

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT IN THE ACCOMMODATION SECTOR: A CASE STUDY OF BED AND BREAKFAST ESTABLISHMENTS IN PORT ST JOHNS, EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract: The tourism industry is well recognized for its significant socio-economic and environmental impacts that might not always be positive, and that might result in enduring problems at tourism destinations. The environment is a playground in which most tourism activities that take place are staged and performed. It is, therefore, reasonable that the environment is seen as a fundamental tourism product that can either be destroyed or protected by tourism activities. On the other hand, tourism business, due to the nature of unrestricted access and utilization, remain vulnerable to a number of environmental issues that are brought about by those who provide services to tourists. As such, this calls for awareness of the accommodation sector's environmental sustainability, which can be taken care of through the practice of responsible tourism. To address this issue, the concept of accommodation, hence, is seen as one of the main players in terms of tourism, and is seen as benefiting the most from this sector. This paper seeks to establish whether Bed and Breakfasts (B&Bs) in Port St Johns (PSJ) serve to implement any environmental management strategies. Moreover, the paper seeks to determine the awareness of B&B establishments regarding environmental management. Lastly, to determine the perceived importance of environmental management among B&Bs. The primary data collection was undertaken via the surveys of 45 accommodation managers and in-depth interviews with the key stakeholders.

Key words: Environmental management, accommodation, Port St Johns, Eastern Cape Province, Bed and Breakfast

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INTRODUCTION

Hall (2001) indicates that the concept of coastal tourism embraces the full range of tourism, leisure and recreationally oriented activities that take place in the coastal zone and in the offshore coastal waters. However, Cooper et al. (2005) state that, as soon as tourism activity takes place, the environment is inevitably changed or modified, either to facilitate tourism, or through the tourism process. Holden (2000) perceives environmental management as an approach to finding practical ways for saving water, energy, and materials, and for reducing negative environmental impacts. Therefore, the management of operational practices of tourism enterprises is very much part of today's agenda (Leslie, 2001). Therefore, this research attempts to provide an overview of environmental management in B&B establishments in PSJ. The key focus is on B&B establishments, whether engaging in environmental management practices, and whether or not undertaking such types of practice.

According to Markovic et al. (2009), almost all coastal and marine areas produce, or support, multiple products and services, therefore tourism will not flourish if the area loses its attraction to visitors. Fisheries are usually on the receiving end of everyone else's problems. Furthermore, the author states that industry and energy facilities can degrade the environment for all other activities, therefore there is a need to bring sectoral activities together to achieve a commonly acceptable coastal management framework, particularly in terms of the bed and breakfast (B&B) establishments that are usually located in the coastal areas. Maryland (2005) elucidate that such coastal tourism development as resorts and restaurants require an infrastructure supporting coastal development, like activity suppliers and retail business.

South Africa has long stretches of clear coast, with numerous Blue Flag beaches, with a pleasant climate year around, which serve to attract thousands of tourists to the country (Anon, 2003). Therefore, the environmental performance, environmental management and operational practices of tourism enterprises are very much part of today's agenda (Leslie, 2001), and the hospitality and tourism industry is under great pressure to become more environment-friendly and sustainable (Foster and Okeef, 2000). Furthermore, Ivanovic et al., (2009) assert that tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries, and it is centered on the environment, therefore coastline tourism has become a magnet for tourists. This has raised concerns for sustainable development in the way in which tourism brings about development. Thus, it is responsible for a range of detrimental impacts on the natural and physical environment, such as air and water pollution and traffic congestion. Therefore, the complex nature of human activities in the coastal zone requires a holistic approach to obtain a sustainable outcome.

LITERATURE REVIEW

"Tourism is a global phenomenon. It is the world's largest and fastest-growing industry and is a major economic, environmental and sociocultural dynamic force" Haarhoff and De Klerk (2019: 201). Tourism has shown significant growth progress and is estimated to reach 1.8 billion international travelers by the year 2030 (Chuchu, 2020). The tourism industry has grown in leaps and bounds in South Africa, since the first democratic elections in 1994 (Henama, 2018). Tourism is now a major economic contributor, and in the latest statistics, it had

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been revealed that it contributes nearly 2.8% of gross domestic product (GDP). Tourism is promoted because of the positive economic impacts. "The economic benefits include improving the balance of payments, attracting foreign exchange, in addition to increasing tax coffers through the taxation of non-residents" Henama (2017: 72). The tourism industry has a direct, indirect and induced impact on the destination economy. Tourism is a catalyst for other industries such as agriculture and construction (Henama, 2017). "Tourism has a significant impact on economy and social development of the region, contributing to the flow of currency, creating new jobs, improving infrastructure, etc." Baiburvie et al. (2018: 481). The tourism industry is labor-intensive and this means that the growth of tourism is associated with the growth in jobs. Henama (2019) noted that for the past 24 years, tourism growth rate has always exceeded the national growth rate of the country. Rogerson and Rogerson (2019) noted that the major anchors of tourism in South Africa include Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR), nature based leisure tourism founded on iconic wildlife assets and religious tourism. In South Africa, tourism is currently promoted as the panacea of all ills, associated with development, employment and income generation (Marshall, 2005). The accommodation sector is usually the largest part of the tourism economy, providing an important support service

Environmental management in the accommodation sector has been well recognised in international research. Therefore, environmental management is an important issue for B&B establishments, and it is becoming a priority on the agenda of the government (Sucheran, 2016). However, a rapid increase in the number of tourists globally has given rise to the rapid development of B&B establishments, posing an increasing challenge in relation to the consumption of natural resources, therefore the global trend is to encourage those who own B&B establishments to safeguard the environment through the adoption of sound environmental practices. Researchers indicate that, in the past two decades, a number of B&B establishments have initiated environmental management through a number of programmes and schemes aimed at maintaining the environment in a sustainable manner (Sucheran, 2015). Furthermore, a large proportion of B&Bs generally ignores environmental considerations, as they believe that there are no rewards for environmental management (Kang et al., 2012).

In examining the above assertion, one might refer to Lehmann and Joseph (2009) assertion that the urgency of addressing problems creates an ever-increasing demand for solutions that can be implemented either immediately, or at least in the near future, by the identified stakeholders. These solutions, according to Raymond et al. (2010), might be embedded within the concept of environmental management, in terms of which the enterprises concerned might adopt a management practice that enables the protection of the environment on a management basis. Kuvan and Akan (2005), regard environmental management and its impact on the environment as being important at a time when such environment problems as pollution, the depletion of natural resources, and land degradation are increasing.

An overview of tourism and environmental management

With the dawn of tourism, Page and Dowling (2002) express the opinion that increasing pressure was put on natural areas in terms of tourism development. Once again, Page (2003), argues that tourism development has resulted in the birth of environmental management. However, Spenceley (2008) supports that tourism development subsequently caused a number of environmental problems, such as the destruction of ecosystems and pollution, among many others. Furthermore, Best and Thapa (2011) state that research specifically highlighted that the key role of tourism induces environmental degradation, infrastructure development, natural resource extraction, the generation of waste and pollution, loss of vegetation coverage, and soil erosion.

Therefore, environmental management might include the protecting, or the conserving, of the environment to ensure that both the environment and users are not compromised in the process (Harris et al., 2002). Smit and Skinner (2002) advance that, without management, the visitors' or tourists' invasion of the natural environment could tempt an ecological imbalance within environmental ecosystems. This might happen because of the natural resources that are described by Cooper et al., (2005) as being the primary attractions for tourists. Thus, uncontrolled tourist activities might lead to concerns regarding the ecological impacts of tourism (Fyall et al., 2008; Page and Connell, 2009). Additionally, Scheyvens (2002), Page (2003), Cooper et al., (2005); and Marafa (2009) advocate that tourism development needs to be based on environmental management considerations. Irandu (2006) states that studies further indicate that tourists tend to consume greater amounts of energy, water and materials at tourism destinations than they did at home, therefore those are in charged in B&B might be vigilant to any environmental outcomes might come to pass. Additionally, Griffin (2002) asserts that tourism has been accused of being a despoiler of untouched environments, a destroyer of valued lifestyle and an exploiter of poor nations and there is no such as zero impact tourism (Irandu, 2006). However, Lozano-Oyalo et al., (2012) express a belief that the tourism sector consumes considerable amounts of natural resources, both in terms of resource development and operation, and that it depends heavily on the environment. Managing the environment for tourism, according to Page and Dowling (2002), translates into the environment being managed to suit the tourism typology that is being developed in relation to it. According to Page (2003), environmental management should be developed in such a way that the negative impacts of tourism on it are mitigated. However, Keyser (2002) asserts that in the case of environmental management, or the leading stakeholders, certain communities should contemplate the environmental considerations pre-development. Raymond et al. (2010) suggest that strategies should be formulated to ensure that tourism does not destroy the environment and that it is conserved for the benefit of tourism. Certain impacts of the environment affect the B&B establishment, as can be seen below.

Overview of B&B Establishments

According to South African Tourism (2010), the B&B establishment is an informal, periodic accommodation operation undertaken from a private dwelling. The usual maximum number of guest rooms in a B&B establishment is three, although any application received by the authorities for the establishment of a B&B with more than three bedrooms is automatically treated as an application to open a guest-house. B&Bs are lodging establishments that are in residence, and that offer overnight accommodation and breakfast (Rushmore and Baun, 2001). Different types of property form part of the commercial accommodation sector, including B&Bs, guest-houses, backpackers, hotels, and different types of safari lodges (Rogerson, 2012). South African Tourism (2012) asserts that a B&B is a private home that is usually occupied by the owner, who provides accommodation for the travelling vacationing public. SAT states further that B&Bs usually have 20 rooms or less, with a common living room, and either private or shared bathrooms. They are usually operated by the owner, who lives on site, and who may have a small. In South Africa, B&Bs are usually situated in tourist destination areas, particularly in coastal regions where tourism activities take place, such as PSJ. Atul (2008) concurs that an integral component of the tourism industry is the accommodation or lodgings sector, and hotels form an integral component of the tourist image of destinations. While Tzschentke & Martnatic (2003) confirm that the accommodation sector comprises small or independent operations, and while their individual detrimental impact on the environment is limited, their collective one is significant. According to Ayuso (2007), B&B establishments are viewed as leaving the most permanent footprint on the environment, and as having a vast impact on the sustainability of a destination.

The emergence of the sharing economy has changed the tourism industry including commercial accommodation providers such as Bed and Breakfast establishments. The tourism industry has always been accommodative of technology, always embracing technology to reduce

the cost of doing business, leading to massification in tourism consumption. From the emergence of low cost carriers (LCCs) to the sharing economy, the tourism value has increased in terms of customers and expenditure. The sharing economy has been induced by tourism and companies such as Airbnb are playing a leading role in making travel much more democratic. The tourism sharing economy refers broadly to the application of collaborative consumption in the tourism and hospitality industry (Shereni, 2019). The sharing economy is displacing established big business, by creating disruption in industries, by providing a technology platform that matches supply and demand as noted by Henama (2019). "The relationship between the sharing economy and tourism has led to the pooling of resources to provide services in the tourism industry" Henama (2020: 2). Airbnb has impacted on the profitability of many Bed and Breakfast establishments.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT IN THE B&B ESTABLISHMENTS

Goldestein and Primlani (2012) elucidate that the environmental management attention in hospitality sector as beginning over half a century ago, with it being pioneered in destinations such as Caneel Bay and Maho Bay Campus in the US Virgin Islands. However, Best and Thapa (2011) mention that there are three critical issues that need to be examined when assessing environmental management in the accommodation sector. The author further states that, firstly, accommodation providers are profit-driven, and, therefore, managers need to make fiscally responsible decisions. Secondly, this sector offers a service to guests, and managerial decisions are based on optimizing satisfaction (Gustin and Weaver, 2006). Third, and lastly, the development and operation of accommodation establishments impacts on the natural environment.

In contrast, Erkus-Ozturk and Eraydin (2010) emphasize the point that, according to a study based on the South African tourism region, a number of accommodation establishments had become aware of the importance of environmental conservation, with large to medium-sized small establishments indicating a need to build their collaborative action on environmental issues. This was as the result of them coming to believe that they needed higher quality and superior environmental qualities than they had previously had, so as to become more competitive in the global marketplace. However, Jovicic (2010) recommends that the management of accommodation facilities requires a generous amount of knowledge of environmental issues, especially about the environmental balance sheet, in terms of the consumption of natural resources.

The IHEI (1996) identifies a strategic environmental management programme for accommodation that entails:

- having a clear environmental policy;
- having a plan to raise the levels of environmental awareness among staff and customers;
- seeking published information on environmental matters, and having a plan to audit environmental performance;
- designating a staff, or team, to be in charge of environmental management;
- creating an implementation plan to reduce the excessive consumption of goods, energy and water, and emissions;
- participating in the activities of local communities, such as donations; and
- Becoming a member of some environmental organisation, and conducting appropriate research.

Bostwick (2007) states that regardless of whether a place of accommodation is called an eco-lodge or a green hotel, they are all part of the greening of the hospitality industry. Ayuso (2007) contends that since the 1990s, a number of B&B establishments have voluntarily undertaken to focus on environmental aspect of sustainability, including EMSs, codes of conduct, best environmental practices, ecolabels, and environmental performance indicators.

Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA)

According to Sucheran (2016), the TGCSA programme was launched in 2000, and it is recognised as the official quality assurance body for tourism products in SA. However, the central aim of programme was to put into practice a recognizable globally benchmarked system of quality assurance for the accommodation sector, to ensure commitment to maintaining a high standard of quality. Therefore, the programme is responsible for grading all sectors of accommodation in SA, including hotels, lodges, B&Bs, country houses, guest-houses, self-catering, units, caravan and camping sites, and backpackers.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design

Creswell (2009) defines research design as a process that is comprised of plans and procedures for research that span the taking of decisions on the basis of the making of broad assumptions, to the adoption of a detailed method of data collection analysis. However, there are three different types of research design: quantitative; qualitative; and mixed method. Furthermore, qualitative research design according to Creswell (2009) consists of the researcher generating and formulating questions, as well as adopting procedures, that are directed towards gathering participants' views or opinions on a particular topic. The findings in this design (Gibbs, 2007) are interpreted either in the form of narratives, or in the words of the researcher him/herself. In the same vein, Creswell (2009) defines a quantitative research design as being a means of testing objectives and theories by examining the relationships existing among variables. Therefore, a quantitative research design is used to describe patterns, and to explain relationships existing among variables (Ivankova et al., 2011). However, the authors state further that the mixed method approach is used, which is basically a procedure for collecting, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data within a single study, to understand a research problem completely (Ivankova et al., 2011). Use of the mixed method allows for what was not covered by the quantitative research design to be covered by the qualitative design, and vice versa. The intention is to corroborate the findings according to three different approaches in order to clarify and validate the data concerned. The mixed method approach also provides a way for a researcher to communicate the quantitative results relatively easily, with the support of data from the qualitative design.

Sampling selection

Kumar (2005) asserts sampling is concerned with the selection of the subset of individuals from within a population that enables an estimation to be made of the characteristics of the whole population. There are three main advantages of sampling, which are that the cost is lower, the data collection is faster, and, since the data set is similar, it is possible to ensure homogeneity, and to improve the accuracy, and the quality, of the data concerned. For the purpose of the current study, judgmental sampling was used, with such sampling involving the researcher judging who should be included in the sampling. Therefore, this technique was successfully employed in the fieldwork.

Sample size

Due to the limitations of accommodation establishments, the researcher was able to interview the owners/managers of 41 out of the 45 targeted B&Bs. For that reason, it was guesstimated that the 41 accommodation establishments practiced environmental management strategies. Due to the limitations of the study, the researcher was able to survey all the elements in the representative sample. The number of interviewees was viable for the researcher, because it was higher than the statistically and scientifically acceptable minimum percentage of 33.3%.

SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

Primary data

Veal (2006) avers that primary data is a data that is specifically collected in a research project, with the researcher being the primary user of such data. Moreover, Barbie and Mouton (2011) define primary research as research that involves the collection of original data, using an accepted research methodology. The current study employed primary data through the use of a questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents in the accommodation sector establishments in PSJ. The researchers managed to administer the questionnaires to the respondents, and were able to obtain the required primary data from the fieldwork.

Secondary data

Secondary data, according to Veal (2006) is the data that already exist. It is collected for some other purpose by another researcher; however, it could be used again in the current research. Secondary research normally denotes an activity during which no new original data are collected, but where the research project in question draws on existing secondary data sources alone (Kumar, 2005). Therefore, for the purpose of the current study, the researcher collected secondary data on issues around environmental management, and on the accommodation sector, from key participants in environmental management. The sources consulted included books, journals, and Internet articles, as well as the work of previous students who had conducted a similar study.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

In terms of collecting data for the research, the research utilized a questionnaire containing both open-ended and closed-ended questions. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. A questionnaire was used as the collection instrument for the current research, because using such an instrument is relatively inexpensive and easy. A questionnaire is, however, limited by the fact that the respondents must be able to listen to, or to read, the questions concerned, and to be able to respond to them.

Procedures followed in data capturing and analysis

The quantitative data were captured and analyzed using SPSS software. The use of such software allowed for the conducting of statistical tests to generate tables and charts. The qualitative data were analyzed through categorizing and conceptualizing for research reporting. Adopting such an approach helped the researcher to explain further why the observed concepts and terms were important for the study, and why certain behavior occurred. This assisted in the analysis, and in the process of trying to identify the conclusions and recommendations that could be drawn from the observations.

Ethical considerations

The researchers ensured that the respondents were informed that their participation in the survey was completely voluntary. As such, the respondents were free to opt out of it at any stage if they felt uncomfortable about it. In this way, they could be sure that no harm or injury would happen to them, whether or not they chose to participate in the survey. The respondents' answers were kept confidential and presented anonymously, and the fieldworkers introduced themselves as researchers at the beginning of the survey.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What is the level of awareness of the phenomenon of environmental management?
- Do B&Bs in PSJ implement any environmental management strategies?
- Are B&Bs in PSJ aware of environmental management?

Research objectives

Based on the research questions developed, the following objectives were deemed to be the blueprint for the study. The study sought to:

- Determine the awareness of B&B establishments about environmental management;
- Establish whether the B&Bs in PSJ had implemented any environmental management strategies;
- Determine the perceived importance of environmental management among B&Bs in PSJ.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Strategies undertaken with regards to waste management

The respondents were asked to indicate the strategies that were undertaken to manage the environment. The results obtained are shown in Table 1 below. Despite some of the establishments practicing such strategies, most of the respondents responded negatively to the statement made in this regard.

Table 1. Accommodation Establishments Practicing Waste Management Strategies

Strategies	Total (n=45, in %)	
It educates staff and customers on how to conserve resources	87.8	12.2
It has a programme in place to minimize waste	80.5	19.5
Recycle bins are installed to encourage recycling	68.4	31.6
There is a water conservation programme in place	55.0	45.0

Were environmental issues a significant concern to the accommodation establishment?

The respondents were asked whether environmental issues were of concern to their establishment. Figure 1 below reflects the responses that were obtained in this respect. The majority (85%) of the respondents indicated that their B&B establishment was concerned with environmental management, followed by 15% of the respondents who indicated that it was not. The results show that the outcry regarding the preservation and the conservation of the environment remains a concern to the accommodation establishment in Port St. Johns.

The importance of environmental considerations in the daily management of the accommodation establishment

The respondents were asked to indicate how important they regarded environmental management as being in the daily routine of the business. Figure 2 below shows that the majority of the respondents (62%) of respondents considered environmental management to be very

important to their establishment. It was followed by several (28%) of the respondents who indicated that environmental considerations were important. The remaining 10% were neutral on the issue. Overall, 90% of the accommodation establishments considered environmental issues to be important to their daily routine. The findings could mean that the accommodation sector in PSJ has accepted the need to sustainability manage their business in a way that gives due consideration to what is negative in the environment.

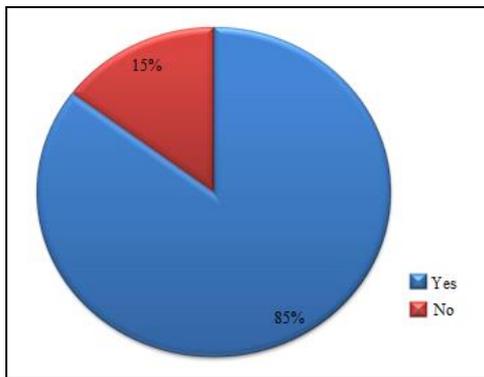


Figure 1. Were environmental issues a significant concern for the B&B (n=45, in %)

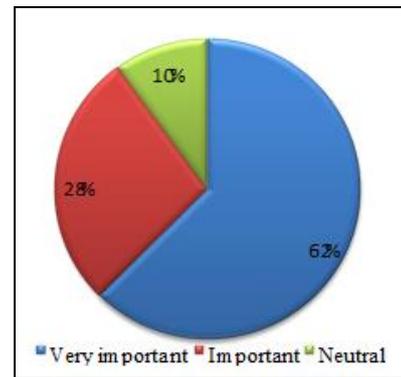


Figure 2. The importance of environmental considerations in the management of the accommodation establishment (n=45, in %)

Respondents’ general understanding of environmental management in the accommodation sector

In terms of the respondents’ general understanding of environmental management in the accommodation sector, they were asked, in a closed-ended question, to express their views about their general understanding of environmental management. Figure 3 below shows the emerging themes of views or opinions regarding the conceptual categories involved, in which recycling, responsible tourism and sustainable tourism were largely prominent. The respondents were generally sound on the need to protect and conserve resources, and to be sustainable. The results were generally consistent (at 2.4%), except that 4.9% of the respondents indicated that they understood environmental management to consist of responsible tourism.

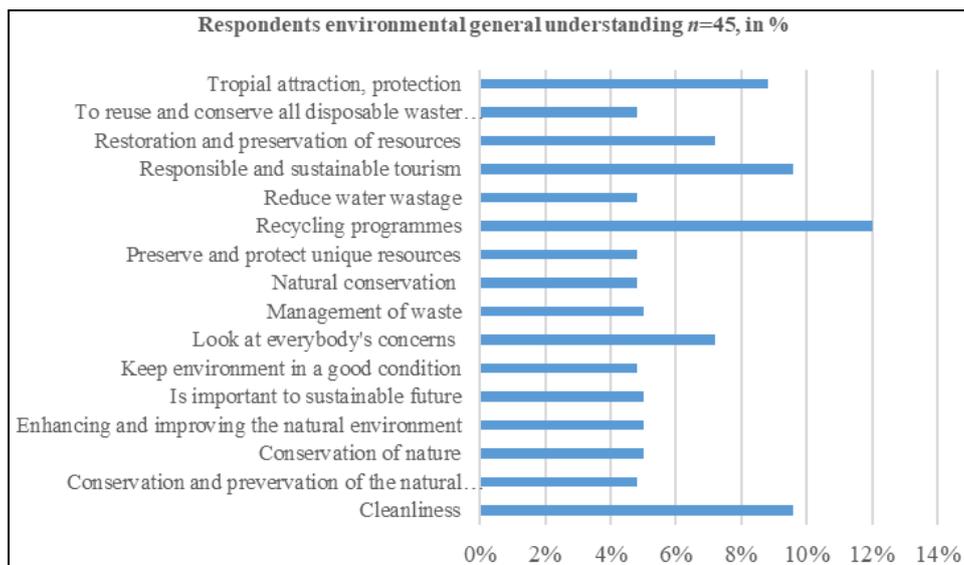


Figure 3. General understanding of the meaning of environmental management

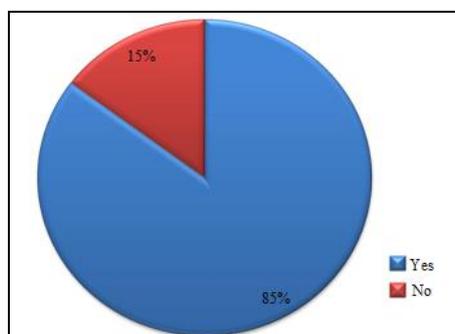


Figure 4. Awareness of any environmental management practices undertaken in the accommodation establishment (n=45, in %)

Awareness of any environmental practices carried on at the B&B establishment

Regarding the responses that were received when the respondents were asked to indicate whether they were aware of environmental management practices that were carried out at the B&B establishment, Figure 4 below shows the percentages that were obtained in this

respect. Of the respondents, 85% indicated that they knew about environmental management, while 15% indicated that they had little knowledge about activities that needed to be undertaken to manage the environment.

Which environmental management practices are currently undertaken in the establishment?

In a follow-up question to the respondents who indicated that they were aware of environmental management practices being undertaken in the accommodation establishment, the managers/owners were asked of which emerging strategies the respondents were aware. Figure 5 below indicates that a classified number of environmental actions were widely applied in the B&Bs and lodges in the study. The most widespread practices that were undertaken by the various establishments included the education of staff/employees in environmental management. The results that were received showed that the accommodation establishments practiced environmental management strategies, of which some were covering swimming-pools in winter to lower the evaporation, and conducting sustainable cycling programmes for the purpose of responsible tourism, as well as water conservation.

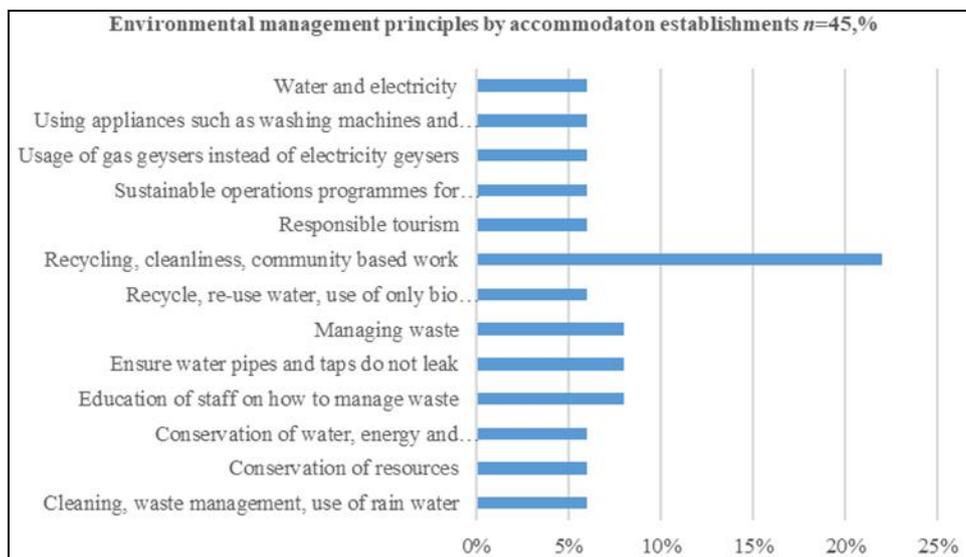


Figure 5. Which environmental management practices are known to be undertaken by the accommodation establishments?

Respondents' views on barriers to proper environmental action undertaken in their business

Murillo-Luna et al. (2011) perceive that there are internal and external barriers to environmental measures that require considering regarding environmental management. Therefore, Table 2 below illustrates the responses that were received when the respondents were asked to indicate which barriers they faced in terms of environmentally friendly management. The authors state further that the barriers include the lack of resources, the employees' attitude towards implementation, negative attitudes towards environmental issues, the lack of understanding and know-how, and the lack of consumer demand for environmentally friendly products. Other significant barriers were noted, included a lack of adequate knowledge and insufficient resources, as well as a lack of resources and of general interest from the local government in terms of the granting of assistance, which were seen as major constraints to environmental management in the B&B establishments in Port St Johns.

Table 2. Barriers to Proper Environmental Action Undertaken in their Business extents barriers t

Barriers	Total (n=45, in %)	
Lack of promotion of environmental management system	76.9	23.1
See no benefit	45.9	54.1
Lack of government assistance	92.5	7.5
Lack of adequate knowledge environmental and technical skill for environmental concerns	73.7	26.3
Recycling	92.7	7.3
Water conservation and re-use	80.5	19.5
Proper disposal of waste	97.5	2.5

BEST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRACTICES RECOMMENDED BY THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents were asked to express their opinion on which environmental friendly practices they would recommend. Figure 6 below shows that the majority (36%) of the respondents were of the view that proper disposal was the most important environmental management technique recommended. This was followed by recycling (34%). Of the respondents, 30% recommended water conservation. The results do not show much difference in terms of percentages. According to Sucheran (2016), it is important for the accommodation sector to remind guests about the need to practice environmentally friendly measures, such as the need to save water and electricity, and for recycling (Sucheran, 2016).

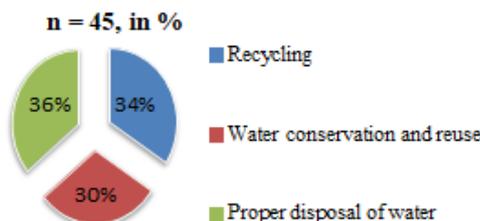


Figure 6. Best environmentally friendly practices recommended by respondents

Limitations of the study

The current study, which was limited to the Post St Johns area in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, specifically focused on guest-houses and B&Bs along the Wild Coast coastline area. This was due mainly to the researcher's economic difficulties and time constraints. Moreover, attention was given to the managers/stakeholders who owned B&B establishments, since the researcher was unable to interview all the stakeholders of the different establishments.

Significance of the study

It is interesting to note that B&B establishments are pressured to give attention to environmental management issues and policies in every phase of business venture. This range from the preparation and application of site plans and business programmes and policies, to the implementation and maintenance of daily routine practices. As such, this study seeks to contribute to the further understanding of the role of B&B establishments in managing environments, as well to the increased awareness of the importance of environmental management, particularly in those small business establishments that directly offer tourism services.

Future research directions

As projected by the current researcher, further investigation should be conducted in future concerning tourism and environmental management. Future related studies should be carried out to find out whether there are similarities and differences in the findings obtained regarding the issue of environmental management in accommodation establishments. Furthermore, future studies could investigate the behavior of guests in selecting environmentally friendly accommodation, for such is a critical issue in terms of the field of environmental management.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The current study could play a principal role in enlightening relevant stakeholders and sectors concerning how they could improve their environmental management practices by adopting more environmentally friendly practices than they have undertaken in the past. In regard to the conclusions made, the following recommendations are shared. According to Sucheran (2016), customers' demand for environmentally friendly products is bringing about visible change in the environmental commitment of B&Bs and lodges, with the stakeholders' involvement in the matter being advisable, in terms of employing which strategies are desirable under the prevailing circumstances. However, the current study found that the entrepreneurs involved were aware of the significance of environmental management initiatives, with many of them already having initiated a number of environmentally friendly practices. Furthermore, Sucheran (2016) small business participation in environmental management is to be encouraged. Therefore, the PSJ local municipality is advised by the researcher to conduct initiatives to inform, and to raise the awareness of, the relevant stakeholders regarding strategies and policies governing environmental management in terms of the accommodation establishments concerned.

The results of the current study have shown that environmental programmes, through a process such as the environmental auditing of every establishment to assess whether they are following environmentally aware procedures, and through a re-evaluation of past achievements, have brought about a need for indicators that can be used for the monitoring of resource usage. According to Buckley (2012), the mainstreaming of environmental management in the hospitality sector requires government intervention and legislation. Therefore, PSJ local municipality is also advised to back such establishments in their use of such environmental management tools as the EIA and the EMS, which were discussed in the literature review. Furthermore, other private stakeholders who deal with environmental issues should intervene in the establishments, and they should interact with environmental organizations to boost their efforts in providing the B&B establishments with the appropriate information and knowledge regarding management of the environment. In the endeavor to gauge the depth of existing theories and literature regarding the phenomenon of environmental management, the current study was aimed at investigating existing B&B establishments, to determine the perceived importance of environmental management among B&Bs in PSJ, as well as at measuring the awareness of guest-house, B&B establishments about environmental management, with an eye to responsible tourism, and to the strategies governing environmental practices. In this regard, the researcher was able to generate recommendations for the relevant stakeholders to consider, and to utilize, as a foundation upon which strategies of proper environmental management might be built.

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