access, which involves visa regulations. According to the WEFTT report 2013/2015, SA ranked 59th of 140 countries in 2013 and 15th out of 140 countries in 2015. The WEFTT report 2013/2015 further states that, with regard to prioritisation of travel and tourism, SA ranked in 44th position in 2013 and 46th position in 2015. Governments play a significant part in forming and developing the travel and tourism sector and its competitiveness, with SA having shown a vast improvement.

2.5.7.2 Global and SA Tourism Policies

The WEFTT (2013: 305) ranks SA's overall policy rules and regulations at 46th place out of 141 countries, which is beneficial to the development of the sector. Basically, there has been steady improvement by SA, over the course of the past few assessments, by means of property rights that are well-protected and almost no visitor visa requirements. The policies, rules and regulations of a country focus on the scope of the policy environment, in its contribution to improving that particular country's travel and tourism sector.

The SA government can notably impact the attractiveness of tourism; this also considers the extent to which foreign direct investment and ownership are positively received and expedited. A country's visa requirements can complicate visitor entry into the country, as the recent requirement of unabridged birth certificates for children revealed. Policies and factors that boost environmental sustainability are vital to safeguard a country in continuing to be an attractive destination. A country's environmental regulations impact a destination's attractiveness.

Developed destinations need to combine their efforts, as stated by the WEFTT Report (UNWTO 2015: 3), regarding multi-stakeholder cooperation, flexibility and innovations, so that they can successfully respond to emerging regions' demand. Effective, short-term, turnaround strategies, should be considered by developing destinations, in order to improve their tourism and travel sectors, while re-establishing their allure to the international traveller. This can be achieved by making sustainability the basis of destination development and marketing and by concentrating on long-term sector development.

Notwithstanding rising instability brought about by environmental, economic, and political challenges, it is expected that tourism will continue to be a significant driver of future economic growth. In order to ensure risks of instability and volatility are turned into opportunities, for stability in the long-term, policymakers that focus on the most prominent assets of their country will have the ability to leverage these to greatest effect, and are in the best position to succeed.

As highlighted in its Policy and Practice for Global Tourism, the UNWTO (2011a: 98 – 108) advises of ways in which competitiveness can be improved. These are: benchmarking of the destination, volume and value of tourism data, overall visitor satisfaction, and stakeholder satisfaction, along with new product development, taxation and tourism, evaluating the customer journey, and knowledge management in tourism; in addition to innovation and

cooperative behaviour in tourism; and small business development, as well as tourism product development. Durban Tourism needs to monitor, and put mechanisms in place to monitor these factors, thus improving competitiveness. According to Rogerson (2016: 1), climate change in SA is a major impact factor influencing local economic development and the need for government to plan and have policies in place.

Part V of the Development and Promotion of Tourism in the SA white paper (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism 1996: 27) is concerned with sparking SA's tourism growth. The key areas of this section are what drive tourism competitiveness, in terms of continually improving safety, investment opportunities, as well as cultural and environmental sustainability. Added to this, product development, promotion and marketing, and cooperation and product quality, as well as infrastructure, security, and transportation, are considered further key drivers of competitiveness.

The focal point of the NDT report (2011b) is on tourism growth, research, sustainability, and service excellence, as well as competitiveness of a destination, and accommodation grading in SA.

The report (SAT 2010: 25) states that gearing up to be globally competitive, includes four vital aspects: delivering a world class visitor experience, SA's potential to attract continuing investments, community involvement in tourism and protection of SA's environment.

Consistent with the report, the main strategic objectives, identified by the National Tourism Sector Strategy of the NDT (2011a) comprise strategic plan that outlines the economy and tourism growth, visitor experience and brand, as well as good governance and sustainability. In keeping with this research, tourism stakeholders need to take the volatility of the global exchange rate into account, in addition to climate change policy response, fuel costs, and advancements in technology, along with the green growth agenda, price-

conscious consumers and changing lifestyles and demographics. It is further held by the NDT (2011a: 10) that SA has natural resources that can benefit the country, when properly used; however, these resources need to be maintained and upheld in the process.

The report specifies that visitors to the country would need to have enjoyed their stay, in order to want to come back to SA for another visit as tourists. The focus areas comprise growing tourist volumes and increasing the length of tourists' stay, minimising "the pattern of seasonality to all-year-round visitors", and increasing consumption by tourists; in addition, distribution will be enhanced on a provincial level, being consumer-driven, with international destination competitiveness improvement also stipulated.

The NDT Sector Strategy (2011a: 25) emphasises the importance of growing domestic tourism, which provides valuable income, is less seasonal, and more dispersed, in terms of tourism spend. Domestic tourists can be powerful destination ambassadors, and have a greater appreciation for the environment. The possible changes in this market are travelling less, having shorter booking lead times, more value for money, and shorter lengths of stay, as well as travelling to closer destinations.

KZN's Department of Economic Development and Tourism's vision for the year 2020 (TKZN 2012: 21), is for the province to be globally renowned, to be known as the top beach destination in Africa, and to offer a one-of-a-kind mixture of heritage, scenic and wildlife experiences for all visitors. These factors will be achieved by spreading the benefits of tourism geographically throughout the province, growing visitor numbers and yields, and focusing tourism development on growing from the core of the beach and Durban, as well as a unique combination of wildlife, scenic and traditional experiences.

The province is also going to focus on niche tourism sectors, such as sport, events, business, and cruise-, as well as avi-tourism, including paleontological

and geological experiences, in addition to adventure, diving, health, and shopping. This strategy is underpinned by the following principles: service excellence, focus on selling experiences, and alignment to national strategy, as along with the national economic growth path, and provincial economic and spatial objectives.

2.5.7.3 Conclusion to Process Section

Factors established from the process element of the marketing mix include policy and planning of Durban's tourism industry. Policy and planning are vital destination competitiveness factors. The various factors were discussed in the context of the destination competitiveness model.

2.6 MARKET PERFORMANCE

The tourism industry is a significant economic contributor to the SA economy. It is thus important for Durban to establish factors that are significant to destination competitiveness. Should Durban improve its tourism competitiveness it would draw more tourists to the city and improve the city's socio economic status? Therefore, there is a need to assess Durban's market performance.

Evaluating past and present research about success factors, one can find countless approaches to measuring corporate performance. There are two ways that can be seen as common standards. The first is to use key performance indicators that could reflect market or financial performance. The second is to use subjective performance measures, for example, by asking respondents to rate their firm's performance compared with their nearest competitor (Matear, Osborne, Garrett, and Gray 2002) or to use a goal-orientated approach that focuses on the respondent's subjective evaluation of the importance of given goals and on his or her subjective evaluation of the company's achievement of these goals (Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010).

In the context of subjective performance measures, a researcher intends to overcome difficulties that could arise when asking managers to disclose sensitive information (Pelham and Wilson 1995). Relative approaches to performance measurement are useful to overcome difficulties in a heterogeneous sample (van Egeren and O'Connor 1998), for example, when analysing different sectors and sizes of firms (Matear *et al.* 2002). Subjective and relative approaches have been widely used in marketing and management research (Chang and Chen 1998).

As stated by Baumgarth (2010), corporate performance can be measured in terms of the achievement of market-related and economic goals. Market performance can, nonetheless, be defined as “the effectiveness of an organisation’s marketing activities” (Homburg and Pflesser 2000) and can be measured by items pertaining to achieving increased awareness, creating a positive image, winning new customers, and achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty, or attaining a desired market share (Homburg and Pflesser 2000; Matear *et al.* 2002; Li 2010; Gullet and McKercher 2011).

2.7 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The literature review discussed Durban’s competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective. This discussion provides a background and the academic framework for the study, as well as providing critical information to tourism industry stakeholders for developing marketing strategies and tactics. Relevant competitiveness models were presented. The chapter further focused on the role of the marketing mix principles that are appropriate to the tourism industry. The conceptual model of Crouch and Ritchie was used in Chapters four and five as a framework to critically evaluate Durban’s marketing activities.

The research methods and information collection are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

While a literature review was presented in the previous chapter, this chapter is aimed at discussing the methodology of the research and its design, used for the intent of conducting this research. In addition, techniques and approaches applied in this study are identified in this chapter.

Research design is explained by Hakim (2000), in his study of research designs for economic and social research, as the research methodology adopted/selected that best responds to the research objectives. This study's objectives were set out in chapter one, and were addressed by identifying the role of the marketing mix in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination. This was, investigated through determining factors critical to tourism competitiveness; establishing Durban's current tourism marketing mix factors, assessing the performance of Durban's tourism industry from a stakeholder perception and making recommendations of appropriate marketing actions to improve performance of the critical success factors.

The objectives of this chapter are to:

- Provide an account of the research design;
- Identify research methods and techniques that were employed for data collection and
- Explain the two questionnaires' organisation, design and administration.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODS

The process of managerial decision-making for all facets of business is facilitated by the design of business research, according to Babin, Carr, Griffin, and Zikmund (2012: 5). Fink (2008) for instance, equates practicing research to "discovering evidence that matters". The process includes opportunities,

difficulties, idea generating and evaluating, and performance monitoring, as well as comprehending the business process. The marketing mix principles were researched in this study to provide valuable insight into the tourism industry in Durban. The findings will assist in improving tourism business, attracting more consumers to Durban, thus bringing in revenue and enhancing the economy of the city.

3.2.1 Mixed Method of Research

A mixed methods approach involving both quantitative and qualitative methods was adopted in this study. The definition of mixed methods research, as put forward by Creswell, Clark and Plano (2007: 261), is a procedure “for collecting, analysing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data, at some stage of the research process, within a single study...” in order to “...understand a research problem more completely”.

Bell and Bryman (2007: 648) assert that qualitative research supports quantitative research. In this study, the results of the survey questionnaire were supported by “...in-depth knowledge of social contexts, acquired through qualitative research...”, with senior managers of the tourism industry who were interviewed. Employing quantitative and qualitative approaches allowed for the gathering of in-depth information and data in a short space of time, without inconveniencing the participants. The mixed method approach used in this study was the ‘concurrent triangulation’ method.

3.2.1.1 Qualitative Research

The purpose of qualitative research is stated by Boeijie (2010: 11), to be the description and understanding of social phenomena, pertaining to the connotations people ascribe to them which, when analysed, produce rich, descriptive data. In this study, qualitative data were gathered through the structured interviewing of senior managers, from Durban’s tourism industry.

The structured interview in this study focused on open-ended questions, which were based on the marketing mix principles. According to Cooper and Schindler (2014: 144), qualitative research is meant to achieve a comprehensive discernment of a situation by drawing information from people, organisations, texts, and settings, as well as objects and events. Senior manager responses were discussed in-depth, allowing for rich information gathering.

Qualitative methodological approaches are found by Bridgmon and Martin (2012) to stress the importance of multiple subjective realities as an important source of knowledge building (Biber-Hesse 2015: 16). The findings of this study could lead to a series of marketing strategies for tourism businesses in Durban, enhancing its competitiveness.

3.2.1.2 Quantitative Research

It is held by Bell and Bryman (2007: 154) that research of a quantitative nature entails “the collection of numerical data and exhibits a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for a natural science approach”. In this study, employees of the tourism industry were administered with surveys that contained closed-ended questions.

Cooper and Schindler (2014: 146) state that quantitative research methodologies measure consumer behaviour, knowledge, and opinions or attitudes, which relate to the questions, such as how much, how often, how many, when and who? The quantitative approach used in this study assisted the researcher to obtain and complete the large sample size targeted for the study. A total of 400 employees, across the various sectors of the tourism industry, were administered surveys, in order to establish Durban’s competitiveness, using the marketing mix principles. A total of 308 employees responded to the survey questionnaire.

3.2.1.3 Descriptive research

Descriptive research was employed in this study, due to its aim of describing the detail of this phenomenon, while also investigating the opinions of stakeholders in Durban's tourism industry, using the principles of the marketing mix. Consistent with the findings by Bush, Hair, Ortinau, and Wolfinbarger (2008: 33), the purpose of descriptive research is to make information available on consumer attitudes, intentions, preferences, and purchase behaviours, in addition to the appraisal of marketing mix strategies, information about competitors, target markets, and demographics, as well as environmental factors.

3.2.1.4 Cross-sectional research

Often referred to as social survey design (Bell and Bryman 2007: 55; Babbie 2010), cross-sectional design uses questionnaires and structured interviewing. When collecting the primary data for this study, this research approach was implemented, as surveys are mostly made use of in cross-sectional studies.

Cross-sectional means that a broad picture of the research problem is provided through quantitative results, while the general picture is refined, explained or extended by means of qualitative results. This research contained both quantitative and qualitative results from the administered survey, and the structured interviews with senior managers. Questions were based on the marketing mix in both the survey and structured interview.

3.3 RESPONDENTS

Bush *et al.* (2008: 33) state that a sample can be described as a subgroup of people or objects, randomly selected from an identified target population's general 'membership pool'. In this study, respondents were employees and managers of the tourism industry in Durban. Sampling, according to Babin *et al.* (2012: 384), is a central aspect of a business research requiring in-depth examination, by selecting a small number of the population. Daniel's (2012)

study findings offer essential, yet practical guidelines in the making of sampling choices.

3.3.1 Qualitative study – interviews

3.3.1.1 Population

The sectors, from which the senior managers were chosen to participate in the study, were drawn from the retail, hospitality, government, transportation, and other areas included in the tourism industry of Durban.

3.3.1.2 Sampling Method

Purposive sampling was used to select the senior managers from Durban's tourism industry, with an element of judgment sampling as well. As stated by Creswell *et al* (2007: 178), purposive sampling is used in special situations with a specific purpose in mind. This sampling technique was used as senior managers across Durban's tourism industry are responsible for long-term development and planning, which is vital to the industry. According to Creswell *et al.* (2007: 136), judgement sampling design is when participants are selected for a sample, based on the belief of an experienced individual that the research study's requirements will be met by the participants.

3.3.1.3 Sample size and justification

Senior managers were chosen throughout the different sectors of Durban's tourism industry (Table 3.1), with organisations chosen across the different sectors. A sample size of 30 managers was selected due to there being only a small number of senior managers. The sample size selected was representative across the tourism sector and organisations.

Table 3.1: Sample selection

Targeted	Managers
Government (national, provincial and city)	5
Retail (travel agents, tour operators, transportation companies- ground, air, rail & sea)	8
Hospitality (hotels, guest houses, bed & breakfast establishments, guest lodges)	10
Other tourism related companies. (attractions, Food and Beverage, events, foreign exchange)	7
Total	30

3.3.2 Quantitative study - Survey

A sample of employees of the tourism industry in Durban was administered with surveys. As explained by Garner, Kawulich and Wagner (2012: 100), the process of knowledge creation is multi-faceted and involves the collection of data from various sources; gathering data, in a relatively short time, from large groups of people, requires survey research. In the context of this study, the survey was administered to employees of Durban's tourism industry.

3.3.2.1 Population

Employees across the various sectors and different tourism organisations were selected. The respondents were chosen from various departments and due to their involvement with working frontline with tourists.

3.3.2.2 Sampling method

Convenience sampling, according to Neuman (2014: 248), involves selecting anyone the researcher has access to. The reason for this, was due to operational reasons and availability of staff during the times and days designated for surveys, with some staff not available for participation. The method used also had a quota sample approach built in to it, so that the sample

covered an adequate cross-section of the industry, namely retail, hospitality, other tourism and governmental stakeholders (Table 3.2).

3.3.2.3 Sample size and justification

A sample of 400 employees was selected across the different tourism sectors and organisations in Durban (Table 3.2), with only 308 employees that responded to the survey. The sample was essentially a convenience sample.

Table 3.2: Sample size

Targeted	Employees
Government (national, provincial and city)	40
Retail (travel agents, tour operators, transportation companies- ground, air, rail & sea)	120
Hospitality (hotels, guest houses, bed & breakfast establishments, guest lodges)	120
Other tourism related companies. (attractions, Food and Beverage, events, foreign exchange)	120
Total	400

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1 Data Collection Instrument derivation

3.4.1.1 Quantitative – Survey questionnaire

a) Construction of survey questionnaire

It is held by Babin *et al* (2012: 334) that the development stage of the research questionnaire is of vital importance, with the provided information used in the questions' construct.

The description of a questionnaire, in accordance with Bush *et al* (2008: 170), is that it is a set of questions and scales contained in a document, with which to: collect primary data conforming to the research objectives; select appropriate data collection methods; and develop appropriate questions and scaling. The researcher determines the layout and evaluation of questions,

obtains client approval, pre-tests, revises and finalises the questionnaire and finally, manages the implementation of the survey.

In this study, the questionnaire used closed-ended questions that employees could complete, with little intervention from the researcher or research assistant.

The questions in the questionnaire were based on the principles of the marketing mix and the literature review chapter. Questions included biographical details of the respondents, qualifications, and sector of the tourism industry employed in. All questions were short, clear and concise. As affirmed by Neuman (2014: 322), validity and reliability are enhanced, when respondents can quickly grasp the meaning of each question as intended, and answer completely and honestly.

The closed-ended questionnaire employed in this study (Appendix 1) made use of a 5-point Likert scaled response. Vaus (2014: 101) highlights that Likert scales are used to measure attitudes or opinions, whereby the level of the respondents' disagreement or agreement is indicated, by a given statement. Respondents in this study were given gradients of choice from strongly agree, agree, and uncertain, to disagree and strongly disagree.

In allowing respondents to answer in any way they chose, some open-ended questions were included (Bougie and Sekaran 2013: 150). This provided an opportunity to comment on the research and other, associated matters and express additional views. The questions were based on the marketing mix principles, allowing ease of analyses and interpretation of the data by the researcher, through pre-coded questionnaires.

Subsequent to data collection, a factor analysis was conducted to ensure that the questions grouped under each of the 7Ps were in fact consistently

measuring that particular marketing mix factor, and thus assessing the validity of the questionnaire. These results are provided in Chapter 4.

b) Pre-testing of questionnaire

The questionnaires directed at employees of the tourism industry were carefully constructed. A pilot questionnaire was conducted with colleagues. As Delport, Fouche, Strydom and Vos (2011: 394 - 395) point out, the pilot study for a qualitative study is significant because it is usually informal and contains a smaller number of respondents to determine trends. To ensure that questions were clear, relevant and meaningful to respondents, 15 questionnaires were administered in a pilot test, to work colleagues of the researcher, from the hospitality and tourism industry.

Changes made to the piloted questionnaire were minimal, but were significant to the overall impact of the data collected. This method proved to be useful, as the time and grammatical errors were rectified. Four test structured interviews were conducted with the researcher's senior managers, to establish the reliability and validity of the interview guide.

3.4.1.2 Qualitative – interview schedule

a) Construction of interview schedule

In interviews, responses are not limited by unstructured or open-ended questions, as explained by Cooper and Schindler (2014: 302).

Bush *et al.* (2008: 172) state that respondents are allowed, through open-ended questions, to reply in their own words; this is a type of unstructured question. No predetermined list of responses exists in this study, as managers could discuss their responses. The second instrument used to gather information was thus a structured interview guide.

The interview schedule was drawn up as follows:

- Cover letter;

- Topic;
- Biographical information;
- Open-ended questions, regarding the marketing mix, in relation to Durban's tourism industry (Appendix 3).

The questions in the interview schedule were gathered from the various chapters that focus on the marketing mix for tourism and hospitality (George 2011). Questions based on competitiveness were derived from Crouch and Ritchie (2003). The structure and form of the biographical details were derived from Neuman (2014).

b) Pre-testing of interview schedule

The interview schedule for use with managers of the tourism industry was pretested with eight work colleagues and friends as interview subjects, with only minimal grammatical corrections needing to be made.

3.4.2 Administration of data collection instruments

3.4.2.1 Survey questionnaires

In accordance with Vaus (2014: 140–141), the questionnaire administration method must take the following into account:

- How will the sample requirement affect the selection of administration method?
- How does the content of the survey affect the choice of administration method?
- How do funding considerations affect the choice of administration method?

What other accessible resources are available? What methods best suit the study's nature? A survey is considered the "most widely-used social science data-gathering technique", which provides us with accurate, reliable and valid data (Neuman 2014: 316). In this study, a survey questionnaire was used, administered firstly by the researcher, and contingent on the organisation's nature, by the marketing or human resource managers or research officers.

The questionnaire was distributed to employees that work frontline with tourists, in various tourism industry sectors.

In certain organisations, the HR managers or marketing managers chose to email the questionnaires to their staff over a specified number of days and then gathered and returned them by email to the researcher. This was due to the nature and operation of the business, whereby the researcher was not allowed into the organisation and due to some potential respondents not being available. The open-ended questions from the employee survey were removed, as managers indicated that employees do not have much time to spend completing the survey.

The research assistants who helped with the administering of the surveys and interviews were marketing, HR and research officers and the individuals selected understood the field of tourism. The research assistants were briefed on the content of the questionnaire and given information on the nature and content of the research.

3.4.2.2 Interview schedule

An interview schedule makes a frame of reference available for interview participants' responses. In this study, managers of the tourism industry were interviewed face-to-face by the researcher. Consistent with Babbie (2010) and Neuman's (2014: 253) findings, the highest response rates are obtained with direct, face-to-face interviews, which also permit the longest questionnaires, allowing interviewers to use extensive probes.

Respondents are allowed, through open-ended questions, to reply in their own words, as explained by Bush *et al.* (2008: 172), making this a type of unstructured questionnaire. No predetermined list of responses exists in this study, as managers could discuss their responses.

With reference to findings by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007: 161), the advantages of open-ended questions are that detailed and honest answers

can be given by the respondents, revealing respondents' thinking processes, while questions that are complex can be answered satisfactorily. In the process, this study is expected to yield extremely interesting information, categories and subcategories, by means of thematic analysis of responses.

Described as a social relationship, in line with Neuman's (2014: 254) statement, the interview is comprised of two strangers temporarily interacting socially, with the clear objective of particular information being obtained by one person, in a structured manner.

According to Veal (2011: 284), the advantage of open-ended question's is that the respondent's answer is not unduly influenced by questionnaire wording or by the interviewer. In addition, respondents' verbatim replies may offer varied material from a rich source.

This approach is supported by Lewis, Saunders and Thornhill (2009: 360), who state that the general term 'questionnaire' consists of all data collection techniques, wherein the same set of questions are put to each person, which also includes structured interviews.

The researcher conducted 15 of the structured interviews and set up appointments with senior managers, while eight interviews were conducted by research assistants. The structured interviews were conducted over two months, with appointments made with the various managers, in a time frame of one hour per subject. The interviews had to be scheduled at the convenience of the manager, as each interview lasted at least 45 minutes. The researcher or research assistant introduced the topic and the objective of the study, asked the questions and recorded the managers' responses as the managers spoke about each question. Where the researcher or research assistant had to explain further, an explanation was provided.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

3.5.1 Editing and Data Capturing

3.5.1.1 Survey

For this study's quantitative data, it was necessary to utilise computerised, statistical scrutiny of the data, to describe and interpret the data obtained from the questionnaire. Data collected were captured with the use of Microsoft Excel, after which they were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Inc.) package version 22.0. Questionnaires that were completed were checked for errors, consistency and completion. Pre-coding of questionnaires was employed to reduce mistakes and enable data capturing with ease.

3.5.1.2 Interviews

According to Bush *et al* (2008: 197), "qualitative data is largely inductive", containing patterns, themes and categories, which become known through the data. The qualitative data were analysed and common themes were categorised from responses to questions, for discussion by the researcher.

3.5.2 Data Preparation Coding

3.5.2.1 Qualitative coding

Open-ended questions must follow an elaborate procedure, as indicated by Veal (2011: 303), which must be followed to devise a thematic coding system. The data gathered from the interviews were coded according to the marketing mix factors.

3.5.2.2 Quantitative Coding

Veal (2011: 303) states that the majority of questionnaire survey data now use computers for analyses, which means the questionnaire information has to be translated into encrypted number instructions (numerical codes) and structured in a logical and organised manner, so as to be 'machine-readable'. Scaled answers, as in Likert Scales and attitude statements, readily lend themselves to coding.

The sample size of this study was large, therefore coding was necessary. The data were captured by data capturers and then analysed with the assistance of a statistician, to produce findings in graphical representation. The Likert scale used, ranged from 1 to 5 and the answers were coded to determine the responses. It is explained by Cooper and Schindler (2014: 379) that numerical or other symbols are assigned to answers in the process of coding, enabling the grouping of responses into only a few categories. Questionnaires were checked by the researcher for completeness.

3.5.3 Analysis

3.5.3.1 Survey - quantitative

The results for each individual question were calculated and produced as bar graphs, with mean scores for each question. The relevant questions were then grouped according to the 7Ps and means calculated for each of the 7P constructs, to identify the agreement or disagreement of the respondents to the acceptability of each of the 7Ps for the Durban tourism activities. Where relevant, inferential statistics, in the form of chi square analyses with a level of significance of $p < 0.05$, were calculated to assess the statistical significance of the findings.

3.5.3.2 Interviews – qualitative

The response to each open-ended question was discussed according to the marketing mix factors. The researcher recorded all the findings per question and grouped the common areas discussed in the qualitative section of chapter four. Discussion of the findings were elaborated on and compared to findings from the survey, as the interview questions pertained to the marketing mix principles as well.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

3.6.1 Survey – quantitative

3.6.1.1 Reliability

In quantitative research, according to Bell and Bryman (2012: 157), reliability is fundamentally concerned with issues of consistency of measures. Reliability is explained by Kruger and Welman (2005: 145), as the means by which the ability of the data collection instrument and the method employed, in obtaining data that are consistent, are measured. In this study, the consistency statistics of Cronbach's Alpha were used.

Cronbach's Alpha is stated as being "a commonly used test of internal reliability [that] calculates the average of all possible, split-half reliability coefficients" (Bell and Bryman 2007: 164). There were 308 answers to each question, contributing to reliability.

With reference to research by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007: 215), different types of reliability exist. This study determined internal reliability, which is also known as internal consistency. A high degree of similarity should exist among a quantity of items when they are formulated to measure a specific construct, as the supposition is that they measure one, shared construct. Internal reliability is measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.7 was employed in this study. However, it should also be noted that Denscombe (2007) maintains that scores between 0.50 and 0.60 can be regarded as significant and those above 0.70 as acceptable.

3.6.1.2 Validity

Quantitative validity, according to Bell and Bryman (2012: 159), refers to the issue of whether or not an indicator that is used to gauge a concept, actually measures it. The survey questionnaire was checked by the supervisor, co-supervisor and a statistician and by means of a pilot test, providing face validity.

3.6.2 Qualitative – interviews

3.6.2.1 Reliability

Qualitative research reliability, as stated by Bell and Bryman (2012: 395), is significant when the study can be replicated. In the context of this research, the study could be adapted at various levels, ranging from organisations, to provincial and national bodies.

This representativity was managed, by means of purposive sampling method, where the willingness of the respondents is depicted through the conditions and the situation to be normal. Well-planned research objectives are required, in order to curtail the entire assortment of reactive effects. Training of field interviewers was undertaken to meet this minimum requirement and interviewing plan.

3.6.2.2 Validity

Validity is held by Cooper and Schindler (2014: 142) to be a measurement characteristic focused on what the researcher in fact wishes to measure. This includes the variances found with a measurement tool that reveals actual differences between a population's selected participants. To establish this study's validity, face validity was established in the pilot test.

With regards to qualitative validity, according to Biber-Hesse (2015: 88), the significance of validity is how well the different pieces of the research fit together and correspond with the research objectives and how well the research translates into a practical impact.

3.6.3 Triangulation

Veal (2011: 142-143) explains that triangulation originates by way of fixing the position of an object, through using the land surveying method, with measurements taken from two different positions and the object as the triangulation's third point, in the context of research. Using more than one research approach in a single study to investigate issues requires use of the

triangulation method to draw from a wider-ranging perception of the issues being explored.

The study used the mixed method known as concurrent triangulation, which allows for the drawing of meaningful, rich conclusions to questions. As highlighted by Biddix (2009), concurrent triangulation is characterised by two or more methods used to confirm, cross-validate or corroborate findings within the study. The purpose of cross-triangulation ensures that both methods are used to overcome a weakness in using one method with the strength of another.

The research validity, according to Bell and Bryman (2012: 234), is increased by triangulation. Questions, in the context of the marketing mix principles, were administered to both senior managers in interviews, as well as in the employee survey.

This study used both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches to determine Durban's competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective. A triangulation method was appropriate to this study, due to data being analysed in more than one way, using the qualitative and quantitative approaches. Senior managers were interviewed, and employees that work face-to-face with tourists were selected as participants and administered with a survey.

Triangulation comprises the synchronised, but distinct, gathering and breakdown of qualitative and quantitative data that could be contrasted and compared, to check the extent to which they agree or disagree that would, in turn, allow the researcher to produce a well-validated conclusion. The findings of this study included the comparison and cross-referencing of the surveys and interviews, which were as follows:

- The qualitative study involved structured interviews, conducted with senior managers of the tourism industry, while the quantitative study used a survey questionnaire, administered to employees of the tourism industry in Durban.
- Using triangulation benefited this study, in that one method's possible weaknesses were complemented by the other method's strengths. There were common areas derived from both the interviews and survey questionnaires that contained different questions, aimed at different target groups.
- According to Bougie and Sekaran (2013: 104), the technique of triangulation is also related to the use of mixed methods. The concept behind triangulation is affirmed by the statement that the researcher can have more confidence in the results, when employing different sources or methods that produce the same results. This research used both qualitative and quantitative methods, so that a better understanding of the phenomenon would result and different findings of both data types could be compared and contrasted, simultaneously, concerning the phenomenon, in order to produce well-validated conclusions.

Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered concurrently, with results from the two data sets contrasted and conclusions deduced according to the two study themes, identified from where similar or common areas were found.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical clearance for the study was obtained prior to starting the research, with an ethical clearance letter obtained from DUT. A letter of consent was sent out to various tourism companies in Durban and permission obtained to conduct interviews and surveys.

Bush *et al.* (2008: 180) point out that the letter of consent has, as its primary role, to acquire willingness and cooperation of the respondent in participating

in the research project. For this study, letters were sent to the HR manager of each organisation to seek permission to administer the survey to staff of various departments (Appendix 3).

A letter was attached to the questionnaire, which explained the following:

- Research Topic;
- Reasons for the questionnaire;
- Research Aims;
- Instructions on how to complete the questionnaire;
- Confidentiality Assurance and
- Researcher's Details.

The approach for the interview with the managers of the tourism industry was similar, in that a letter was sent to the manager concerned, who then responded by either agreeing to the interview or not agreeing to be interviewed. When the manager agreed, an appointment was then set up and the researcher (or research assistant) conducted the interview. Verbal responses were recorded on the interview sheets that contained the questions.

3.8 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter presented details as to the manner of data collection and analysis. The mixed methods approach used, making use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in this study, was described in detail. In addition, the administration and design of questionnaires and interviews were also discussed.

The research methodology of this study comprised a detailed progression, which incorporated the theory of the literature review. The administration and design of questionnaires and interviews were deliberated, and the research design and sampling procedures described. Every attempt was made to

minimise errors and that research assistants gathered the correct information. Most of the interviews with managers of the tourism industry were conducted by the researcher, as a precautionary measure. Pre-testing and coding was described in the methodology as well.

The analysis of the data is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Whereas the previous chapter presented a review of literature, the objective of this chapter is to present the results, details and findings obtained from the questionnaires administered and interviews conducted in this study. It must be noted that there were respondents who did not answer certain questions. The information obtained from the survey questionnaire and interview questionnaire responded to the critical areas of the study, which were grouped into three fundamental themes. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise, organise, express graphically and, in general, analyse the information quantitatively and qualitatively. The data collected from the survey questionnaires were analysed with SPSS version 22.0.

4.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of the study was to determine Durban's tourism competitiveness factors, from a stakeholder perspective.

The research objectives were to:

Main objective

Identify the role of the marketing mix in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination.

Sub-objectives

- Identify factors critical to tourism competitiveness
- Determine Durban's current tourism marketing mix factors
- Assess Durban's tourism industry performance from a stakeholder perception.
- Recommend appropriate marketing actions to improve performance of the critical success factors.

The above research objectives were discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2) of the study, in which an extensive, theoretical account of these aspects was provided. It was important to explain and understand how dynamic the tourism industry is.

The methodological approach to the study is encapsulated in Figure 4.1:

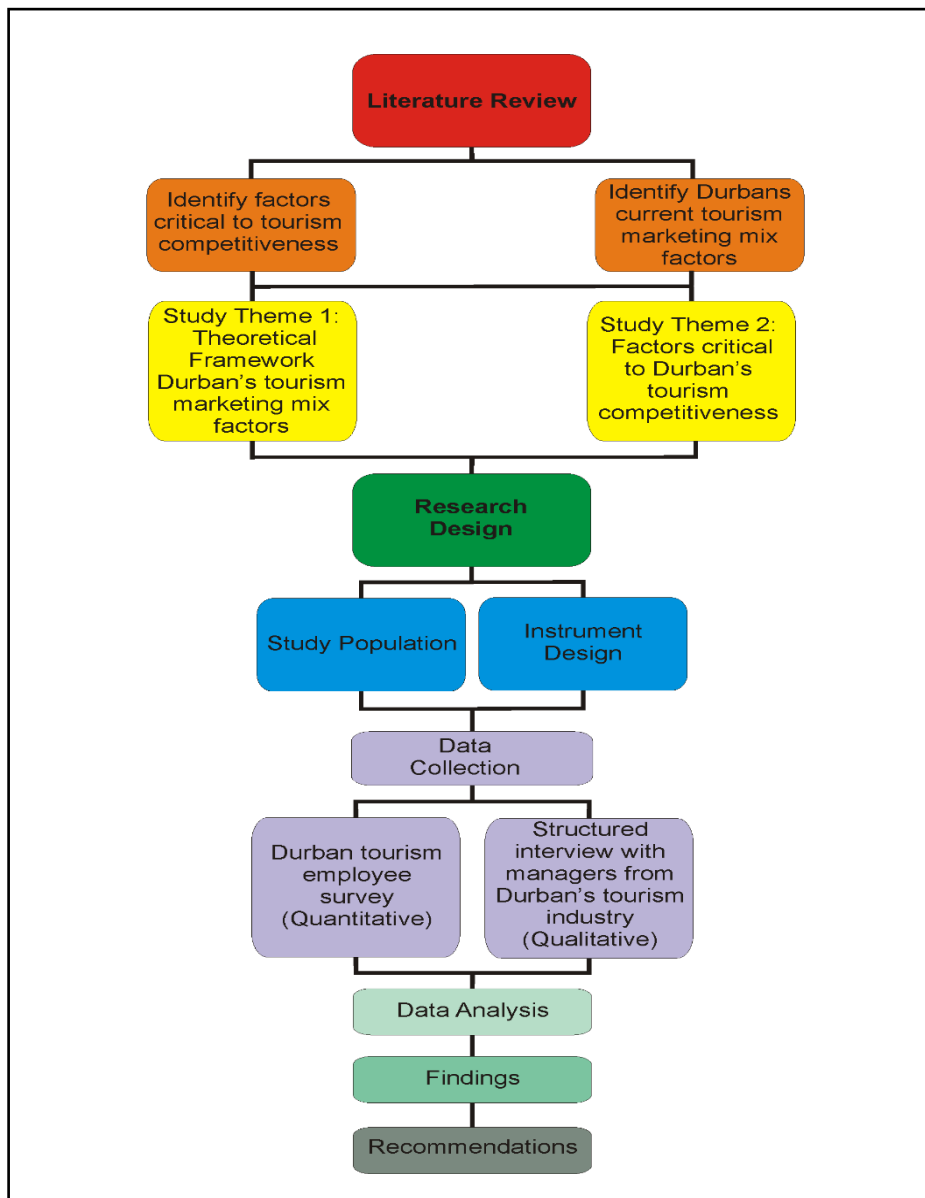


Figure 4.1: Methodological approach to the establishment of findings

The literature review provided the relevant content of Durban's tourism industry in relation to tourism competitiveness and marketing mix factors. Durban's profile was discussed in Chapter 2, while the marketing mix principles were discussed and applied to Durban, and tourism competitiveness gaps identified in the second level of the diagram (Figure 4.1).

Two study themes were identified from the literature review, which appear in Figure 4.1 in the third level: the theoretical framework for Durban's tourism's marketing mix factors and factors critical to Durban's tourism competitiveness. The themes are related to the objectives of the study, which relate to the marketing mix principles.

The research design shown in the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh level of Figure 4.1 identified the study population, with the instrument design leading to the development of the questionnaire for the Durban tourism employees (quantitative) and the structured interview guide for senior managers (qualitative) from the tourism industry in Durban. Once the data was collected it was analysed and the findings established.

The findings of this chapter are indicated in the eighth level of Figure 4.1. This chapter will serve to highlight crucial gaps and similarities studied within the literature review. This assisted in the framing and development of the triangulated questionnaires and structured interviews conducted at tourism organisations in Durban. Findings will be represented collectively in this chapter from the respective empirical data. The results of the study are detailed in the subsequent paragraphs.

4.3 RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The results of the study were organised thematically (Figure 4.1), responded to the objectives of the study and were combined with relevant responses from the employee surveys and structured interviews. The survey questionnaire to employees of the tourism industry in Durban and the structured interview

conducted with senior managers from Durban's tourism industry, were originally intended to be compartmentalised and organised into convenient sets of information to the relevant themes of the study.

The data yielded through these mechanisms, however, materialised in an integrated and comprehensive way, which became relevant to the different themes of the study. The data were triangulated, in order to enhance the coherence of the presentation of results. It was necessary to classify related ideas and concepts into respective themes of the study. Some of the information went beyond these parameters, from which data were yielded.

4.3.1 Themes of the Study

The concept of competitiveness within the tourism industry in Durban emerged from the study through various themes. These themes surfaced as dominant components, in enhancing competitiveness within the tourism industry, as follows:

THEME ONE: The theoretical framework for Durban's tourism's marketing mix factors (Chapter 2). The marketing mix principles proved to be an integral point of discussion; they are product, price, place, promotion, process, people and physical evidence. The marketing mix principles emerged as significant, when analysing tourism competitiveness.

THEME TWO: factors critical to Durban's tourism competitiveness (Chapter 2).

This alluded to the current competitiveness factors of Durban's tourism industry, with the industry made up of a range of attractions, entertainment, accommodation, the transportation network, infrastructure and events. These factors create destination appeal and competitiveness. Durban also has a warm climate, a long coastline and is regarded as a melting-pot of mixed cultures steeped in history.

As indicated by Edge (2014: 32), Durban has experienced an increase in domestic and international tourists. Durban's Golden Mile and promenade have had a revamp, with a precinct linking Moses Mabida Stadium.

The following elements form a part of Durban's tourism strategy: culture, history, heritage, and beach destinations, as well as events, meetings, incentives, conferences, and source markets. Cultural and heritage signature events have been identified, to showcase Durban as Africa's events capital and destination of choice. Durban's tourism plans include improving beach tourism, social tourism, heritage and niche tourism.

4.3.2 Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

The two most important aspects of precision are reliability and validity. Reliability is computed by taking several measurements on the same subjects. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered as "acceptable". According to Kruger and Welman (2005: 145), reliability measures the ability of the data collection instrument and method used, to obtain consistent data. In this study, the consistency statistics of Cronbach's Alpha were utilised.

The Cronbach's Alpha score for all the items that constituted the questionnaire were tabulated (Table 4.1) as follows:

Table 4.1: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

Question	Section	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
2	Product Offerings	4 of 4	0.876
3	Pricing	3 of 3	0.778
4	Distribution Channels	3 of 3	0.849
5	Promotion	3 of 3	0.921
6	People	3 of 3	0.881
7	Physical Evidence	5 of 5	0.805
8	Process	3 of 3	0.849
Overall		24 of 24	0.947

All of the questions have reliability scores that exceed the recommended value of 0.70. This indicates a high (overall) degree of acceptable, consistent scoring for this section of the research.

4.3.3 Validity and factor analysis

In addition to the techniques for validity checking mentioned in Chapter 3, the data collected was subjected to a factor analysis. Factor analysis is a statistical technique whose main goal is data reduction. A typical use of factor analysis is in survey research, where a researcher wishes to represent a number of questions with a small number of hypothetical factors. In this study, it was used to assess how well each set of questions reflected the 7P constructs.

The details of the method used are:

- The principle component analysis was used as the extraction method, and the rotation method was Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
- Factor analysis/loading show inter-correlations between variables.
- Items of questions that loaded similarly imply measurement along a similar factor. An examination of the content of items loading at or above 0.5 (and using the higher or highest loading in instances where items cross-loaded at greater than this value) effectively measured along the various components.

The findings of the factor analysis are provided in Appendix 4. From these findings, it is noted that the variables (statements) that constituted each of the sections loaded perfectly along only one factor each. This means that the statements (variables) that constituted the components (the 7Ps) perfectly measured the components. That is, the component measured what it was meant to measure. This confirms the validity of the findings resulting from the questionnaire.

4.3.4 Biographical Information

The biographical information pertains to all three study themes. The findings reflect the answers to the biographical questions in the questionnaire and structured interview, in respect to Durban's tourism industry. The structured interview was completed with a sample of senior managers of Durban's tourism industry. The survey was completed with a sample of employees from the tourism industry in Durban. This section presents the descriptive statistics, based on demographic information of the study, targeting all participants of the study, within Durban's tourism industry, in addition to summarising the biographical characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4.2: Cross Tabulation of Gender - employees and senior managers

Respondent Type	Gender	
	Male %	Female %
Employees	35.1%	64.8%
Senior Managers	63.6%	36.4%

In respect of Durban's tourism industry employees, the findings (Table 4.2) indicate 64.8 percent of the respondents are female and 35.1 percent are male. With regard to senior managers, 63.6 percent are male and 36.4 percent are female. The constitution of the sample indicates that more female respondents are working on the frontline with tourists, while there are more male managers, compared to female managers, in senior management.

Table 4.3: Profile of Age groups - employees and senior managers

Respondent type	Age groups							
	18-29		30-40		41-55		55+	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Employees	22.9%	80	47.7%	147	17.8%	55	8.4%	26
Senior Managers	17.3%	4	43.4%	10	21.7%	5	17.3%	4

Of those employees surveyed, 22.9 percent fall in the age category 18-29 years, with 47.7 percent in the age category 30-40 years, while 17.8 percent are in the age category 41-55 years old, and 17.3 percent are over the age of 55 years (Table 4.3). The constitution of the sample indicates a mature and experienced grouping of respondents, with more than half being older than 30 years. This is useful, as the responses derived would have been from an informed opinion.

The research further identified that 43.4 percent of the senior managers of Durban's tourism industry that were interviewed, are in the age category 30-40 years, 17.3 percent are in the age category 18-29 years old, with 21.7 percent in the age category 41-55 years old and 17.3 percent of senior managers are older than 55 years (Table 4.3). These statistics indicate that the source of information received has come from mature, experienced respondents in the industry.

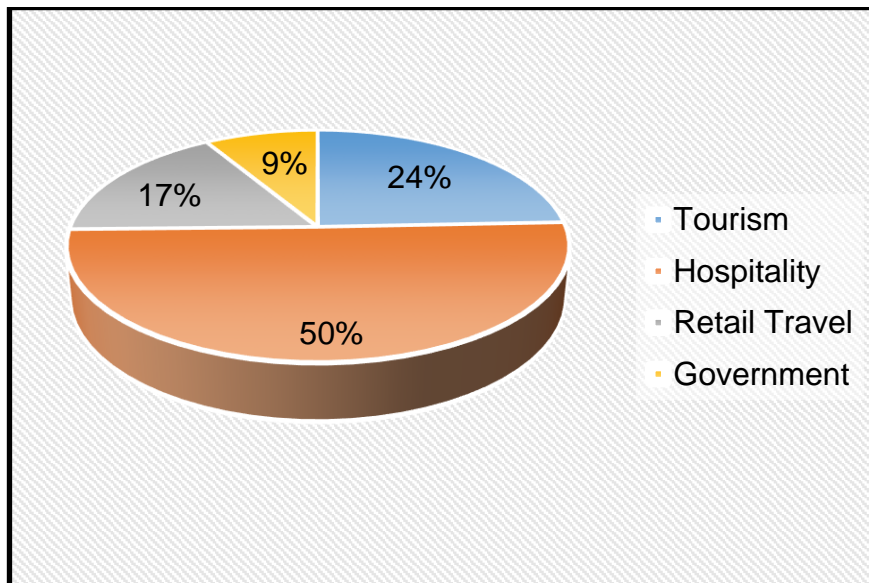


Figure 4.2: Tourism sectors where employees work

The research results show that 50 percent of the employee respondents are in the Hospitality industry, 24 percent is involved with tourism, 17 percent is

from the retail travel sector and nine percent was found to be from the government sector (Figure 4.2).

The study findings are a strong indicator that Durban has a fairly large hospitality sector, which makes up approximately half of the tourism industry in Durban.

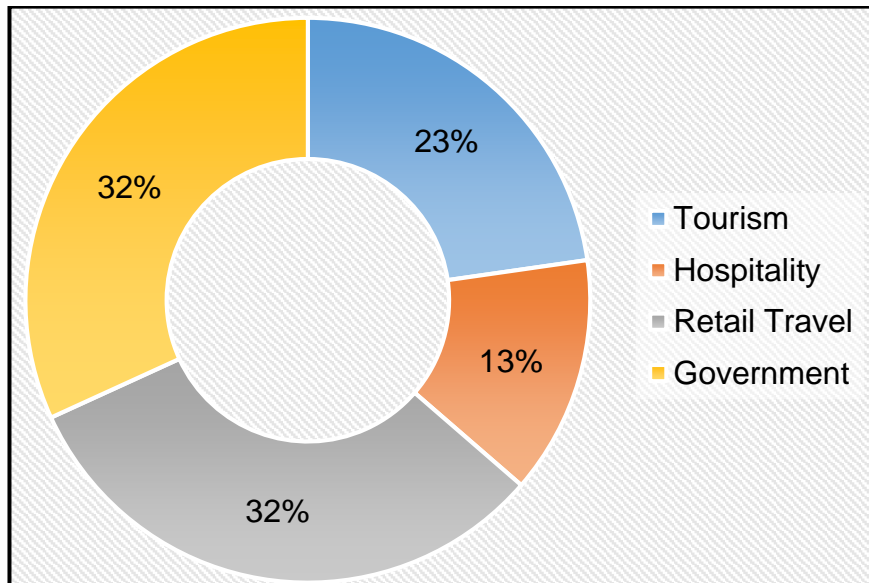


Figure 4.3: Tourism sectors where senior managers are employed

Of the manager respondents surveyed, 32 percent is from the hospitality sector of Durban, with the same percentage (32 percent) of respondents from the retail travel industry, while 23 percent of the respondents is from the retail travel sector and 13 percent from government (Figure 4.3). These statistics provide proof that information was obtained from various sectors.

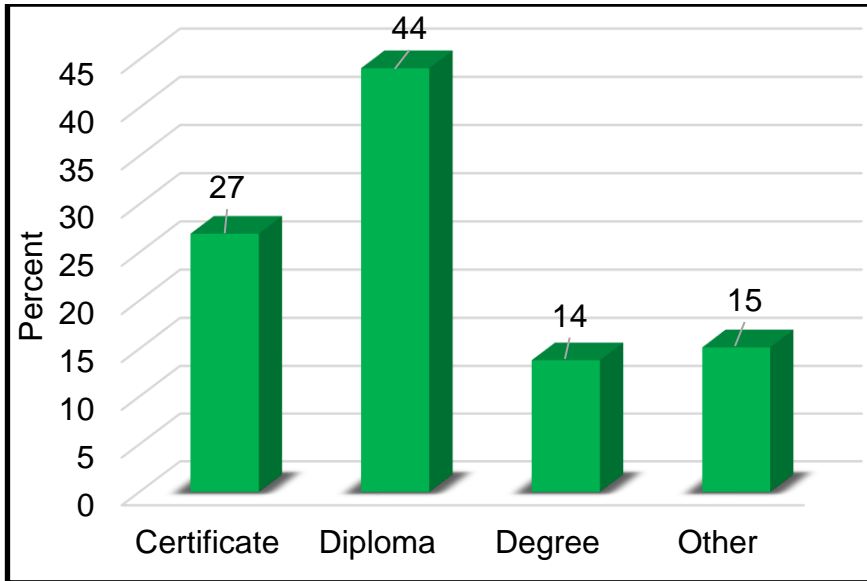


Figure 4.4: Qualification categories of employees

The research findings (Figure 4.4) highlight that 44 percent of the employee respondents indicated they had obtained a diploma, 27 percent a certificate, 14 percent a degree and 15 percent of the respondents indicated other types of qualifications. This is a strong indicator that the information gathered was obtained from respondents among employees in the tourism industry, who are qualified with a tertiary education.

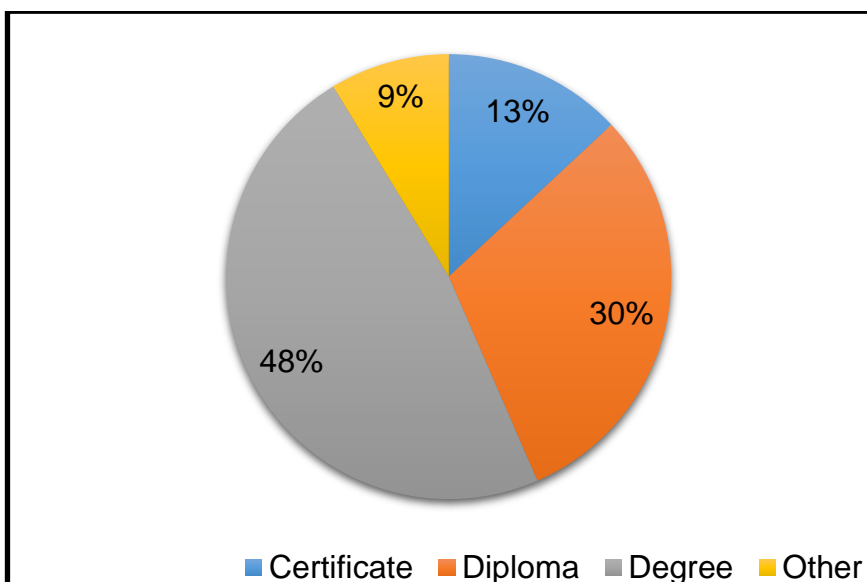


Figure 4.5: Qualification categories of senior managers

It is indicated by the findings (Figure 4.5) that 48 percent of senior manager respondents have obtained degrees, 30 percent diplomas and 13 percent of respondents have certificates, while nine percent indicated other qualifications. In addition, a large percentage of the managers have tertiary qualifications, which is important because managers must have the knowledge and expertise required to function and manage staff in the tourism industry, as tourism is a dynamic industry that is people driven.

4.4 STUDY THEME ONE: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR DURBAN'S TOURISM MARKETING MIX FACTORS

The theoretical framework for Durban's tourism competitiveness (Chapter 2) was discussed, with the framework comprised of the marketing mix principles. The analyses and findings in respect of study theme one are as follows:

4.4.1 Marketing Mix Analysis

This section analyses the scoring patterns of the respondents per variable (question) for each of the seven Ps in the marketing mix. In presenting these findings, the current status of Durban's tourism marketing mix factors will be identified (sub-objective 2) and the stakeholders' (respondents) perceptions of the performance of the Durban tourism industry's marketing activities will be determined (sub-objective 3).

Where applicable, levels of disagreement (negative statements) have been collapsed to show a single category of "Disagree". A similar procedure was followed for the levels of agreement (positive statements). This is acceptable, due to the adequate levels of reliability that showed consistency in scoring patterns.

The results are first presented using summarised percentages for the variables (questions) that constitute each section, together with the inferential analysis to identify whether the findings are statistically significant or not.

Results are then further discussed according to the nature of the findings, especially where significant differences exist between statements, and where opportunities for improvements present themselves.

4.4.2 Product Offerings

This section deals with the first P of the expanded marketing mix, namely the product. A tourism product is comprised mainly of its attractions, accommodation and the overall nature of the activities to do, while being a tourist in that place.

4.4.2.1 Results from the Survey for Product offerings

To assess the product offering, the product construct is comprised of the four statements illustrated, along with the summarised scoring patterns (Table 4.4) for each of the questions comprising the product factor.

Table 4.4 Product (% agree/disagree with statements)

	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
Durban is an appealing destination	11.0	3.3	85.7
Tourists visit Durban because of its attractions and events	11.8	5.6	82.6
Durban exhibits rich culture and history	7.2	10.2	82.6
Durban has adequate product offerings	19.3	15.3	65.4

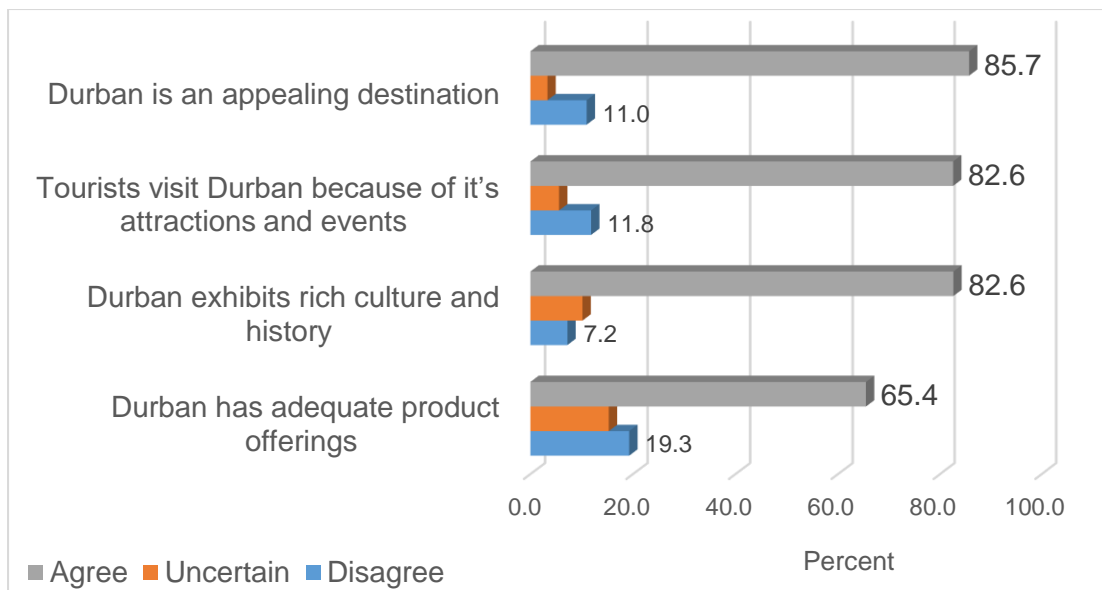


Figure 4.6: Illustration of Product question results (%)

The average level of agreement for the four Product statements is 79.1 percent. Based on an average of the Likert score ratings, product has a mean of 3.98 (4.12+ 4.04+ 4.11+ 3.66/ 4), which confirms respondents are generally satisfied with the product component of Durban’s marketing strategy.

The statement with the highest level of agreement relates to Durban being an appealing destination (85.7 percent). There is a 20 percent differential in agreement levels between the highest and lowest values.

Respondents who agreed (65.4 percent), are of the opinion that Durban has sufficient product offerings. The high agreement scores indicate an overall (high) level of agreement with this dimension of the study; in other words, respondents feel that the product factor of Durban’s marketing mix is satisfactory. The only possible area where an improvement could be made is to increase the number of product offerings available – it is interesting to note that one in five of the respondents felt that Durban’s product offering was not adequate, although the other components of the product factor were seen as satisfactory.

To determine whether the differences in the scoring patterns per statement (Figure 4.6) were statistically significant, chi-square tests were done by variable (statement). The null hypothesis tested the claim that there were no differences in the scoring options per product statement, with Table 4.5 showing the results.

Table 4.5: Statistical significance of the Product variables

	Durban is an appealing destination	Tourists visit Durban because of its attractions and events	Durban exhibits rich culture and history	Durban has adequate product offerings
Chi-Square	268.286 ^a	247.579 ^b	243.279 ^c	115.628 ^a
df	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.2.

b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.8.

c. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.0.

Since all of the p-values are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it can be concluded that the distributions of product ratings were not even and were not due to chance. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were statistically significant. It is noted that the category of “Uncertain” also contributes to the p-value.

Thus, it is concluded that the product offering is perceived as generally satisfactory by the respondents. Interestingly, the ‘product’ factor is rated (79.1 percent) as one of the most positive aspects of Durban’s marketing strategy. It is thus a strength upon which the marketing of Durban should be built.

4.4.2.2. Results from the interviews for Product offerings

a) Attractions

Respondents indicated the need for more World Class attractions that would draw tourists to Durban; attractions unique to the city that distinguish Durban from other cities in the world. According to the third person (hereafter referred

to as pa 3) interviewed (“Durban does not have enough for a tourist to see and do...”) Durban has warm weather all year round and a coastline that needs to be further developed into beach resorts and areas worth stopping at. Most tourists visit the V&A Waterfront and beaches in Cape Town. Respondents have indicated that German tourists do not visit Durban due to the lack of resorts, as they seek resort-type destinations. Durban therefore needs a mixture of different types of attractions.

As stated by pa 8 (“Durban does not have enough attractions and entertainment which distinguishes itself from other cities in the world ...”), respondents indicated that Durban needs more tourism product and packaged tours to attract different types of tourists with a unique, memorable experience.

b) Entertainment

There is a need for more entertainment on the beachfront, such as Music and cultural shows, as stated by pa 4 (“Durban does not have enough to see and do”). According to pa 11, “There is not much to do in the evenings as restaurants and shopping centres close early on the beachfront”, indicating a need for more events and festivals to draw tourists to the city, with these offering an economic spin-off for the city. There is also a need for different types of events, with more Arts and Cultural events crucial to showcasing Durban’s variety of cultures. Tourists should be able to see and partake in these cultures, which would offer them a unique experience.

Respondents indicated that Durban does not offer or have sufficiently different types of cuisines, even though the city is viewed as a ‘melting pot’ of different cultures. More cuisine with an African/ Zulu flavour needs to be available to the tourists; there are not many restaurants that offer Zulu cuisine.

c) Accommodation

More accommodation is needed in Durban because when there are big events in the city, the accommodation is insufficient. As stated by pa 5 (“Different

types of accommodation is required at different prices as accommodation is very expensive”).

Thus, it can be concluded that Durban requires more entertainment and attractions, different types of cuisine, in particular more African cuisine, as well as a variety of accommodation types and resorts.

4.4.2.3 Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings for product

There was a high level of agreement amongst respondents to the survey with regards to Durban being an appealing destination, having adequate attractions and events and exhibiting rich culture and history. The agreement level was much lower for Durban having adequate product offerings. There was a high level of agreement for Durban having more attractions, events, entertainment, and resorts, as well as offering different types of cuisine.

As highlighted by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 110), the culture, history and mix of activities available at a destination provide the primary foundation for both physical and emotional stimulation that excites and challenges visitors. Special events at a destination create the dynamics and the uniqueness that make a destination memorable. The superstructure of a destination is a fundamental characteristic of the destination, while the types of activities and entertainment create destination appeal.

Findings from the senior manager interview indicate the need for additional attractions in Durban. Further, Bowen *et al.* (2014: 532) state that attractions alone do not draw visitors; destinations must seek to deepen the travel experience, by providing greater value and making the experience more significant. Competitiveness amongst destinations extends to restaurants, facilities, sports, and cultural amenities, along with entertainment.

The need for different types of attractions that can encourage tourists to visit both popular tourist destinations and less usual places, is pointed out by

Holloway and Humphreys (2012: 249). Attractions, such as events, heritage buildings, natural and man-made attractions, as well as entertainment and gastronomy, form the basis of much of the appeal of a destination. Tourists also require adequate “see and do” activities.

The conclusion is thus that Durban requires more tourism product development, such as attractions, entertainment, accommodation, resorts, events and the offering of various types of cuisine.

4.4.3 Pricing

This section deals with the second P of the expanded marketing mix, namely the price. Price is related to an amount that a tourist would pay for a service or product. Tourists would use price which is one of the factors to determine if their vacation was value for money or not.

4.4.3.1 Results from the Survey for Pricing

To assess the price offering, the price construct is comprised of the three statements shown along with the summarised scoring patterns (Table 4.6) for each of the questions comprising the price factor.

Table 4.6: Price (% agree/disagree with statements)

	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
Durban is regarded as an affordable destination by tourists to visit	2.6	6.2	91.2
Tourists regard Durban as a value for money destination	3.3	13.7	83.1
Pricing in Durban is influenced by market demand, competition and environmental factors	3.6	12.1	84.3

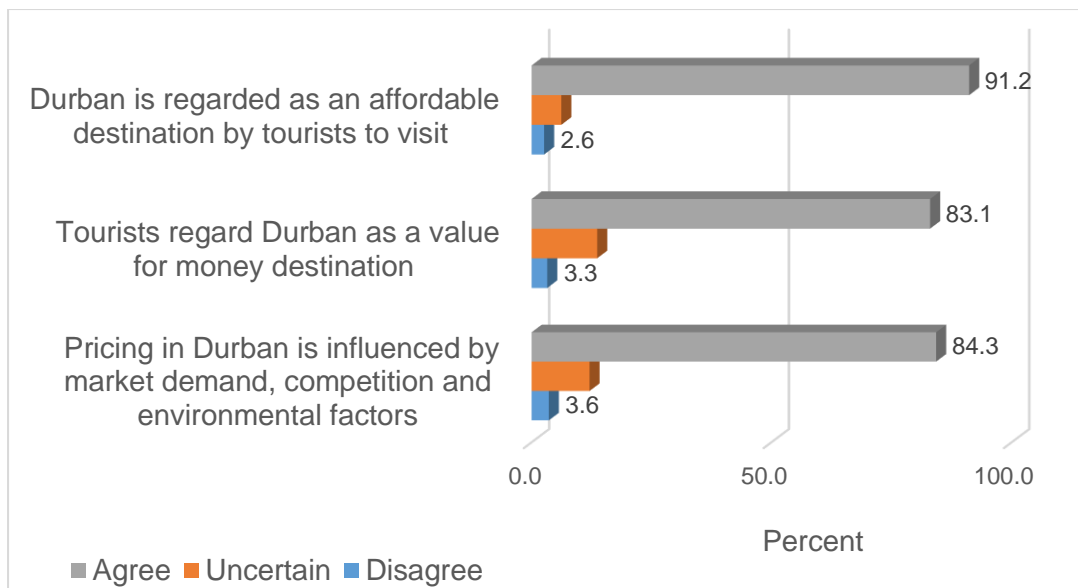


Figure 4.7: Illustration of Price question results (%)

The average level of agreement for the three Price statements is 86.2 percent. Based on an average of the Likert score ratings, price has a mean of 4.08 ($4.15 + 4.02 + 4.06 / 3$), which confirms a high level of agreement for the statements that comprise this section.

The statement with the highest level of agreement relates to Durban being an affordable destination for tourists to visit (91.2 percent). There is a seven percent differential in agreement levels between the highest and lowest values. The respondents furthermore, agreed (83.1 percent) that Durban is regarded as a value for money destination.

The high agreement scores indicate an overall (high) level of agreement with this dimension of the study, in other words, respondents feel that the price factor of Durban's marketing mix is satisfactory.

To determine whether the differences in the scoring patterns per statement (Figure 4.7) were statistically significant, chi-square tests were done by variable (statement). The null hypothesis tested the claim that there were no

differences in the scoring options per price statement. The results are shown in Table 4.7.

The chi-square test patterns indicate the following.

Table 4.7: Statistical significance of the Price variables

	Durban is regarded by tourists as an affordable destination to visit?	Tourists regard Durban as a value for money destination	Pricing in Durban is influenced by market demand, competition and environmental factors
Chi-Square	294.758 ^a	236.283 ^b	346.843 ^c
df	3	3	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 76.5.

b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 76.8.

c. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.2.

The p-values are all significant, implying that there is a significant difference in the scoring patterns.

Since all of the p-values are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it can be concluded that the distributions of price ratings were not even and were not due to chance. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were statistically significant. It is noted that the category of “Uncertain” also contributes to the p-value.

It is thus concluded that the price offering is perceived as generally satisfactory by the respondents. Interestingly, the ‘price’ factor is rated (86.2 percent) as one of the most positive aspects of Durban’s marketing strategy. It is thus a strength upon which the marketing of Durban should be built.

4.4.3.2 Results from the Interview for Pricing

The majority of respondents indicated that Durban is regarded as a value for money destination. In addition, respondents indicated that prices are

reasonable for residents and tourists. The cost of living in Durban is lower than Cape Town or Johannesburg. Entertainment, activities and food are affordable. As stated by pa 10 (“Durban is a very affordable destination for domestic and international tourists...”) Respondents indicated that Durban is also regarded as a family destination that is affordable. From these statements, it is evident that tourists will receive value for money during their visit to Durban. As stated by pa 14, “Durban is most certainly a value for money destination....”.

4.4.3.3 Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings for Price

Managers concluded that Durban is regarded as a value for money destination. Since both the quantitative employee survey and the qualitative management interviews were consistent in their findings, it can be concluded that Durban is an affordable destination and offers a tourist value for money. Pricing at a destination is important, as it determines whether a tourist will visit a destination, how much they spend and how long they stay. Bowen *et al.* (2014: 305) confirm that the consumer decides whether a price is right, as consumers tend to look at the final price and then decide whether they have received good value.

4.4.4 Distribution Channels

This section deals with the third P of the expanded marketing mix, namely place, or distribution channels. Distribution channels, in the context of this study, relate to the availability of information on Durban as a destination.

4.4.4.1 Results from the Survey for Distribution Channels

To assess the effectiveness of Durban’s distribution channels, the distribution channel construct is comprised of the three statements shown, along with the summarised scoring patterns (Table 4.8) for each of the questions comprising the distribution factor.

Table 4.8: Distribution Channels (% agree/disagree with statements)

	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
Information regarding tour operators, travel agents, accommodation, transportation is easily available to tourists in Durban	17.6	10.1	72.3
Information on Durban is easily available on the internet	12.4	5.2	82.4
Is there sufficient information on Durban as a destination which is advertised using TV, newspaper and social media?	22.0	13.8	64.3

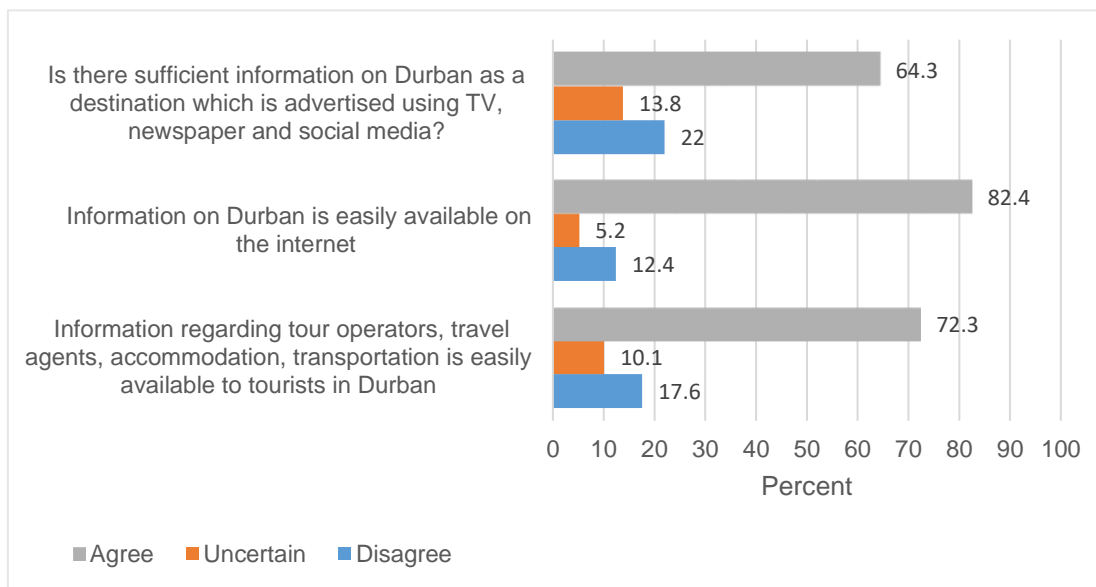


Figure 4.8: Illustration of Distribution Channel question results (%)

The average level of agreement for the three Distribution statements is 73.0 percent. Based on an average of the Likert score ratings, distribution has a mean of 3.79 ($3.77 + 4.02 + 3.58 / 3$), which confirms that the respondents are satisfied with the distribution component of Durban’s marketing strategy.

The statement with the highest level of agreement relates to information on Durban being easily available on the internet. There is an 18 percent differential in agreement levels between the highest and lowest values.

The respondents agreed (82.4 percent) that information on Durban is easily available on the internet. However, only 72.3 percent of the respondents agreed that information regarding tour operators, travel agents, accommodation, and transportation is easily available to tourists. In addition, even less (64.3 percent) of the respondents agreed that Durban as a destination is advertised using TV, newspaper and social media.

Some respondents disagreed there is sufficient information advertised using TV, newspaper and social media (22 percent), whilst 17.6 percent disagreed that information regarding tour operators, travel agents, accommodation, and transportation is easily available to tourists.

The above information indicated that the distribution channels can be improved and that Durban should have more varied channels to reach its various target markets.

To determine whether the differences in the scoring patterns per statement (Figure 4.8) were statistically significant, chi-square tests were done by variable (statement). The null hypothesis tested the claim that there were no differences in the scoring options per product statement. The chi-square test results are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Statistical significance of the Distribution Channel variables

	Information regarding tour operators, travel agents, accommodation, transportation is easily available to tourists in Durban	Information on Durban is easily available on the internet	Is there sufficient information on Durban as a destination which is advertised using TV, newspaper and social media?
Chi-Square	203.081 ^a	262.072 ^b	165.705 ^c
df	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.4.

- b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.2.
- c. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.0.

The p-values are all significant, implying a significant difference in the scoring patterns.

Since all of the p-values are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it can be concluded that the distributions of place ratings were not even and were not due to chance. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were statistically significant. It is noted that the category of “Uncertain” also contributes to the p-value.

The distribution offering can be concluded as perceived by the respondents to be generally satisfactory. Interestingly, the ‘distribution channel’ factor is rated (73 percent) as one of the most positive aspects of Durban’s marketing strategy. It is thus a strength upon which the marketing of Durban should be built.

4.4.4.2 Results from the Interviews for Distribution Channels

The majority of respondents indicated that Durban is a long haul destination – only one airline flies in. Durban requires more international connections. This is supported by pa 3 - (“Many tourists go to CPT and JHB...”). Johannesburg (JHB) and Cape Town (CPT) have more international flights than Durban. Durban would also benefit from more awareness of the city. As stated by pa 20 (“Many people abroad have not heard about Durban...”). Respondents indicated that the distribution channels, in particular abroad, are insufficient. This concludes that Durban has a need for more international flights coming into Durban and more distribution channels abroad to create awareness of Durban. Increased marketing initiatives are therefore required.

4.4.4.3 Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings for Distribution Channels

The concluding results of the employee survey and the manager interviews signify that their perception is that distribution of information on Durban and its product offerings is easily available to tourists on the internet. Information regarding tour operators, travel agents, accommodation and transportation is also shown to be perceived as available to tourists. The distribution of information about a destination, creates awareness of a destination, and is important in attracting tourists to a destination.

Durban does, however, require more distribution channels abroad to create awareness of the city and more international flights flying into Durban, as these factors contribute to the city's competitiveness.

4.4.5 Promotion

This section deals with the fourth P of the expanded marketing mix, namely promotion. The promotion aspect creates awareness of a product or service.

4.4.5.1. Results from the Survey for Promotion

To assess the effectiveness of Durban's promotion, the promotion construct is comprised of the three statements and summarised scoring patterns (Table 4.10) for each of the questions comprising the distribution factor.

Table 4.10: Promotion (% agree/disagree with statements)

	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
Durban marketed adequately as a destination on a national and international level	30.1	18.0	52.0
Durban is marketed using a variety of promotional techniques	25.1	20.2	54.7
Durban as a destination has strong brand identity	22.5	14.3	63.2

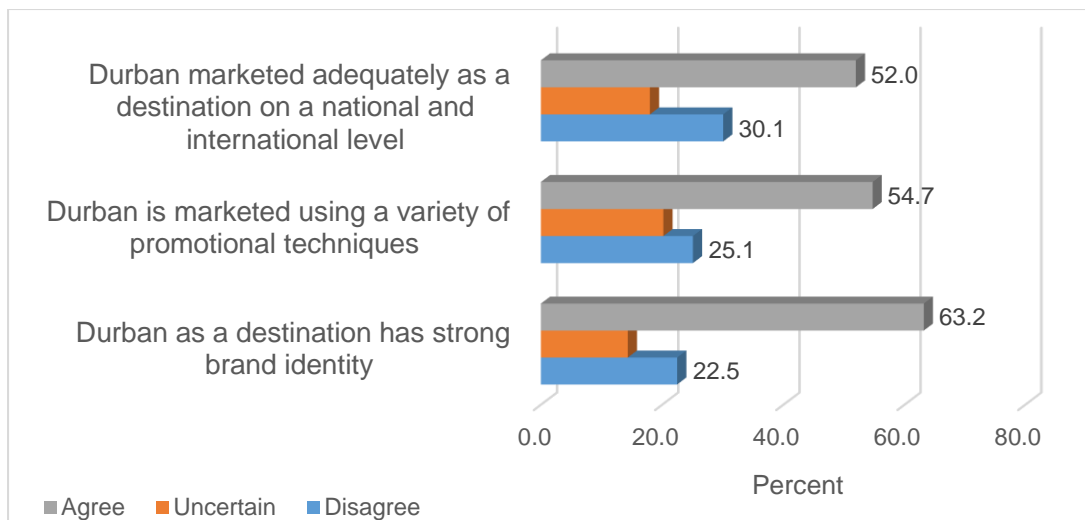


Figure 4.9: Illustration of Promotion question results (%)

The average level of agreement for the three Promotion statements is 56.6 percent. Based on an average of the Likert score ratings, promotion has a mean of 3.46 ($3.34 + 3.42 + 3.63 / 3$), which indicates a lower mean than the other components of the marketing mix. This indicates room for improvement with promoting Durban.

Only 52 percent of respondents agreed that Durban is marketed and promoted adequately as a destination on a national and international level, with 30.1 percent of the respondents indicating they disagreed with this statement and 18 percent were uncertain.

While a large percentage of the respondents agreed (54.7 percent) that Durban is marketed using a variety of promotional techniques, 25.1 percent disagreed and 20.2 percent of the respondents were uncertain about this statement.

Most off the respondents agreed (63 percent) that Durban as a destination has strong brand identity, with 22.5 percent indicating disagreement about this statement and 20.2 percent of the respondents were uncertain that Durban as

a destination has strong brand identity. The above information indicates that Durban’s promotional techniques need to improve.

To determine whether the differences in the scoring patterns per statement (Figure 4.9) were statistically significant, chi-square tests were done by variable (statement). The null hypothesis tested the claim that there were no differences in the scoring options per product statement, with the results shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Statistical significance of Promotion variables

	Durban marketed adequately as a destination on a national and international level	Durban is marketed using a variety of promotional techniques	Durban as a destination has strong brand identity
Chi-Square	89.556 ^a	104.287 ^b	122.104 ^b
df	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.2.

b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.4.

Since all of the p-values are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it can be concluded that the distribution of the promotion ratings was not even and was not due to chance. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were statistically significant. It is noted that the category of “Uncertain” also contributes to the p-value.

It can therefore, be concluded that the promotion offering is perceived as mediocre by the respondents. Interestingly, the ‘promotion’ factor is rated (56.6 percent) as the second weakest aspect of Durban’s marketing strategy. It is an indicator that there is room for improvement.

4.4.5.2. Results from interviews for promotion

The majority of respondents indicated that Durban requires more promotion by SAT on an international platform. SAT does not promote Durban. As implied by pa 13 (“Durban is trying to promote itself....”) and by pa 7 (“TV and online is a constraint with promoting Durban...”), indicating Durban’s promotion activities are inadequate. TKZN and Durban have a budget of only R50 million for international advertising. As pa 19 stated (“Market to be improved, need to attract more tourists and need more social networking”). The conclusion is thus that Durban requires more promotion and more exposure on social networks.

4.4.5.3. Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings for Promotion

The results from the survey and interviews conclude that Durban requires more promotion. The city also requires more on itself on social media. The employee survey findings indicate that respondents perceive there to be sufficient information and promotion of Durban and that it is adequately advertised on different types of media. Results from the senior manager survey also reveal the need for more international and national marketing campaigns that market Durban as a destination, while also highlighting the need for increased tourism marketing initiatives to create awareness of Durban. George (2011: 471) states that destination marketing is vital and there is a need for the destination to modify offerings and develop new offerings to attract new markets, in an increasingly competitive, global tourist industry.

4.4.6 People

This section deals with the fifth P of the expanded marketing mix, namely people. The people component of the marketing mix is a significant component because people comprise the main contact with tourists and can play a major role in creating a dynamic tourism industry.

4.4.6.1 Results from the Survey for People

To assess the effectiveness of Durban’s people, the people construct is comprised of the three statements shown, in addition to the summarised

scoring patterns (Table 4.12) for each of the questions comprising the people factor.

Table 4.12: People (% agree/disagree with statements)

	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
Your organisation customer service driven	14.4	4.9	80.7
Employees receive regular customer service training and are empowered to handle customer complaints	24.3	6.9	68.8
Customer service levels exceeds customer expectations	19.3	10.6	70.1

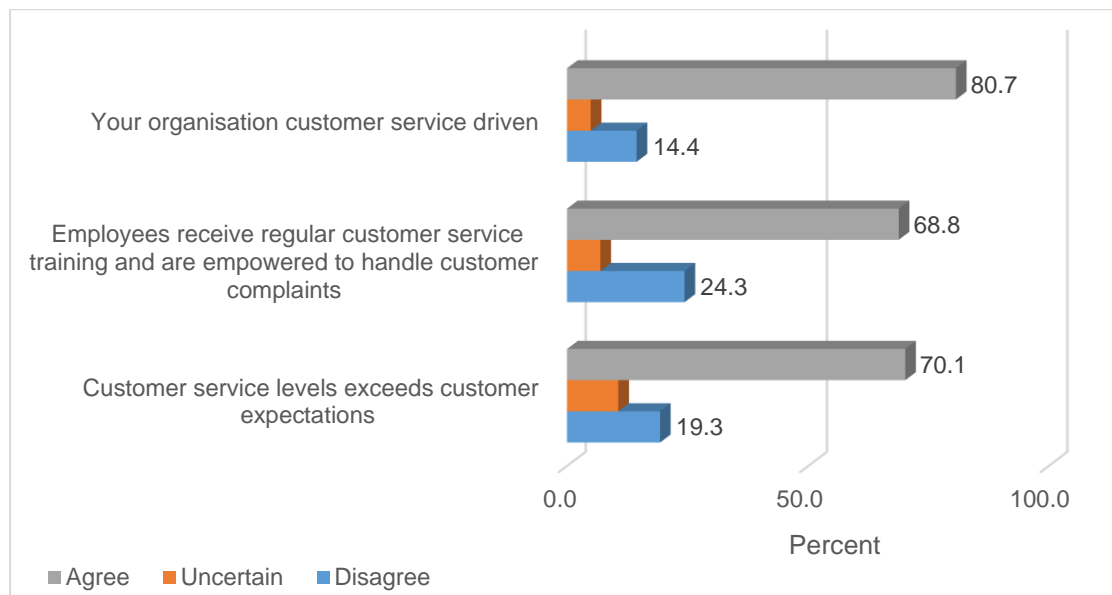


Figure 4.10: Illustration of People question results (%)

The average level of agreement for the three People statements is 73.2 percent. Based on an average of the Likert score ratings, people has a mean of 3.84 $(4.15 + 3.72 + 3.64 / 3)$, confirming that the respondents are reasonably satisfied with the people component of Durban’s marketing strategy.

Agreement was indicated by 80.7 percent of the respondents that the organisation that they work for is customer service driven, while only 14.4 percent of respondents disagreed with this statement.

Respondents agreed (68.8 percent) that employees receive regular customer service training and are empowered to handle customer complaints, with 24.3 percent of respondents disagreeing with this statement.

There was further agreement from the respondents (70.1 percent) that customer service levels exceed expectations, whilst 19.3 percent of respondents disagreed with this statement.

The above results are varying and indicate that Durban’s customer service levels have room for improvement.

To determine whether the differences in the scoring patterns per statement (Figure 4.10) were statistically significant, chi-square tests were done by variable (statement). The null hypothesis tested the claim that there were no differences in the scoring options per product statement. The chi-square test results are shown below.

Table 4.13: Statistical significance of People variables

	Your organisation customer service driven	Employees receive regular customer service training and are empowered to handle customer complaints	Customer service levels exceeds customer expectations
Chi-Square	250.000 ^a	135.836 ^b	260.146 ^c
df	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.0.

b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.8.

c. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.2.

Since all of the p-values are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it can be concluded that the distributions of people ratings were not even and were not due to chance. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were statistically significant. It is noted that the category of “Uncertain” also contributes to the p-value.

Thus it is concluded that the people offering is perceived as generally satisfactory by the respondents. Interestingly, the 'people' factor is rated (73.2 percent) as one of the most positive aspects of Durban's marketing strategy. It is an indicator that there is room for improvement.

4.4.6.2 Results from interviews for People

The majority of respondents indicated that Durban does not have many return visitors, with visitors not impressed with customer service. As stated by pa 20, "staff require customer care training", while pa 1 highlights that there is no focus on service excellence. It is stated by pa five ("More research on visitor satisfaction is needed..."), which would allow more focus on service excellence, also needed. As pa 16 points out ("More research is required on why many tourists do not return to Durban..."). Research should be conducted on why tourists do not return to Durban. A culture of service excellence is required and research on what tourist expectations are in this regard is needed. This thus concludes that Durban requires a service excellence culture and research into why many tourists do not come back to Durban.

4.4.6.3 Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings for People

The survey and interview results agree and conclude that Durban needs to improve on its customer service. Research into why tourists do not return to Durban is also required. Customer service delivery is a vital component of the tourism industry, which is dynamic and dependent on people. Bowen *et al.* (2014: 72) underline that companies must be customer-centric, and must win customers from their competitors and keep them, by delivering greater value.

4.4.7 Physical Evidence

This section deals with the sixth P of the expanded marketing mix, namely physical evidence. The physical evidence component of the marketing mix is significant as tourists visit destinations that are safe, clean, have good

infrastructure and climate, making these important factors that determine whether a tourist chooses to visit a destination.

4.4.7.1 Results from the Survey for Physical Evidence

To assess the effectiveness of Durban’s physical evidence, the physical evidence construct is comprised of the five statements, shown along with the summarised scoring patterns, in Table 4.14, for each of the questions comprising the physical evidence factor.

Table 4.14: Physical Evidence (% agree/disagree with statements)

	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
Durban has a low crime rate	75.8	12.7	11.4
Durban is a clean city	55.8	15.2	29.0
Durban’s public transportation system is adequate	51.2	13.6	35.2
Durban’s climate is good all year round	12.5	5.3	82.2
Durban infrastructure is adequate	33.8	16.4	49.8

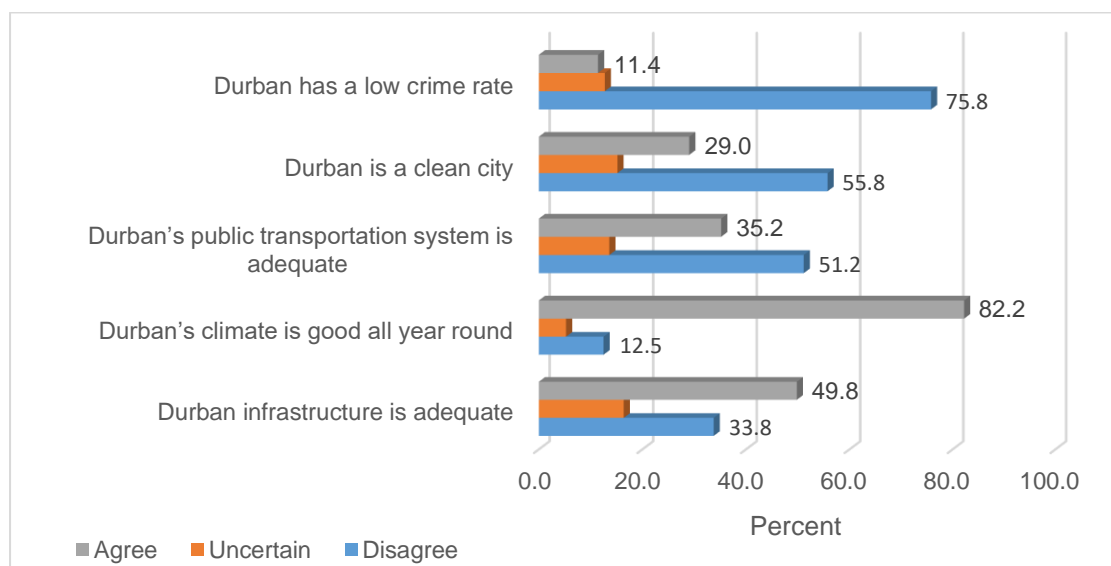


Figure 4.11: Illustration of Physical Evidence question results (%)

The average level of agreement for the five Physical evidence statements is 41.52. This is much lower than the other components of the marketing mix. Based on an average of the Likert score ratings, physical evidence has a mean

of 2.94 (2.09 + 2.64 +2.71 + 4.07 + 3.17 / 5), which confirms that the respondents are not satisfied with the physical evidence component of Durban’s marketing strategy.

Most respondents disagreed (75.8 percent) with the statement that Durban has a low crime rate and only 55.8 percent of respondents felt that Durban is a clean city. About half (51.2 percent) of respondents disagreed that Durban’s public transportation system is adequate and half (49.8 percent) agreed that Durban’s infrastructure is adequate. Most (82.2 percent) of the respondents agreed that Durban has good weather all year round.

The above results indicate that Durban needs to improve its crime rate, safety, transportation and infrastructure, which are vital factors when tourists choose to visit a destination, as stated in chapter two. Destination appeal is also based on the following factors.

To determine whether the differences in the scoring patterns per statement (Figure 4.11) were statistically significant, chi-square tests were done by variable (statement). The null hypothesis tested the claim that there were no differences in the scoring options per product statement. The results are shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Statistical significance of Physical Evidence variables

	Durban has a low crime rate	Durban is a clean city	Durban’s public transportation system is adequate	Durban’s climate is good all year round	Durban infrastructure is adequate
Chi-Square	192.529 ^a	96.884 ^b	63.003 ^c	237.776 ^d	88.098 ^e
df	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.2.

b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.6.

- c. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.2.
- d. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.8.
- e. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.0.

All of the scoring patterns are significantly different with some statements having higher levels of positive values and others higher levels of negative values.

Since all of the p-values are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it can be concluded that the distribution of physical evidence ratings was not even and were not due to chance. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were statistically significant. It is noted that the category of "Uncertain" also contributes to the p-value.

4.4.7.2 Results from interviews for Physical evidence

a) Transportation

The majority of respondents indicated that Durban's public, road and rail transportation is very poor, with public road transportation being unsafe and unreliable. Respondents indicated that the taxi industry should be regulated, as they are very unsafe for people to use, however, in most areas there are no other options. Not all areas in Durban have a safe reliable bus service, as the People Mover service is reliable but is only operational in the CBD. Private road transportation, which tourists have to utilise, is very expensive. Respondents also indicated that there is no 24hour road public transport available and they would like cycling to be introduced and promoted more.

The rail system was indicated by respondents to be of poor quality, resulting in tourists and most residents of Durban not making use of it. Respondents indicated that they would prefer a rail system such as the Gautrain, which is operational in Johannesburg, and that the train system should be on the major hotels, airport and tourist attraction routes. It was further indicated by respondents that they would like a system such as the Tram system in London,

which is very effective and very efficient. As highlighted by pa 7 (“Durban’s public transport system is poor and requires improvement...”).

b) Municipal services

Public health and education services need to be improved as they are in a poor state. Tourists cannot be sent to a public hospital or clinic if they fall ill due to the poor service and conditions. Municipal service delivery, such as electricity and water, is also perceived as very poor, with electricity or water supply faults taking many hours to fix. There are, in addition, areas which flood during heavy rains, including roads, which become dangerous.

Respondents indicated that there are many old decaying buildings in the CBD and surrounding areas that require upgrading. There needs to be preservation of historical buildings, such as the Victoria Street Market and the Grey Street Mosque; and there is no upkeep of municipal buildings, such as hospitals, in most areas.

c) Crime and Grime

All respondents indicated a problem with crime and grime, which deters tourists. It is unsafe for tourists to travel in Durban, especially at night. The city is also dirty, which poses a health problem. There are, furthermore, too many homeless people on the street, beachfront and at stop streets. As stated by pa 21 “crime and grime deters tourists from returning to the city...”

Thus the above interview findings conclude that Durban needs to reduce crime and grime, and improve public transportation system and infrastructure, such as the upkeep of buildings and municipal services. This also concludes that Durban’s infrastructure is inadequate.

4.4.7.3 Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings for Physical Evidence

The findings from the surveys and interviews conclude that Durban's infrastructure is inadequate. Crime and grime need to be reduced, public transportation must improve and infrastructure needs improvement. Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 132) explain that infrastructure of a destination includes; roads, rail systems, airports, shipping, and taxis, as well as public safety, water and electrical facilities, telecommunications systems, and medical services and education systems. Destination competitiveness is, therefore, a function of the ability of the destination to provide and maintain its effectiveness and efficiency of its infrastructure.

Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 132) emphasise that destination competitiveness is, thus, a function of the ability of both the public and private sectors, to provide and maintain a destination's infrastructure because it sustains tourism development and the needs of both the travel trade and its customers.

4.4.8 Processes

This section deals with the seventh P of the expanded marketing mix, namely processes. The process component of the marketing mix is significant as it focuses on customer service, which is an important aspect of a tourist's holiday.

4.4.8.1 Results from the Survey for Processes

To assess the effectiveness of Durban's processes, the process construct is comprised of the three statements shown with the summarised scoring patterns (Table 4.16), for each of the questions comprising the process component.

Table 4.16: Process Evidence (% agree/disagree with statements)

	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree
Tourists are offered effective and efficient customer service	20.0	16.7	63.3
Employees play a vital role in service delivery	10.0	4.3	85.7
Durban offers adequate customer service delivery systems	23.2	16.4	60.4

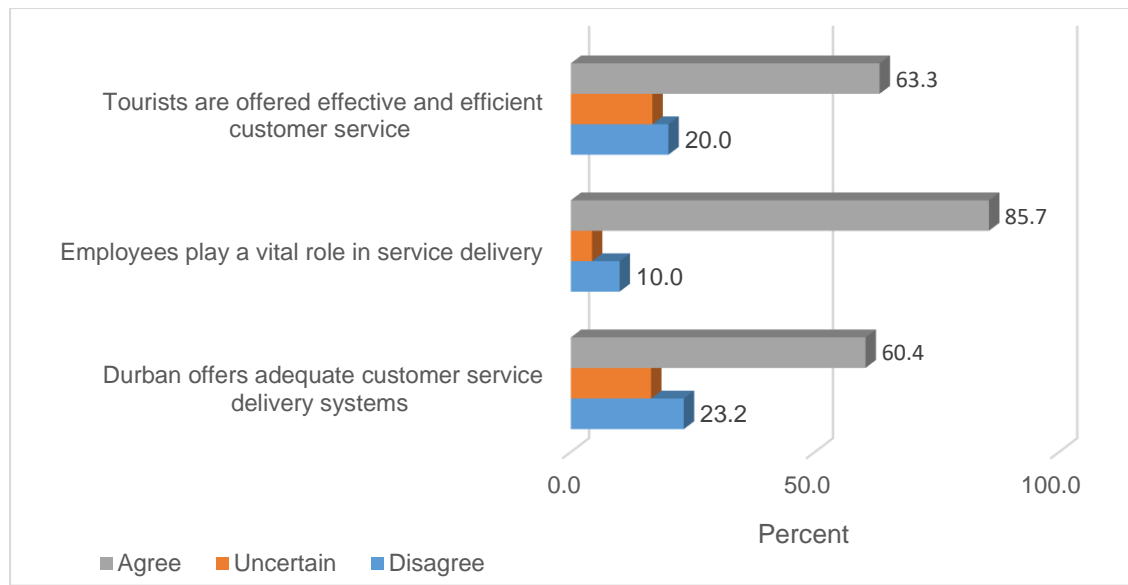


Figure 4.12: Illustration of People Evidence question results (%)

The average level of agreement for the three Process statements is 69.8 percent. Based on an average of the Likert score ratings, process has a mean of 3.69 $(3.49 + 4.13 + 3.46 / 3)$, which confirms that the respondents are reasonably satisfied with the process component of Durban’s marketing strategy. However, there is room for improvement, as the average mean is lower than other sections.

The majority of respondents agreed (85.7 percent) that employees play a vital role in service delivery. Moreover, 63.3 percent of respondents agreed that tourists are offered effective and efficient customer service, whilst 60.4 percent agreed that Durban offers adequate customer service delivery systems. The

results indicate that there is room for improvement where customer service and customer service delivery systems are concerned.

To determine whether the differences in the scoring patterns per statement (Figure 4.12) were statistically significant, chi-square tests were done by variable (statement). The null hypothesis tested the claim that there were no differences in the scoring options per product statement and results are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Statistical significance of Process variables

	Tourists are offered effective and efficient customer service	Employees play a vital role in service delivery	Durban offers adequate customer service delivery systems
Chi-Square	202.590 ^a	267.833 ^b	134.181 ^c
df	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 61.0.

b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.0.

c. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 59.6.

All of the scoring patterns and differences are significant. Since all of the p-values are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it can be concluded that the distributions of process ratings were not even and were not due to chance. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were statistically significant. It is noted that the category of “Uncertain” also contributes to the p-value.

4.4.8.2 Results from Interviews for Processes

The majority of respondents indicated that more funding is required from national and provincial government for Durban. Durban does not receive much

funding or support from TKZN or SAT, with SAT promoting the Kruger National Park (Hood 2008) and Cape Town Durban depends on its limited funds to improve and promote itself on a global platform. More investment is thus required to further develop Durban as a tourist destination that could distinguish itself from other destinations. Respondents indicated that Ethekewini Municipality needs to allocate more funds to Durban Tourism to develop and promote the city, so that it may be seen as a competitive destination.

As highlighted by pa 10 (“Durban need to align itself to the NDT’s strategy and TKZN’ s strategy so that there is synergy from national to provincial and city level...”). TKZN’s vision for 2030 is to be Africa’s top beach destination. Durban, which is part of KZN, can develop its existing coastline. As stated by pa 17 (“CNN rated Durban as the most underrated city”). A solution could lie in more public and private sector collaboration. Thus, the findings conclude that Durban needs more funding and the city needs to align itself with national and provincial tourism strategy.

4.4.8.3 Synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings for Process

The findings indicate that customer service needs improvement and Durban needs to focus on improving customer service standards. The city also needs to align itself to the national and provincial tourism strategy, which it is not doing currently. There are national and provincial goals contained in the strategy that Durban should strive towards.

4.5 STUDY THEME TWO: Factors critical to Durban’s tourism competitiveness

The findings of the seven P’s of Durban will be highlighted and how the findings of each component fit into the conceptual model of destination competitiveness by Crouch and Ritchie (2003). This section will also highlight that all of the findings relate to the marketing mix component and are also destination competitiveness factors.

4.5.1 Results from interviews regarding Durban's competitiveness

Most respondents indicated that Durban is not a competitive destination because there is nothing distinctive about Durban that sets it apart from other cities in the world. Respondents indicated that although Durban is made up of a mixture of cultures, and offers warm weather all year round, it is not enough to draw tourists to the city and does not give the city a distinctive selling point. Respondents indicated that there are no iconic events; Durban is a long-haul destination, which means that for tourists to come to Durban they will have to fly to Johannesburg or Cape Town and then purchase another ticket to come to Durban, increasing the time and money spent to visit Durban.

According to pa 15 ("Durban draws more domestic than international tourists to the city..."). Many foreign airlines do not fly to Durban, therefore, an additional flight ticket is needed for tourists to come to Durban. As highlighted by pa 23 ("Respondents indicated that there are no unique attractions or events and there is nothing distinctive about Durban to draw tourists to the city..."). There is also too much crime and grime in the city.

The majority of respondents indicated that Durban needs to improve its crime and grime in the city, making it safer for tourists and residents. The city, in addition, needs a more effective and efficient public transport system in place, as the city needs to draw more upmarket world-class attractions and more entertainment to entice tourists. Moreover, Durban needs to improve its safety and security. A further need is that of customer service levels improvement. More investment opportunities also need to be created, along with additional international flights to the city. Respondents indicated that the city requires a better public healthcare system, along with education and municipal services. Thus this concludes that Durban is not a competitive destination and should therefore improve its competitiveness.

4.5.2 Factors critical to Durban’s tourism competitiveness.

The findings of each of the P’s will be linked to the different sectors and factors of the destination competitiveness conceptual model.

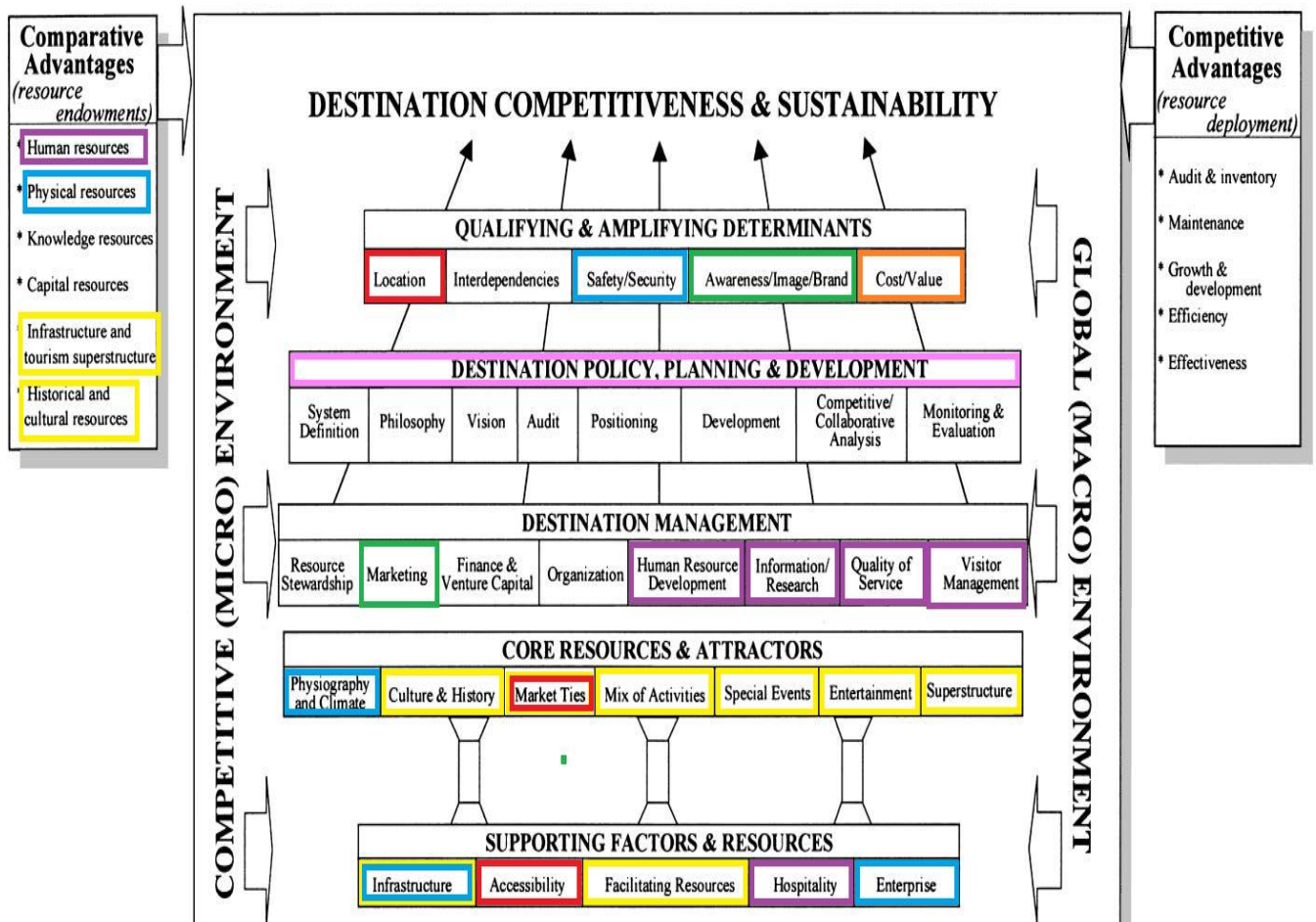


Figure 4.13: Crouch and Ritchie model of destination competitiveness

4.5.2.1 Product

The yellow colour coded components of Figure 4.13 are product components, as per the findings of this research. The findings of the study show that Durban requires additional tourism infrastructure, such as extra attractions, events, accommodation, and resorts, as well as entertainment and restaurants. Entertainment, special events, historical and cultural attractions and

superstructure are a part of core resources and attractors of the above model and are essential to competitiveness.

4.5.2.2 Price

The orange colour coded component, which is cost/value, depicted in Figure 4.13, is a price component as per the findings of this research. The indication is that Durban is regarded as an affordable destination offering value for money. According to the model, it is regarded as Cost/Value and is a component of qualifying and amplifying determinants.

4.5.2.3 Distribution Channels

The red colour coded components of location and accessibility shown in Figure 4.13 are distribution components, as per the findings of this research. It was revealed that Durban requires more distribution channels to create awareness of the city. This factor related to market ties, which is a component of core resources and attractors. Durban is also regarded as long-haul destination, as it does not have many international flights coming into Durban. This component is related to location, which is a component of qualifying and amplifying determinants. Durban being a long-haul destination is also related to accessibility, which is a component of supporting factors and resources.

4.5.2.4 Promotion

The green colour coded components of Figure 4.13 are promotion components, as per the findings of this research. Durban requires more promotion, marketing and funds for promotion. Promotion is linked to awareness, image and brand and is a component of qualifying and amplifying determinants.

4.5.2.5 Physical Evidence

The blue colour coded components are physiography, climate, safety and security and infrastructure, as illustrated in Figure 4.13, are physical evidence components as per the findings of this research. Durban's infrastructure is in

need of improvement in public transportation, municipal services and buildings; infrastructure is a component of supporting factors and resources. Enterprise, in the context of this study, includes Durban Tourism. Durban also needs to improve its crime and grime, which is related to qualifying and amplifying determinants of the competitiveness model.

4.5.2.6 People

The purple colour coded components comprise HR, information/research and quality of service (Figure 4.13) and are people components, as per the findings of this research. It was revealed that Durban needs to improve its customer service, as well as visitor management and research needs to be conducted into why many tourists do not return to Durban. While customer service is linked to quality of service, which is a component of destination management, the need for research is linked to information and research that form part of destination management.

4.5.2.7 Process

The pink colour coded component is made up of destination policy, planning and development (Figure 4.13), with these being process components, as per the findings of this research. Other components of destination management of the competitiveness model that Durban needs to focus on include improving customer service and alignment with provincial and national tourism strategies.

4.6 COMPONENTS NOT COVERED IN THE DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS MODEL

The components not covered in the competitiveness model were not covered in the study and were not directly related to the marketing mix principles. These components were destination competitiveness factors.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter detailed the results from each data collection instrument, triangulated as per the mixed methods approach, to provide a synthesised and constructive discussion. The presentation of the findings culminated in a detailed discussion around the study themes. This discussion creates a sound platform for the development of conclusions and recommendations.

The conclusions and recommendation follow in the final chapter of the study.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the study. The objective of this chapter is to also present recommendations and provide a summary on the interpretation of the results. This study's overall purpose was to identify the role of the marketing mix in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination. The marketing mix principles were used to measure and assess various factors relating to competitiveness.

The purpose of establishing the tourism competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective is significant for tourism stakeholders because the factors would assist in increasing domestic and international tourist numbers to the city, thus improving the economy of Durban.

The flow and steps completed, in which the research was set out, have been identified (Figure 5.1).

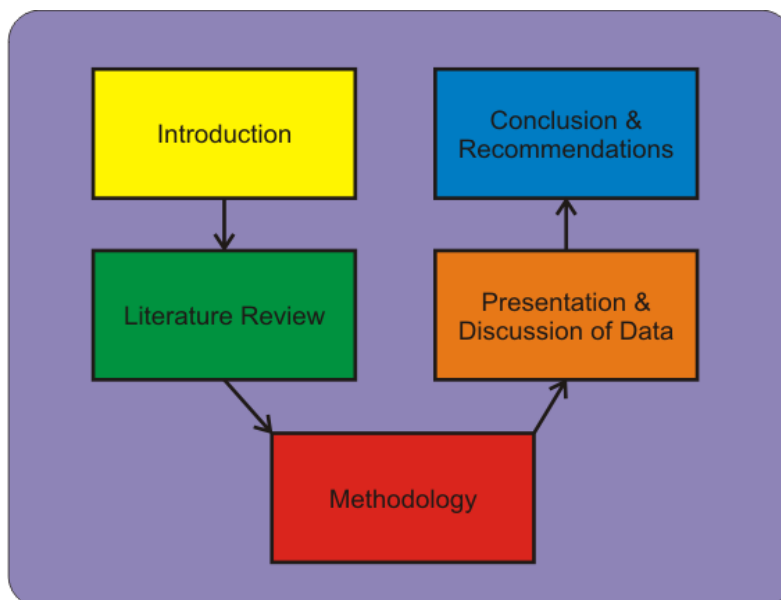


Figure 5.1: Flowchart of the study

The approach to the study was presented in the introductory chapter, making the problem statement and rationale of the research known, which identified the areas of concern around the destination competitiveness factors of Durban.

The research objective was to identify the role of the marketing mix in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination. This was achieved by identifying factors critical to tourism competitiveness, determining Durban's current tourism marketing mix factors, assessing the performance of Durban's tourism industry from stakeholders' perception and recommending appropriate marketing actions to improve performance of the critical success factors.

The literature review was the foundation of the theoretical aspect, which generated a discussion on factors critical to tourism competitiveness and Durban's current tourism marketing mix factors. Four models were used to discuss the need for a destination to be competitive and compete on a global platform. The marketing mix principles were used as a conceptual framework to discuss Durban's competitiveness factors.

The methodology chapter presented details regarding the research methods and explained the mixed methods process of the study. In addition, the research design and types of research undertaken by the researcher were also described. Furthermore, the sampling procedure, organisation and administration of questionnaires to the employees were explained, along with the structured interviews with senior managers of the tourism industry. An account of the pre-testing, coding and editing of the questionnaires was provided, and the use of field research assistants justified. The chapter concluded with limitations of the study.

The core themes were identified (Chapter 4) as: the theoretical framework of Durban's tourism marketing mix factors; and the factors critical to Durban's tourism competitiveness. The data analysis revealed that the application of the

marketing mix principles to establish Durban's tourism competitiveness, was a useful framework in determining destination competitiveness. Also revealed by the data analysis, is that Durban does have competitive factors, but with some areas that require improvement and other areas that require serious attention. It was further brought to light that employees and managers generally share the same opinions on most areas. The findings show that Durban needs to become a more competitive destination in order to be sustainable and to contribute to the economy of the country.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS ABOUT RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study's main aim involved determining Durban's tourism competitiveness factors, from a stakeholder perspective. Questionnaires were issued to a sample of 400, with 308 employees from the tourism industry responding, along with 23 senior managers that were interviewed, of the original 30 identified. Based on this, the following section represents the conclusions of the study, based on the objectives set out in Chapter one.

5.2.1 Core Research Theme 1: Theoretical Framework of Durban's Tourism Marketing Mix Factors

Key conclusions in this respect include those relating to the marketing mix and competitiveness.

5.2.1.1 Marketing mix factors

a) Product

Durban requires more tourism infrastructure such as attractions, entertainment, accommodation, resorts, events and the offering of different types of cuisine.

b) Price

It can be concluded that Durban is an affordable destination and offers a tourist value for money. No major changes are needed for this factor.

c) Distribution Channels

Durban requires more distribution channels abroad to create awareness of the city and more international flights flying into Durban.

d) Promotion

The results from the survey and interviews conclude that Durban requires more promotion and funds for advertising. The city also requires more exposure on social media.

e) People

The results establish that Durban needs to improve on its customer service. Better knowledge as to why tourists do not return to Durban is required.

f) Physical evidence

The findings from the surveys and interviews conclude that Durban's infrastructure is inadequate. Crime and grime need to be reduced, public transportation must improve and infrastructure needs improvement. As stated by Crouch and Ritchie (2003:233) factors such as crime and grime can mitigate or enhance the tourist's choice to travel.

g) Process

The findings indicate that customer service needs development. The city also needs to align itself to national and provincial tourism strategy.

5.2.1.2 Durban's competitiveness as a destination

The findings from the senior manager interview were that Durban is not a competitive destination that compares to other cities in the world. Respondents indicated that, in order for Durban to be competitive, the city needs to reduce crime and grime, making it safer for tourists. A more effective and efficient public transport system for Durban must be put in place and the city needs to develop more upmarket, world class attractions and more entertainment. In

addition, Durban needs to improve its safety and security, while customer service levels need to improve and investment opportunities created. The need for additional flights into Durban are another aspect which, when implemented, will positively influence the city's tourism numbers. Respondents further indicated that Durban is in need of a better public healthcare system, while also requiring improved education and municipal services. According to Crouch and Ritchie (2003:130) supporting factors and resources are the foundation of a competitive destination.

5.2.2 Core Research Theme 2: Factors critical to Durban's tourism competitiveness

The findings listed in Section 5.2.1 are significant factors of destination competitiveness. According to Crouch and Ritchie's (2003) conceptual model of competitiveness, these components factor as qualifying and amplifying determinants, core resources and attractors, supporting factors and resources, as well as destination management. Crouch (2007: 429) focuses on the attributes of competitiveness, while suggesting that tourism destinations need to develop, maintain, protect and strengthen their competitive positions at a global level (Crouch 2011: 27-45). Therefore, determining a destination's competitive advantage is vital for sustainability. Strategies for destination competitiveness must consider how and where limited resources should be directed.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

As stated by Durban Tourism (2015: 3-17), the 2013/2014 visitor statistics indicate a decline in international and domestic visitor numbers to Durban and a decline in visitor spend to the city. In order to achieve economic sustainability, an established marketing mix of factors will assist Durban as a city, to become a preferred destination of choice, thus ensuring that tourism sustainability is achieved. There is also a lack of knowledge regarding how competitive Durban is as a destination and how well the city performs according to tourism competitiveness, with the added lack of knowledge

regarding factors to be improved, to increase the tourism competitive advantage.

The findings in Chapter four and conclusions drawn from core research themes one and two, show that the marketing mix factors could assist Durban to achieve economic sustainability. Should the city become a more competitive destination, it will draw more tourists to the city. The findings in Chapter four have determined Durban's competitiveness from a stakeholder perspective. As highlighted by Crouch and Ritchie (2003:110) core resources and attractors that underlie the basic desire to travel to a given destination which represent the pulling force driving the demand for destination tourism.

The role of the marketing mix was identified in improving Durban's competitiveness as a destination, identifying factors critical to tourism competitiveness and current marketing mix factors. The performance of Durban's tourism industry from a stakeholder perception was assessed using the marketing mix factors, with appropriate marketing actions recommended, with which to improve performance of the critical success factors.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY

According to UNWTO (2014: 28), improving tourism competitiveness is essential, as destinations need to adapt and develop in a rapidly transforming, global marketplace. New paradigms for city tourism are required, in which key issues, such as community engagement, improved research and data to guide planning and management are addressed, along with public and private sector partnerships, the creation of clusters and streamlining technology, innovation and sustainability.

This study has shown the relevance of the competitiveness models, and in particular, the Crouch and Ritchie (2003) destination competitiveness model, to interpret and understand tourism marketing, specifically that of city tourism related to competitiveness and sustainability.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

5.5.1 The development of additional tourism infrastructure

The development of additional tourism resources should include: attractions, events, upmarket and world-class attractions, accommodation, as well as the increase of restaurants and entertainment, along with additional accommodation and increased air connectivity.

The tourism industry in Durban can improve its tourism competitiveness, by adding to its core resources. The industry's public and private sector stakeholders need to become involved in developing additional tourist attractions, events, upmarket world-class attractions, as well as accommodation, restaurants and entertainment. Upgrade and development of Ushaka theme park and the development of the Point Water Front area would enhance Durban's competitiveness. Stakeholders of Durban's tourism industry would, consequently, also have to seek financial investment.

Destinations must, as Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 119) explain, be innovative and create unique characteristics that make them stand out in the marketplace. This can be achieved with the development of special events, mega-events and hallmark events (Kruger 2011) that have proved to be one way of creating uniqueness of a destination.

Durban should, therefore, focus on developing events that would attract national and international tourists. When a tourist visits a destination, use is made of accommodation, transport, entertainment, and restaurants, in visiting attractions. Thus, tourism stakeholders can focus on a single offering to various target markets or a single offering to a single target market. Tourism stakeholders, such as tour operators, could also produce multiple tour packages and target various markets or offer a variety of, for instance, township tours to international tourists. Durban, as a destination, can be marketed as a leisure, events and business destination, thus attracting various

markets. Moreover, Durban needs to offer the tourist more entertainment variety, in particular during the evenings.

Activities and events have established themselves as traditional components of destination competitiveness, according to Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 124). As a destination, Durban should showcase unique entertainment that makes it distinctive, similar to the theatres in London and the Broadway shows in New York.

Consumers of tomorrow will, as stated by Holloway and Humphreys (2012: 245), seek more original, adventurous kinds of holiday, to strange and outlandish destinations, looking for something distinctive. There are also predictions that underwater leisure cities will be built on sea beds, with the development of ocean tourism, along with advances in space tourism. This will substantially affect tourism marketing (Buhalis 2000.). Nonetheless, one of Durban's core resources, which is a competitive advantage, is its coastline, where further product development can be done, as well as in the Point Water Front area.

Tourism stakeholders in Durban, such as the hotels, could offer themed events, such as wine-tasting, to create awareness of their hotels. Ushaka theme park could, for instance, compile a DVD of the park and all that it offers. The further development of Ushaka theme park, to emulate other water theme parks in the world, for example in Dubai, would also be an advantage. Different types of events must, in addition, be offered, such as business, educational, arts and entertainment. Durban Tourism could also focus on cultural festivals and sporting events, while conferences and conventions are focused on by the Durban Convention Bureau on.

5.5.2 Built Infrastructure

The regeneration of the city's infrastructure must be of a high standard. Transportation at a destination is vital, as it is the way tourists are able to

commute to various places. The operation, availability and efficiency of the transportation network system is important. Durban can improve its road transportation, by having a more effective, efficient, accessible and affordable public transportation system that operates for most of the day.

The city also requires a rail system, similar to the Gautrain, which both residents and tourists can make use of. Increased air connectivity, where more direct, international flights come into and fly out of Durban, would encourage more international tourists to fly directly into Durban and not have to incur the cost of booking an extra flight.

Airlines could engage in service modification, such as introducing organic foods on their menus, in addition to which, they could also offer different or additional routes. Increasing air connectivity would allow tourists from abroad to fly direct, into and out of Durban.

Durban municipality can carry out renovations to historical buildings to entice tourists to visit, while accommodation facilities could engage in style changes to suit their target market. Additionally, travel agents could offer a variety of packages and booking procedures, with tour operators offering niche tourist packages, such as medical or educational packages.

Hotels and airlines offer guests patronage awards for their frequent use of the facility, similar to SAA's frequent flyer programme. Tourism stakeholders in Durban can also offer point-of-purchase sales; while fast food restaurants could offer customers a free promotional glass, instead of paper cups. Moses Mabida stadium can offer coupons for their adventure walk or bungee jumping. Ushaka Theme park could have discounts for schoolchildren and tourists at different times of the year and could offer a variety of activities and experiences, as well as quality service.

Durban Tourism needs to strategically place its information offices, which should be open seven days a week, both nationally and internationally. Choosing these strategic points would be based on Durban's target markets in the different geographic areas. These offices must be easily accessible, offering additional services, such as internet access, fax, printer, and photocopier facilities, along with business newspapers and satellite services, 24 hours a day, as added benefits to a business tourist.

It is held by Crouch and Ritchie (2003: 133) that infrastructure at a destination shapes its competitiveness. Stakeholders in the tourism industry depend on the destination's infrastructure, as tourism stakeholders require utility services to ensure their tourism ventures are successful. Therefore, Durban needs to ensure that its transportation network, as well as its water, electricity, health and communication systems, are efficient, as these are factors fundamental to the success of a tourist's visit.

5.5.3 Reduce Crime and Grime in Durban

The World Economic Forum competitiveness reports (2013/2015) reveal that SA needs to improve its health and safety. This research has also indicated that Durban needs to improve its 'crime and grime', which is vital to tourists, as they are apprehensive about visiting a place where the crime rate is high and the place is unhygienic, as they could become a victim of crime or come into contact with diseases.

It is crucial that tourism stakeholders in Durban engage in crime awareness programmes, provide training to service personnel, ensure proper signage and avoid language barriers with international guests, as well as assist with beautification of the city; these factors enhance visitor satisfaction. In addition, the public transportation system needs to be safe, efficient and effective for public use.

5.5.4 Increase marketing initiatives and promotion, nationally and internationally

Durban needs to be marketed more on a national and international platform, as this would create awareness and interest in Durban as a destination. National Departments, such as SAT and Tourism KZN, should support and collaborate with Durban Tourism on their international marketing campaigns.

Durban Tourism, as the marketing agent for Durban as a destination, along with its various stakeholders, ought to develop and coordinate a strong and very prominent promotion mix. The following areas need to be concentrated on at national and international level: public relations, sales promotion, advertising, personal selling, and, specifically, electronic media that would create awareness of Durban as a destination.

There are a number of sectors in Durban's tourism industry and each could have different target markets, which necessitates varied advertising campaigns. Stakeholders of Durban's tourism industry should do more advertising to identified target markets and inform these target markets. Tourism stakeholders in Durban also need to ensure the target market is persuaded and reminded.

Advertisements on the National Geographic and Discovery Channels are scheduled over a period of time. Durban Tourism could conduct research on what consumers recall from magazine and television advertisements, through recognition tests, to ask the readers what they have seen in these advertisements. There also needs to be reminder advertising and regular sales promotion.

Tourism stakeholders in Durban can use the internet to provide tourism information, product offering information, online reservations and payment on a website, and customised product searches. In addition, website interaction

and direct links to other websites, along with toll free telephone numbers and ticketless travel could be offered, thus increasing customer communication.

Durban Tourism's website could host its various stakeholders, such as restaurants, entertainment, airlines, accommodation, tour operators and travel agencies, by providing hyperlinks to each of the individual websites. Maps and special offers from various stakeholders can, additionally, be advertised on this website, along with queries and booking platforms. Durban Tourism could, in effect, create an encyclopaedia of information, which would serve as an information service on the city. An effective website would assist national and international tourists wanting to visit Durban with planning and making correct and informed choices.

The following choices could be included on the Durban Tourism website homepage: a video clip of Durban, accommodation, tourism information, and attractions, as well as restaurants, shopping, entertainment, and maps, with a currency converter, and information regarding the weather and transport/traffic. This type of website would allow potential customers to see Durban at a glance. The website should include general information about Durban, how to get there, getting around in Durban, places to stay and things to see and do whilst in Durban.

The use of travel aggregators, search engine marketing, affiliate marketing, and online reputation management to optimise the website, along with online social media and advertising, will ensure optimal exposure. Durban Tourism should, as Cape Town does, also make use of Twitter and Facebook, while adopting more digital direct marketing technologies, by using e-mail or mobile phones. This also holds true for podcasting, which is part of the most up-to-date demand technologies, allowing consumers to download video or audio files via the internet to an iPod.

It is supported by Bowen *et al.* (2014: 362) that building good customer relationships involves developing good customers. Relationships involve the development of a good promotion mix, including public relations, direct marketing, advertising, personal selling, and sales promotion. The marketing communication landscape is also changing, in that there is a move to digital and a wireless age.

5.5.5. Research into why many tourists do not return to Durban

The reasons why tourists do not return to Durban need to be investigated, as this would enable remedying and addressing these issues. In order to develop and sustain competitiveness, public and private sector stakeholders of Durban will have to identify and address the reasons why tourists do not return.

Durban Tourism and its stakeholders can satisfy their consumers, by identifying needs and wants of consumers from online customer comments or through email facilities. Online customer surveys can be hosted by tourism stakeholders in Durban, who in addition, can use data mining to gather information on consumers. Customer needs can thus have instant responses.

Tourism stakeholders of Durban must focus on customer satisfaction, in order to build strong customer brand loyalty. Durban Tourism needs to, therefore, have a strong brand that consumers relate to and that they could identify with, on a national and international level. A strong brand will also distinguish Durban from the rest of the cities in the world. Tourism stakeholders in Durban must generate new ideas from their customers and competitors, while travel agents can suggest ideas to tour operators, with regards to special interest tours and preferred destinations.

5.6 LIMITATIONS

As with all research, this study had certain limitations:

- Tourists were not included as respondents – however, for this study, this is not an issue as the objective of the study was to examine the problem from a stakeholder (excluding tourists) viewpoint;
- The sample was a non-probability one and thus generalising results should be done with care. In fact, generalising these results beyond Durban is not suggested, as the whole study was designed around Durban tourism.
- Only the marketing mix components of the competitiveness model were covered. Thus, other aspects of competitiveness, which could be very important, were not covered. Nonetheless, the study objective was to examine the stakeholders' opinions of the marketing of Durban. These other aspects on competitiveness could be the subject of further research as suggested in the next section.
- The results obtained reflected relatively little variance between the variables. This may have been due to the use of a 5 point Likert scale, which may not have discriminated sufficiently between respondents' opinions.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As mentioned, research into the lack of repeat visitors would be beneficial to tourism stakeholders in Durban, while the following areas could also be investigated through further research:

- Other aspects in the competitiveness models that could be critical to successful, sustainable marketing of Durban as a destination.
- Determining the requirements to increase the number of international flights to Durban.
- Research into tourists' satisfaction, once they have visited Durban.
- The need for improved customer service and what the key areas are that need improvement.
- Future work in this field, if using Likert scales, should use at least a 7-point scale to increase the likelihood of variance in responses being more clear.

As highlighted by Crouch and Ritchie (2003:2) a tourism destination is competitive when it has the ability to increase tourism expenditure, increasingly attract visitors, whilst providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences and maintain profitability, while enhancing the well-being of the destination's residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Factors that contribute to the competitive advantage of the tourism industry in Durban: a stakeholder perspective.

1. Part A: Biographical Information

Please mark an [X] in the appropriate block or number.

1.1. What sector of the tourism industry are you currently employed in?	
Tourism	1
Hospitality	2
Retail Travel	3
Government	4

1.2. Gender	
Male	1
Female	2

1.3. Age Group	
18-29	1
30-40	2
41-55	3
56 and above	4

1.4. Qualification	
Certificate	1
Diploma	2
Degree	3
Other	4

PART B: Establishing Durban's competitiveness factors

Please answer the following questions below in relation to Durban's tourism and hospitality product/offering. Place an X in the appropriate box:

2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement that describes Durban's product offerings as a destination?					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.1. Durban is an appealing destination.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2. Tourists visit Durban because of its attractions and events.	1	2	3	4	5
2.3. Durban exhibits rich culture and history.	1	2	3	4	5
2.4. Durban has adequate product offerings.	1	2	3	4	5

3. Mark the appropriate box with an X for each of the following statements in relation to pricing in Durban.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
3.1. Durban is regarded as an affordable destination by tourists to visit	1	2	3	4	5
3.2. Tourists regard Durban as a value for money destination	1	2	3	4	5
3.3. Pricing in Durban is influenced by market demand, competition and environmental factors	1	2	3	4	5

Mark the appropriate box with an X for each of the following statements

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that describes Durban's distribution channels.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
4.1. Information regarding tour operators, travel agents, accommodation, transportation is easily available to tourists in Durban	1	2	3	4	5
4.2. Information on Durban is easily available on the internet.	1	2	3	4	5
4.3. Is there sufficient information on Durban as a destination which is advertised using TV, newspaper and social media?	1	2	3	4	5

Mark the appropriate box with an X for each of the following statements

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that describes Durban's Promotion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
5.1. Durban marketed adequately as a destination on a national and international level.	1	2	3	4	5
5.2. Durban is marketed using a variety of promotional techniques.	1	2	3	4	5
5.3. Durban as a destination has strong brand identity.	1	2	3	4	5

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that describes Durban's people.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
6.1. Your organisation is customer service driven	1	2	3	4	5
6.2. Employees receive regular customer service training and are empowered to handle customer complaints	1	2	3	4	5
6.3. Customer service levels exceeds customer expectations	1	2	3	4	

Mark the appropriate box with an X for each of the following statements

7. How would you rate Durban's physical evidence?					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
7.1. Durban has a low crime rate.	1	2	3	4	5
7.2. Durban is a clean city.	1	2	3	4	5
7.3. Durban's public transportation system is adequate.	1	2	3	4	5
7.4. Durban's climate is good all year round.	1	2	3	4	5
7.5. Durban infrastructure is adequate.	1	2	3	4	5

Mark the appropriate box with an X for each of the following statements

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that describes Durban's process.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
8.1. Tourists are offered effective and efficient customer service.	1	2	3	4	5
8.2. Employees play a vital role in service delivery.					
8.3. Durban offers adequate customer service delivery systems.					

9. Additional comments to any of the above responses

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Factors that contribute to the competitive advantage of the tourism industry in Durban: a stakeholder perspective.

2. Part A: Biographical Information

Please mark an [X] in the appropriate block or number.

1.1. What sector of the tourism industry are you currently employed in?	
Tourism	1
Hospitality	2
Retail Travel	3
Government	4

1.2. Gender	
Male	1
Female	2

1.3. Age Group	
18-29	1
30-40	2
41-55	3
56 and above	4

1.4. Qualification	
Certificate	1
Diploma	2
Degree	3
Other	4

PART B: Establishing Durban's competitiveness factors from a stakeholder perspective

1. Is the infrastructure in Durban sufficient? Elaborate on your answer.

2. Does national and provincial government provide adequate support at city level?

3. Are Durban's product offerings such as attractions, entertainment, accommodation, transportation events and restaurants sufficient for local and international tourists?

4. Do you regard Durban to be a competitive destination on global platform?

5. How can Durban improve its competitiveness as a destination?

6. Is Durban regarded as a value for money destination?

7. Do you think Durban is promoted adequately on a national and international platform?

8. In your opinion are customers satisfied with product offerings in Durban?

9. Do organisations gather and follow up on feedback from customers?

10. Is Durban regarded as an easily accessible destination to international tourists?

APPENDIX 3: FACTOR ANALYSIS STATISTICS

Question 2: Product Offerings

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.819
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square
	622.532
	df
	6
	Sig.
	.000

Component Matrix^a

	Component
	1
Durban is an appealing destination	.865
Tourists visit Durban because of its attractions and events	.909
Durban exhibits rich culture and history	.802
Durban has adequate product offerings	.845

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Question 3: Pricing

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.689
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square
	261.357
	df
	3
	Sig.
	.000

Component Matrix^a

	Component
	1
Durban is regarded as an affordable destination by tourists to visit?	.853
Tourists regard Durban as a value for money destination	.858
Pricing in Durban is influenced by market demand, competition and environmental factors	.790

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Question 4: Distribution Channels

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.726
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square
	394.640
	df
	3
	Sig.
	.000

Component Matrix^a

	Component
	1
Information regarding tour operators, travel agents, accommodation, transportation is easily available to tourists in Durban	.864
Information on Durban is easily available on the internet	.896
Durban as a destination is advertised using TV, newspaper and social media	.874

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Question 5: Promotion

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.750
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	696.886
Df	3
Sig.	.000

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Durban marketed adequately as a destination on a national and international level	.932
Durban is marketed using a variety of promotional techniques	.945
Durban as a destination has strong brand identity	.912

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Question 6: People

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.732
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	507.925
Df	3
Sig.	.000

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Your organisation customer service driven	.890
Employees receive regular customer service training and are empowered to handle customer complaints	.891
Customer service levels exceeds customer expectations	.926

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Question 7: Physical Evidence

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.780
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	579.011
Df	10
Sig.	.000

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Durban has a low crime rate	.768
Durban is a clean city	.854
Durban's public transportation system is adequate	.853
Durban's climate is good all year round	.360
Durban infrastructure is adequate	.842

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Question 8: Process

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.651	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	505.967
	Df	3
	Sig.	.000

Component Matrix^a

	Component
	1
Tourists are offered effective and efficient customer service	.923
Employees play a vital role in service delivery	.767
Durban offers adequate customer service delivery systems	.931

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF CONSENT

159 Kennedy Road
Clare Estate
Durban
4091
9 September 2014

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT

I am currently undertaking a research project as part of my studies towards a Masters degree in Technology: Hospitality and Tourism at Durban University of Technology. The study aims to determine Durban's tourism competitiveness from a stakeholder perspective.

Would you agree to complete a questionnaire for the study? The questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes. Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons, and without prejudice or any adverse consequences. The information you give will only be used for research purposes and will be aggregated with other responses and only the overall or average information will be used. Your identity and individual answers will be kept totally confidential. Should you wish to discuss this further please feel free to contact me or my supervisor Dr Rishi Balkaran, telephone: 031 3735333 or rishi@dut.ac.za or Mr Solly Docrat, telephone: 031 3735480 or sollyd@dut.ac.za.

Your assistance will be much appreciated,

Yours faithfully,


Sacha Mhlanga
0837437377
sacha_m@ananzi.co.za

APPENDIX 5: TURNITIN REPORT

10-Aug-2017 08:40AM (UTC+0200)

Submission ID: 836246117

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STUDENT PAPERS

APPENDIX 6: EDITOR'S REPORT

Helen Richter

Advanced Editing, Proofreading
& Copy writing

feetjieding@gmail.com
072 9538169

08 August 2017

To whom it may concern:

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING & AUTHENTICATION

I have proofread and edited the following MTech thesis and certify that the contents are, to the best of my knowledge, the author's own work:

"Factors that Contribute to the Competitive Advantage of the Tourism Industry in Durban: A Stakeholder Perspective"

By Sacha Maharaj

With thanks,



H. S. Richter
