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# Motivations to travel as a backpacker

Case: Australia

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## ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to study the motives of people who travel to Australia as backpackers. After backpacking in Australia myself I wanted to find out what motivates other people to travel to Australia as backpackers. The goal was to find out what kind of tourists people who choose to travel as backpackers are and what motivates them to do it. The reasons for choosing Australia as their backpacking destination were studied as well.

In the theoretical part different travel and tourism industry related terms and some theories of motivation are described in order to better understand the analysis of the results of the research. A quantitative, electronic questionnaire survey was conducted and the results are based on the 81 answers that were received.

According to the results of the research backpackers are young people who want to get away from routine life. They want to meet new people, experience excitement and learn something new about themselves while exploring the world. Most backpackers that travel to Australia are Europeans. The size, the nature and the wildlife of Australia as well as the fact that it is very far away are appealing attributes which backpackers are drawn to.

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Keywords	Travel motivation, backpacking, tourism, Australia
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## ABSTRAKT

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Efter att ha rest som backpacker i Australien blev jag intresserad av att ta reda på varför så många väljer att resa just dit som backpackers. Målet med detta lärdomsprov var att ta reda på vilken typ av turister människor som reser som backpackers är och varför de väljer att göra det. Orsaken till varför så många väljer att resa just till Australien undersöktes också.

I teoridelen går man igenom en del bastermer inom turismen samt några motivationsteorier för att bättre förstå analysen av resultatet av undersökningen. I undersökningen användes en kvantitativ, elektronisk enkät. Resultatet baserar sig på de 81 svar som samlades in.

På basis av undersökningen kan man dra den slutsatsen att backpackers är unga människor som vill fly vardagens rutiner. De vill träffa nya människor, uppleva äventyr och lära sig något nytt om sig själva samtidigt som de upptäcker världen. De flesta backpackers som reser till Australien är européer. Storleken, naturen och djurlivet i Australien samt det faktum att det är så långt borta är lockande egenskaper som backpackers dras till.

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

Over the last couple of decades backpacking has been a fast growing sector in the tourism industry. Back in the day when the first backpackers appeared, it was something that only the most venturesome people did but today more and more people want to explore the world through backpacking. It is very common among young people, especially from western countries such as the European and North American countries, to go on a backpacking trip at some point in their lives. Some of the most popular backpacking destinations are South East Asia, Australia and South America. The aim of this thesis is to study the motivations of people who travel to Australia as backpackers. I chose this subject because I have travelled to Australia as a backpacker myself and I was interested in finding out what motivates people to travel as backpackers and why so many choose Australia as their backpacking destination.

## **1.1 Research problem**

The aim of the research is to find out what kind of tourists people who choose to travel as backpackers are and what motivates them to do it. The destination choice and the reasons for choosing Australia as their destination are studied as well. From the survey I want to find out if backpackers who travel to Australia can be seen as more allocentric or psychocentric types of tourists and which motivators and push factors make them want to go backpacking. The importance of different pull factors and attributes of a destination when choosing their destination is also studied.

## **1.2 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis consists of two main sections; the theoretical study and the empirical study. In the theoretical section different travel and tourism industry related terms and some theories of behaviour are described in order to better understand the analysis of the research conducted in the empirical part of the study.

The first chapter describes the reason behind the research and the research problem. In chapter 2 the term tourism is explained and the chapter also gives an over-

view of the background and history of travel and tourism. Chapter 3 describes the history of backpacking and the terms backpacker and backpacking are defined. Different backpacking trends are listed in chapter 3 as well and the chapter also gives an insight in backpacking in Australia. In chapter 4 tourist motivation is described and some theories of motivation, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the leisure motivation scale by Beard and Ragheb, are explained. Push and pull factors and determinants are also included in chapter 4. Cohen's and Plog's typologies are explained in chapter 5 and chapter 6 gives an overview of the decision making process when choosing a destination. Chapter 7 gives an overview of Australia as a country; the climate, the nature and also the tourism industry. In chapter 8 different research methods are defined. The differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches to research are explained and validity and reliability are also discussed in this chapter. How the research was implemented is included in chapter 8 as well. The results of the research are presented in chapter 9 and chapter 10 consists of conclusions and suggestions for further research.

## 2 TOURISM

When we hear the word tourism we think of people travelling to different destinations, taking a vacation, sunbathing, sightseeing, experiencing new cultures, or just having a good time. Tourism is not only all of that, it is also the world's largest industry and it is continuously growing bigger (Goeldner, Ritchie 2009, 4). With new trends, markets, destinations and technology it is an industry that is constantly changing.

Tourism is the movement of people travelling to and staying in a place that is outside of the normal place of residence and work for leisure, business and other purposes. There are two elements in tourism, the first one is the journey to the destination and the second one is the stay and activities taking place at the destination. The movement is temporary and short-term, this means that the traveller's intention is to return within a few days, weeks or months. The maximum length of stay is one year. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2005, 13)

### 2.1 History of travel

People have travelled through all ages, for one reason or another. Even long before the wheel was invented people moved around on foot. Humans are curious and adventurous by nature. However, at this time, the main reason for travelling was to survive. As seasons changed and animals migrated people followed them to hunt for food and get shelter. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 8)

The beginning of the modern era of travel could be marked about 4000 B.C.E. This is when money and the wheel were invented by the Babylonians and also the beginning of the development of trade. This meant that it was now possible for people to pay for transportation and accommodation. One could say that the Babylonians were the founders of the travel business. (Goeldner, Ritchie 2009, 37)

#### *The Empire Era*

The Empire Era, including the time of the Egyptian Kingdoms, the Greek Empire and the Roman Empire, is when the tourism industry really started to develop. At

this time people started travelling for governmental, commercial, educational and religious purposes and also for pleasure. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 8)

The Egyptian Kingdoms (4850-715 B.C.E.) were the first known civilization to have united governmental functions at centralized locations. It was easy to travel to these locations by boat using the Nile River. Travelling in both directions was possible thanks to the current going north and the wind blowing south. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 8-9)

About 2700 B.C.E. the pharaohs began building the famous burial tombs using the good building stone in the Nile valley. These burial tombs included the Step Pyramid of Djoser, the Sphinx, the three great pyramids at Giza, and the pyramid complex at Abusir. The ancient Egyptian pyramids and the Sphinx are considered to be some of the world's first tourist attractions. As early as 1600 B.C.E. these great wonders started to attract large numbers of visitors. Many visitors came for religious purposes and spent some time in prayer, but for most of them the main motivation was curiosity and enjoyment. Like tourists today, these visitors felt the need to leave evidence of their visit so many scratched their names in the stone with a sharp object. Some also wanted to purchase souvenirs. (Goeldner, Ritchie 2009, 38)

In the Greek Empire (900-200 B.C.E.) people started travelling more for enjoyable experiences and pleasure. Aristotle promoted the concept of leisure as a key element of the Greek lifestyle. The Greek cities offered activities like shopping, eating, drinking, gaming, watching sports and theatre. The development of the Ancient Olympic Games 776 B.C.E. had a great impact on the tourism business. As people travelled to the site to watch the games and were housed in tents a tourism event was created. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 10; Page 2009, 39)

During the growth of the Roman Empire (500 B.C.E.-300 C.E.) leisure facilities like spas, baths and resorts were created and just like the Greeks people enjoyed a leisure lifestyle. In addition, with the conquering of overseas territories came a demand for business-related travel. Good roads were built, Roman currency was universally accepted and Greek and Latin were common languages. This made

travel to distant places easier and safer. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 10; Page 2009, 39)

### *The Middle Ages and the Renaissance*

As the Roman Empire collapsed travel became less common. The breakdown of the previously controlled and organized society resulted in many different currencies, languages and transportation systems. This made travel more difficult and sometimes even dangerous. During the Middle Ages (5th-14th centuries) travel almost disappeared completely. However, one exception to this was the Crusades taking place in the years of 1096 to 1291. As the Roman Catholic Church became more powerful there were nine Crusades to retake the Holy Land. The main reasons behind the Crusades were war and conquest but another motivation for the Crusaders was to get away from home and experience new places. After the Crusades, in 1275-1295, the merchant Marco Polo travelled across the Middle East and all the way to China. This increased the interest in travel and trade and resulted in the rebirth of travel during the Renaissance (14th-16th centuries). Trade routes reopened as commercial activities grew and people became more interested in learning about new cultures and started seeing the educational benefits of travel. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 11)

### *The Grand Tour Era*

The Grand Tour Era (1613-1785) began with diplomats, businesspeople and scholars travelling to countries like France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany to seek educational experiences. It started with the wealthy English but later became fashionable among other individuals too. People who had the time and money travelled throughout Europe to get knowledge about the countries they visited and experience the cultures of the "civilized world". The trips could last for many years. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 11-12)

As can be seen from the history of tourism, travel has always existed. It started with people travelling for survival, they moved because they had to. Trade and business were also early forms of tourism. Since people are curious by nature and

as new methods of transportation developed and roads got better travel evolved into people seeking new experiences and adventures just for fun.

### **3 BACKPACKING AS A FORM OF TOURISM**

Backpacking is a low-budget, independent way of travelling. What makes a backpacker differ from a normal tourist is that they prefer to stay in budget accommodation, usually go on longer trips and often visit many different countries while travelling. Backpackers are also more likely to organize their travels themselves instead of buying a packaged trip like many of the normal holiday travellers do. Backpackers usually enjoy meeting new people, both locals and other travellers. (Richards, Wilson 2004, 92)

#### **3.1 History of backpacking**

It is difficult to determine exactly when backpacking as we know it today started. Some say that it began with the “Hippie trail” in the 1960’s, but the evolution of backpacking may have started much earlier than that. The early explorers went out on adventures with ships or wagons to explore the unknown parts of the world already in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Some consider Italian explorer Giovanni Careri who lived in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century to be the very first backpacker due to the fact that he was the first traveller who actually travelled just for the fun of it. Careri was the first European to do a solo tour around the globe using only public transportation. While travelling, he liked talking to locals and exploring exotic destinations just like many backpackers today. (Southeastasiabackpacker.com 2011)

One could also say that backpacking started as hiking or camping. The backpack was invented in 1920 by Lloyd F. Nelson. As camping and exploring the outdoors became more popular in the 1940’s and the hikes got longer more equipment, like tents, sleeping bags and cooking accessories, was needed. Over the years the backpack became lighter and more developed to fit all of these gadgets. America embraced hiking by creating the National Scenic Trail Act in 1968. President Lyndon Johnson proposed the act in 1965 because he wanted to encourage people to rediscover the outdoors and nature. Large areas of land became available to the public for recreational use and trails became more accessible. (Duinsure.com 2013)

Exactly when hiking developed into backpacking is hard to say but many people claim that the “Hippie Trail” of the 1960’s and 1970’s influenced the modern concept of backpacking a lot. Many free souls travelled from Europe to Asia following segments of the Silk Road, an ancient trading network spreading from Europe to China. These young people left home in search of adventure, spiritual enlightenment or in search of their own identity. One of the most popular routes was Europe to Kathmandu through Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India to Nepal. Along the way some areas became known as “hippie-hang-outs”. The most famous one was Freak Street in Kathmandu where you could find cheap accommodation, cheap food and cheap cannabis; this could be compared to places like Khao San Road in Bangkok that is a popular spot among backpackers today. (Southeastasiabackpacker.com 2011)

### **3.2 Backpacking trends**

The original backpackers travelled to experience new interesting cultures and learn something about the world and they view travel as a personal growth. For these people travel is their life and they see the whole world as their home. However, this is not the only form of backpacking. (Aswetravel.com 2014)

Over the years, new backpacking trends have occurred, one of them is flashpacking. Flashpackers are backpackers with a higher budget and usually more limited time when travelling. They carry with them all the latest stuff and electronic equipment to make travelling more comfortable. They travel around the world like backpackers and visit all the main attractions but instead of saving money for a trip they might spend it on drinking, partying and nicer accommodation. One could describe it as backpacking in style. Another form of backpacking that is becoming more popular, which could be seen as the opposite of flashpacking, is ultralight backpacking. The ultralight backpackers use smaller packs, buy lightweight clothes and even cut their toothbrushes in half to ease the weight of their backpacks. (Aswetravel.com 2014)

Back in the day backpackers were young people going out to explore the world without any planning or knowledge about the places they were about to visit. Now

backpackers are using the internet to do research about destinations and plan their trip before they go. Also, the age of backpackers has increased. Previously backpackers used to be in the age group of 18 to 25 or even younger than 18, but nowadays we can see people up to 30 or even older traveling as backpackers. (Thealternativetravelguide.org 2014)

Another growing trend among backpackers is the desire to get a local and authentic experience. Even though they still might visit the main tourist attractions in a city people want to know how the locals live, where they hang out and what restaurants they prefer. (Thealternativetravelguide.org 2014)

### **3.3 Backpacking in Australia**

Australia is one of the most popular backpacking destinations in the world with more than half a million international backpackers visiting each year. In the year ending June 2014 9 per cent of all visitors entering Australia were backpackers and they accounted for 14 per cent of visitor expenditure which makes the backpacker market a significant tourist sector. The average stay of backpackers was 80 nights which makes Australia a huge destination for long-term travellers. (Tourism Research Australia 2014)

## 4 MOTIVATION IN TOURISM

Motivation answers the question why people travel. When making travel decisions there are different factors influencing the process. All individuals have their own travel motivators and their own attitudes, perceptions and images of the world or of a specific destination. All of this will influence their travel decisions. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 43)

Motivating factors in tourism can be divided into two groups; factors which motivate a person to travel and factors which motivate a person to travel to a specific destination at a particular time. Every tourist is different and has different motivating factors. The main factors determining a tourist's motivations are personality, lifestyle, past experiences, past life, their own image and perceptions of their own strengths and weaknesses. Motivators may change over time if there are changes in the individual's personal circumstances like e.g. having a child, worsening health or increase or reduction in income. Every tourist is likely to be influenced by a number of different motivators at a time, not just one. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 53-55)

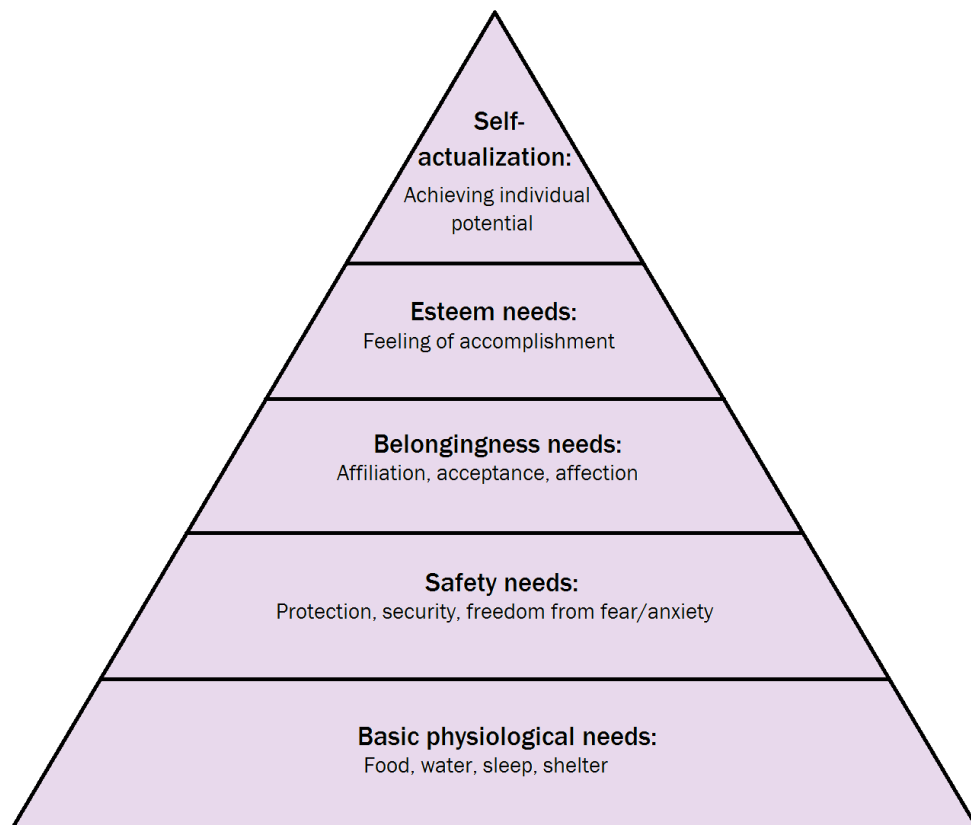
Different demographic groups usually have different motivating factors. A study published in 1996 found that there are significant differences between tourists of different ages, sexes, educational attainment, income and marital status. The study showed that young people usually preferred holidays with a lot of activities while older travellers were looking for restful destinations with sightseeing opportunities. Highly educated respondents showed a preference for destinations offering cultural and nature-based activities while people with lower education thought it was important to try new and unfamiliar activities on their vacations. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 58)

There are also national and cultural differences when it comes to motivators. While people from the Northern European countries and the Northern states of the USA are motivated by the desire to get a suntan, people from hotter countries want to escape the heat by taking trips to the cooler hilly areas. Some people seek some form of spiritual fulfilment and wish to embark on a pilgrimage; this is more

common among e.g. Muslims than Christians. Some motivators like nostalgia, romance and the desire to see sights are universal. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 59)

#### 4.1 Maslow's hierarchy model

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is one of the most well-known theories of motivation through time. The theory is based on the principle of ranking the individual needs. According to Maslow the level of self-actualization, which is the highest level in the hierarchy model, is what people should aspire to. He also claimed that if none of the needs in the hierarchy were satisfied the physiological needs, which are the lowest level of needs, would dominate the behaviour. When the lower needs were satisfied they would no longer motivate and the individual would move on to the next level. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 45)



**Figure 1.** Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The model has five basic needs that the individual wants to fulfil (figure 1). The lowest level of needs is basic physiological needs which consist of food, water, sleep and shelter. After this comes safety needs like protection, security and freedom from fear and anxiety. For most individuals in developed countries these two levels of needs have been met and they are no longer motivators. To fulfil their higher level needs individuals often use travel. The higher level needs are belongingness, esteem and self-actualization. Belongingness needs consist of love, friendship, affiliation and group acceptance. Esteem needs include self-respect, success and the desire for status. The highest level is self-actualization or the desire for self-fulfilment. Individuals often want to fulfil more than one of these needs by traveling and exploring the world. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 36)

#### **4.2 The leisure motivation scale**

Based on the work of Maslow, Beard and Ragheb created a model called the Leisure Motivation Scale in 1983. This model divided motivators into four different types. These types are the intellectual component, the social component, the competence-mastery component and the stimulus-avoidance component. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 54)

*The intellectual component* includes individuals who are motivated to join activities that involve exploring, learning, discovery, thought or imagery.

*The social component* consists of individuals who engage in leisure activities for social reasons. This component includes two basic needs which are the need for friendship and inter-personal relationships and the need for the esteem of others.

*The competence-mastery component* includes individuals who engage in leisure activities in order to achieve, master, challenge and compete; these activities are usually physical in nature.

The last type, *the stimulus-avoidance component*, consists of individuals who want to escape and get away from their life situations, some may want to avoid social contact and seek solitude while some want to seek rest and unwind themselves. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 54)

### 4.3 McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie's four categories

McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie (1995) also divided motivators into four different categories. These categories are physical motivators, cultural motivators, interpersonal motivators and status and prestige motivators.

*Physical motivators* are motivators related to health and refreshment of body and mind. This group of motivators are linked to sport and pleasure activities which will reduce tension.

*Cultural motivators* are those linked to the desire to see and find out more about other cultures, to find out about the lifestyle of natives of a country.

*Interpersonal motivators* include the desire to meet new people or visit friends and relatives. Travel is an escape from routine relationships with friends and the home environment to seek new experiences.

*Status and prestige motivators* are connected to the desire for continuation of education like personal development, ego enhancement and sensual indulgence. Individuals with these motivators want to get recognition and attention from others in order to boost their personal ego. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 47)

### 4.4 Push and Pull factors

For decades, a distinction between push and pull factors have been made by tourism researchers in order to understand the importance and position of motivation in tourism. Travellers are both pushed to travel by individual needs and wants, and pulled to travel to a specific destination by appealing attributes of that particular destination. The push motivations are useful for explaining the desire for travel while the pull factors explain the actual destination choice. (Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 34)

Pull factors refer to the images, perceptions and knowledge an individual has of a specific destination and they explain why the individual decides to travel to that particular destination. The attributes that pull the individual to the destination in-

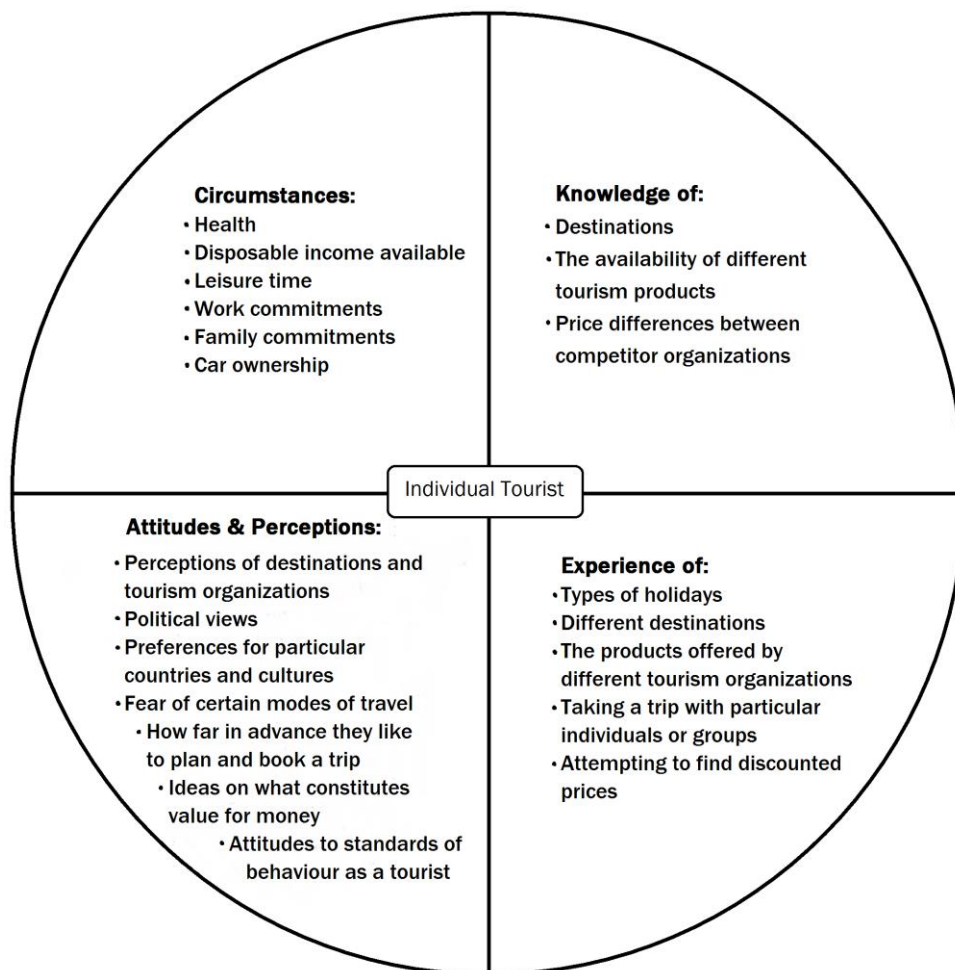
clude tangible factors like beaches, historic sites, recreation facilities, undisturbed nature and cultural resources while a more subjective factor could be how fashionable the destination is. (Sharpley 2002, 56; Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 35)

Push factors, on the other hand, are the factors which influence the individual to want a holiday in the first place. These are factors like desire for escape, rest and relaxation, adventure, prestige, social interaction, novelty seeking, learning new things or evaluation of self. There has to be a need or push before the pull factors come into play; first push factors motivate the individual to want to travel and after that the pull factors determine which destination will satisfy the needs of the individual. (Sharpley 2002, 56; Cook, Yale, Marqua 2010, 34-35)

It is important to differentiate push and pull factors in order to understand the role of motivation within the demand of tourism. For example, choosing a beach holiday may be explained by the pull of the climate and likelihood of getting a suntan, but the real motivation behind the choice of destination might actually be the need to be seen with a suntan. So in this case the push is to get a suntan that the tourist can show off when returning home. In the same way, the reason to visit an exotic destination might not be the desire to see a particular place, but to be able to say that you have been there. (Sharpley 2002, 56-57)

#### **4.5 Determinants**

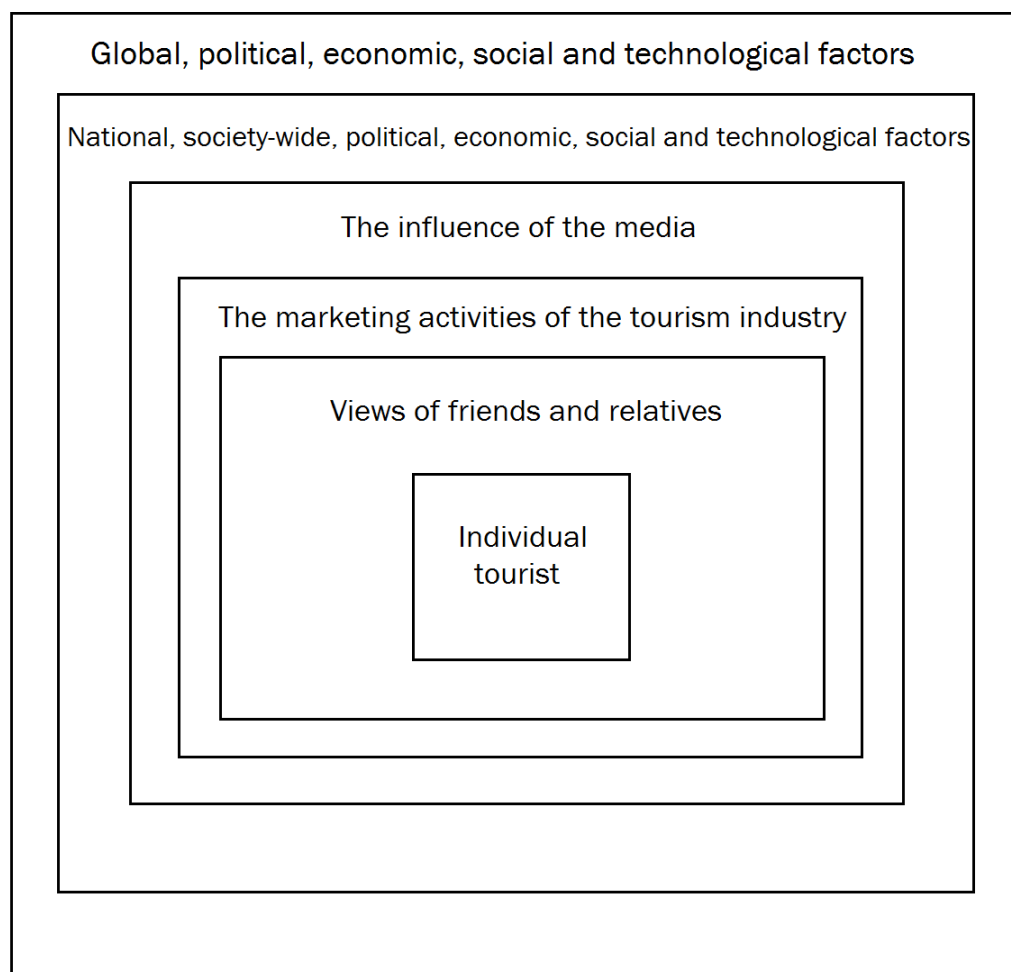
Even if an individual is motivated to travel it does not mean that the individual is able to. There are a number of factors determining the individual's ability to travel. These factors are called determinants of demand and can be related to both the individual and the supply environment. The determinants can be divided into two types; those factors which determine whether or not a person is able to travel and those factors which determine the type of trip that will be taken, if the first types of determinants allow a trip to be taken in the first place. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 97; Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 62)



**Figure 2.** Personal determinants

Determinants can further be divided into factors which are personal to the tourist and factors which are external to the tourist. The factors listed in figure 2 are determinants that are personal to the tourist. Health and income are determinants that could prevent an individual from taking any kind of holiday while other factors will only affect what kind of trip will be taken. Factors like leisure time and work and family commitments might limit the duration of a trip and decide when the trip will be taken while income and price differences between competitor organisations might determine the destination choice and type of accommodation. Also the individual's perception of a destination, political views and fear of certain modes of travel will determine the destination e.g. a person with a fear of flying is not likely to travel 10 hours in a plane to reach a certain destination. Different in-

dividuals will find certain determinants to be more important than others depending on their personalities, attitudes, fears and past experiences. The importance of different determinants will also change for each individual over time with changes in age, family situation and experience as a tourist. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 62-64)



**Figure 3.** External determinants

Figure 3 gives an overview of the determinants that are external to the tourist. Some examples of external determinants are political factors like immigration restrictions and visa requirements as well as civil disorder, terrorism and the nature of the political system at a destination. Also tourism organization marketing like

foreign destinations' advertising campaigns or tour operators' brochures as well as the influence of the media e.g. holiday features on television or in newspapers and wildlife programmes can be external determinants. Another important external determinant is the view of friends and relatives. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 64-65)

Whether an individual is more influenced by their own personal determinants or external determinants depends on the individual's personality and lifestyle. Extrovert people may be influenced by external determinants, such as the view of friends and relatives while introverts may trust their own experiences more. People who watch news programmes regularly and take an interest in world-wide social and environmental issues may be influenced by external factors like e.g. human rights records of a country's government while people who do not know of or do not worry about such things will not even consider this factor. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 65)

## 5 TYPOLOGIES

Tourists can be divided into different roles or typologies to determine their attitudes towards different ways of travelling, destinations and activities. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 50)

### 5.1 Cohen's typology

In 1972 the influential sociologist, Cohen, classified tourists into four different types; the organised mass tourist, the individual mass tourist, the explorer and the drifter.

*The organised mass tourist* is low on adventurousness and typically buys a package holiday to a safe and popular destination. Such tourists tend not to stray far from the beach or hotel and prefer to travel around with large groups of other tourists, being guided through the destination having little contact with local culture or people.

*The individual mass tourist* is similar to the organised mass tourist but more flexible and buys a looser package that allows them more freedom. They are more likely to look for the occasional novel experience. However, they still tend to stay on the beaten track which will keep them from the real experience of the destination.

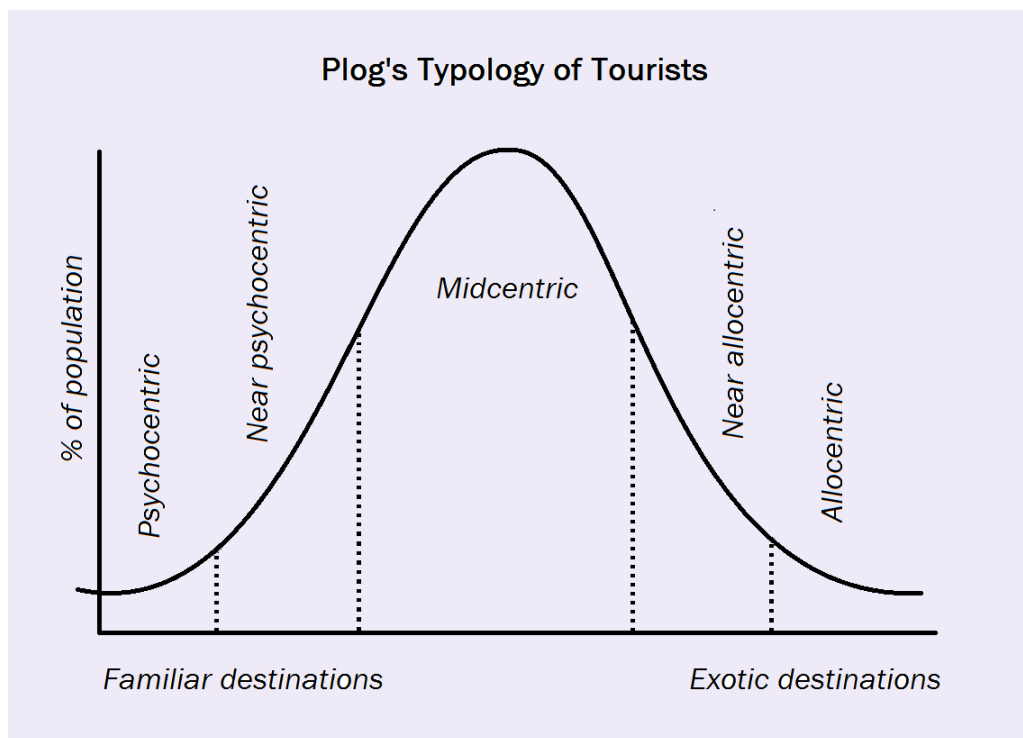
*The explorer* organises the trip independently, is looking to get off the beaten track and consciously tries to avoid contact with other tourists. While they set out to meet local people they still want a certain level of comfort and safety by using comfortable accommodation and reliable transport.

*The drifter* tries to avoid all connections with the tourism industry and attempts to get as far away from home and familiarity as possible. With no planned itinerary the drifter lives with the locals and chooses their destinations and accommodation on a whim.

Cohen described the first two types as institutionalized tourists and the latter two as non-institutionalized. According to Cohen the non-institutionalized tourists are the pioneers who explore new destinations while the institutionalized tourists then follow when the destination has become less adventurous and more comfortable to travel to. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 86-87; Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 50-51)

## **5.2 Plog's typology**

In 1974, Plog developed a theory which classified people into interrelated psychographic types. These types range from two extremes; the psychocentric type and the allocentric type. Plog argued that the psychocentrics were less adventurous, inward-looking people who are conservative in their travel patterns and prefer safe destinations or resorts that are already popular. Allocentrics, on the other hand, are adventurous and outward-looking people, who are motivated to discover new destinations, take risks and rarely return to the same destination more than once. These people would prefer exotic destinations and individual travel. According to Plog, there are a number of intermediate categories between these two extremes such as near psychocentric, midcentric and near allocentric. As can be seen from figure 4 the majority of the population fall into the midcentric category. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 47)



**Figure 4.** Plog's typology

Plog also found that people with lower income were more likely to be psychocentric types while those with a higher income most likely were allocentrics. In a later study, however, it was observed that middle-income groups showed little positive correlation with psychocentric types which created a problem since there were a number of psychographic types who could not, due to income constraints, choose the type of holiday they preferred even if they were motivated to; after all it costs a lot of money to be a wanderer around the globe. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 47)

Plog's theory closely associates travel motivation to types of destinations. For example, allocentrics will prefer unspoilt destinations that are undiscovered by the travel trade while psychocentrics desire the comfort of well-developed destinations. This theory can be difficult to apply, since people will travel with different motivations on different occasions. A short weekend holiday may be in a nearby psychocentric-type destination, whereas a longer holiday, taken by the same indi-

vidual, may be in an allocentric-type destination. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill 2008, 47-48)

## **6 DECISION MAKING AND CHOOSING A DESTINATION**

The decision to purchase a tourism product is the result of a complex process and a number of factors influencing the decision. Decisions involved in choosing a holiday are e.g. which destination, which mode of travel, how long will the trip last, when will the trip be taken, what kind of accommodation and so on. Some factors that will affect the holiday purchase decision are personality, health, family and work commitments, lifestyle, disposable income, word-of-mouth recommendation of friends and family, the climate of destinations, availability of suitable products etc. Most of these factors are closely related to both motivators and determinants. (Swarbrooke, Horner 1999, 73-74)

### **6.1 The process of buying behaviour**

A number of models have been developed by marketing theorists to explain the process of buying behaviour and decision making, the best known and also the simplest model is known as the AIDA model. AIDA stands for awareness, interest, desire and action. To be able to choose to take a holiday a person must first become aware of the destinations from which they can choose. After that they have to develop an interest towards one particular destination and become committed to it before they will buy a particular holiday. (Holloway 1998, 59-60)

The aim with marketing is to move the consumer from a stage of unawareness of a destination, resort or hotel through each stage of the process to a point where the consumer will buy a particular holiday. The first step in this process is to become aware of the product. Every day, hundreds of new pieces of knowledge are presented to consumers, including information about new destinations and products. Consciously or unconsciously a lot of this knowledge is screened out from our memories since we cannot absorb all information which is presented to us. If we are favourably predisposed towards a particular product or destination, it is more likely that we will absorb it. For example, if our best friend has just returned from a holiday and has enthusiastically talked about it to us, if we then see a feature of that particular destination on television we might become interested, even though, before our friend mentioned the place we had never even heard of it. If what we

see on the programme reinforces what our friend told us we might be encouraged to seek more information about the destination. At any point we might be put off by what we find, e.g. if we find the destination to be too far away or too expensive. However, if the search process leads us to form a positive image we might start comparing the destination to other destinations which we have been favourably disposed towards. The process of choice involves comparison, estimating the benefits and drawbacks and weighing up one destination against another. (Holloway 1998, 60)

As the process goes on we are developing an image of the destination. This image may not be accurate if the information sources are uninformed or deliberately seek to distort the information that they provide. For example, in 1993 there were many reports by the media that tourists were being mugged in the Miami area, while the destination itself tried to disseminate a positive image by concentrating on selling only the positive benefits of the destination. Images are built on the unique attributes a destination has. These attributes are very important and will help distinguish a destination from other similar destinations and attract tourists to the destination. (Holloway 1998, 60-61)

During the process we will also develop an attitude towards the destination. This attitude is a mix of our emotional feelings towards the destination and our rational evaluations of its merits and will help to determine whether or not we would consider it a possible destination for a holiday. Even if we have a negative image of a destination we might still have a positive attitude towards travel there, because we have an interest in seeing the place. (Holloway 1998, 61)

All holidays and destinations involve risk in some way, it might be risk of illness, of bad weather, of being uncertain about the product until we see it first hand or risk of being unable to get what we want out of the holiday. In the process of consumer choice we will be weighing up the perceived risk we run when travelling to the destination. Some tourists, of course, will enjoy a certain level of risk, as this gives an edge of excitement to the trip. Others, on the other hand, are "risk averters" and will do everything to avoid any possible risks. (Holloway 1998, 61)

## 6.2 Theories of decision making

The process of sorting through different options and determining which one to choose is very complex and individual personality traits will determine how the eventual decision is made. Some people go through a process of *extensive problem solving*, which means that they search for a wide range of products, each of which they evaluate and compare to similar products. Other people, who do not have the patience or time to explore a wide variety of products or destinations, will deliberately restrict the number of choices and the aim is to be satisfied rather than being certain of getting the best possible product. This is called *limited problem solving*. (Holloway 1998, 62)

Many consumers engage in *routinized response behaviour*, which means that the choices they make change relatively little over time. This is common among brand-loyal consumers and some holidaymakers who have been satisfied with a specific destination or company in the past and therefore may choose the same over and over again. Nevertheless, some consumers also buy on *impulse*. This is more common when buying products costing little, however, it is not completely unknown among holiday purchases. (Holloway 1998, 62)

## 6.3 Factors affecting the decision

There are a number of different factors influencing the decision making when choosing a product or destination. These are both personal factors which are internal to the tourist and other influences which are external to the tourist.

### *Pressures from society*

People like to feel that they are making their own decisions about products they choose. However, without always realising it we are very influenced by other people's taste and make our decisions accordingly. This means that we will not always buy the holiday that we think we would most enjoy, but instead we might buy the holiday which will give us status with our friends and other people around us. (Holloway 1998, 62)

*Fashion and taste*

As fashion changes and “opinion leaders” find new resorts and destinations to champion many destinations suffer from the effects of it. There are different reasons why a particular destination loses popularity. Clearly, if the resources are allowed to deteriorate, the market will drift away and find other products or destinations that offer better value for money. Sometimes, however, it is nothing more than a change in fashion which will cause tourism to fall off. This is common in cases where the resort or destination was fashionable in the first place. St Tropez, which was a fashionable destination in the 20th century when Brigitte Bardot, who chose to reside there, was a star, is a good example of this. (Holloway 1998, 62-63)

*Socio-demographic factors*

The most common way of segmenting markets and determining the likely appeal of different products or destinations to different types of tourists is to examine the socio-demographic distinction between travellers. These include difference of age, gender and occupation. Socio-demographic factors play a big role when it comes to choosing a destination since some destinations are developed to appeal to young people while some are marketed to appeal to people with a high education and occupation. (Holloway 1998, 64)

## 7 AUSTRALIA

Australia is the smallest continent in the world but at the same time the world's largest island covering an area of 7.69 million square kilometres. This makes it the sixth-largest nation after Russia, Canada, China, the United States and Brazil. With more than 85 per cent of the residents living in cities Australia is the most urbanised country in the world. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lived in Australia for more than 50 000 years while the first western people came to Australia only about 220 years ago. The current population in Australia is almost 23 million people of whom less than 2 per cent are indigenous people. Australia is divided into six states; New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, and two territories; Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory. New South Wales and Victoria are the most populated states in Australia and their capitals Sydney and Melbourne are the biggest cities. The capital of Australia is Canberra. (Kankaansivu 2013, 7-8; Australia.com 2014)

### 7.1 Climate

The climate is very versatile with tropical rainforests in the north and snowy mountain tops in the south. Australia can roughly be divided into two climatic zones; a temperate zone and a tropical zone. The tropical zone in the northern parts of Australia has high temperatures, high humidity and a wet and a dry season. The wet season, also called the monsoon season, starts in November and lasts for about six months until March; the dry season also lasts for six months between April and October. The temperate zone covering the coast of New South Wales, most of Victoria, Tasmania, the south-eastern part of South Australia and the south-west of Western Australia has four seasons. The seasons are opposite to the northern hemisphere which means that the summer lasts from December to February, the autumn from March to May, the winter from June to August and the spring from September to November. The centre of Australia is very dry and consists of desert and grasslands. (Kankaansivu 2013, 9-10; Australia.gov.au 2013)

## 7.2 Flora and Fauna

Australia is a biologically diverse country and home to more than one million species of plants and animals. Thanks to isolation many of these species are unique to Australia. About 85 per cent of flowering plants, 84 per cent of mammals, more than 45 per cent of birds and 89 per cent of inshore, freshwater fish can be found nowhere else on the planet. (Australia.gov.au 2014)

The dominant type of vegetation in Australia (23 per cent) is the hummock grasslands in Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory. There are around 2800 species of eucalypts in Australia and they make up almost 80 per cent of the forests. The other 20 per cent is made up by acacias, melaleuca (tea tree), casuarinas (she-oaks), callitris (cypress pine), mangrove and rainforests. (Australia.gov.au 2014; Australia.com 2014)

Some of the most well-known Australian animals are the kangaroo, koala, echidna, dingo, emu, wombats and platypus. There are more than 378 species of mammals, 828 species of birds, 300 species of lizards, 140 species of snakes and two species of crocodiles. Almost half of all the mammals in Australia, including kangaroos, koalas, wallabies and wombats, are marsupials. The rest are either placental mammals or monotremes. 21 of the world's 25 deadliest snakes can be found in Australia. (Dfat.gov.au 2012)

## 7.3 Tourism in Australia

Australia is a big country with many tourist attractions. The most popular destinations for tourists in Australia are the coastal cities of Sydney and Melbourne, the Gold Coast and the Great Barrier Reef, which is the world's largest reef and attracts up to two million visitors each year. Uluru and the Australian outback are also popular locations as well as the Tasmanian wilderness. The versatile nature and the unique Australian wildlife is another significant point of interest for tourists. (Wikipedia.org 2015)

New Zealanders make up a big part of the Australian tourism market, usually taking short package tours to the iconic sites. China, the United Kingdom, the United

ed States and Singapore are also big markets. Another source of tourists are backpackers, mostly young people from Western Europe and North America that stay longer and tend to explore more of the country. Many backpackers come to Australia on a working holiday which enables them to stay longer in the country. Working holiday visas are available for most Western European citizens, citizens of Canada and some developed East Asian nations such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and South Korea. To be able to apply for a working holiday visa a person has to be in the age of 18 to 30. For all visitors to Australia, except for New Zealanders, some sort of visa is required. (Wikipedia.org 2015)

## 8 RESEARCH METHODS

When conducting a research, one must first decide what kind of a research method will be used. A research can be either quantitative or qualitative in nature. The main difference between quantitative and qualitative research methods is that the quantitative approach generally involves numbers while in a qualitative approach the answers are usually expressed in words. The information collected in a quantitative research can sometimes be innately quantitative, however, sometimes the information is qualitative in nature but presented in a quantitative form. It is also possible to use both quantitative and qualitative approaches in a research. (Veal 2006, 40)

In this research a questionnaire with both quantitative questions and some qualitative, open-ended questions was used.

### 8.1 Qualitative and Quantitative methods

A *Qualitative* research is generally not concerned with numbers and is usually not presentable in a numerical form. The qualitative approach is used when a full and detailed understanding of the leisure or tourist behaviour and the situation of a few individuals is wanted or required rather than a limited understanding of a big representative group. Therefore, a qualitative research is generally about gathering a great deal of information about a relatively small number of people or cases. The methods used when gathering qualitative information include informal and in-depth interviews, group interviews, observation and participant observation. (Veal 2006, 40; 98-100)

The *quantitative* approach involves statistical analysis and relies on numerical evidence to draw conclusions and test hypotheses. In a quantitative research a large number of people are studied and computers are used to analyse the data in order to get reliable results. While qualitative techniques usually involve the gathering of large amounts of relatively detailed information about relatively few cases, quantitative techniques usually involve the gathering of relatively small amounts of data on large number of cases. However, this is just a tendency; it is also possi-

ble for a quantitative research to involve fewer cases than a qualitative research. In a quantitative research the data may be collected from questionnaire surveys, from observation involving counts or from secondary sources. Questionnaire surveys are probably the most commonly used technique in leisure and tourism research. (Veal 2006, 40; 100-101)

Since the aim of this study was to get an overall picture of what motivates people to go backpacking rather than to get a detailed understanding of just a few people's travel motives a quantitative study was conducted. The questionnaire that was used consisted mostly of quantitative, closed questions where the respondents could easily answer by ticking boxes; this made it easy to compare the answers by using charts and tables. A few qualitative, open-ended questions where respondents could write their own answers were also used in order to get some more detailed and personal answers.

## **8.2 Questionnaire surveys**

Questionnaire surveys involve the gathering of information using a formally designed schedule of questions called a questionnaire or interview schedule. The survey usually involves only a part, or sample, of the group of people in which the researcher is interested. For example, a survey can be based on samples of only a few thousand to represent tens of millions of people. Questionnaire surveys rely on the information given by the respondents. The accuracy of the information depends on the respondents' own powers of recall, on their honesty and on the format of the questions included in the questionnaire. Very little research has been done on the validity and accuracy of questionnaire data in leisure and tourism studies. However, some research has suggested that participants are affected by the desire to be helpful and friendly, especially in face-to-face situations, so, for example, if the interview is about sports the respondent will tend to exaggerate their interest in sports just to be helpful and positive. (Veal 2006, 231-232)

There are two forms of questionnaire surveys; interviewer-completed and respondent-completed surveys. In an *interviewer-completed* survey the interviewer reads out the questions to the respondent and records the answers on the question-

naire. This type of survey is conducted in a face-to-face situation or over the telephone. When the questionnaire is *respondent-completed* respondents read the questions and write down the answers themselves, and no interviewer is involved. Each approach has its advantages and disadvantages. Interviewer-completion is more expensive and less anonymous but the response rate is usually higher and the answers are usually more complete and accurate. Respondent-completion can be cheaper and quicker and is relatively anonymous but the response rate is usually lower and the response may be patchy and incomplete. When designing a questionnaire for respondent-completion, greater care must be taken with layout and presentation so that the respondents, who are “untrained” people, will be able to understand the questions and fill in the questionnaire accurately. (Veal 2006, 233-235)

Because the aim was to get as high response rate as possible a respondent-completed, electronic questionnaire was used. This way it was relatively easy to reach out to a large number of people on e.g. social media. This also made it possible to reach people from different countries which would have been more complicated if an interviewer-completed survey or a questionnaire in paper form would have been used.

### **8.3 Implementing the research**

In order to reach out to a large number of people from different countries the survey was executed on the internet. The questionnaire was made using e-lomake which is a program used to electronically collect data. The link to the questionnaire was published in several groups for backpackers in Australia on Facebook and it was available online for about a week for people to fill in. In addition to that the link to the questionnaire was also sent to people that the author had met while backpacking in Australia. 81 replies were received in total.

### **8.4 The questionnaire**

A questionnaire should be as clear as possible in layout and language so it is easy for the respondents to fill in. It should also not be too long, since the respondents

might lose interest if there are too many questions to answer. The questionnaire for this research was designed in e-lomake. To make it as quick and easy as possible for the respondents to fill in, most of the questions were closed questions where the respondents could answer by choosing the right option and ticking boxes. However, a few open ended questions where the respondents had to answer with their own words were also included in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire has 16 questions and is divided into three sections. In the first section basic information about the respondents is collected, the second section consists of a few questions about their travelling habits and in the third section the respondents have to answer some questions about their backpacking trip to Australia. The whole questionnaire is attached at the end of the thesis.

The questionnaire begins with three questions concerning demographic information of the respondents, i.e. gender, nationality and age. In question 4 nine statements about travelling habits are listed and the respondents can answer by choosing the number from 1 to 5 that best describes them (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree). In the next question the respondents have to check off which continents they have visited and in question 6 they have to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the question if they have ever travelled to a destination more than once. Question 7 is a follow-up question to question 6 where the respondents, if they answered 'yes' on question 6, can write down what destinations they have visited more than once and why. Questions 8 to 16 are about the backpacking trip to Australia. In question 8 the respondents are asked who they travelled with, they can choose from five options; friend, group of friends, partner, alone or other. In the next question they are given the opportunity to elaborate if they chose the option 'other' in question 8. Question 10 is about how long the trip lasted and in the following two questions they are asked about if they have travelled to other destinations as a backpacker before Australia. In question 13 some motivating factors are listed and the respondents can choose from 1 to 5 how important each factor is to them (1=of no importance; 5=very important). The following two questions are open ended and the respondents can answer with their own words why they decided to go backpacking and why they chose Australia as their destination. In the last ques-

tion several different pull factors are listed and the respondents are asked to choose from 1 to 5 how much each factor affected their choice of destination (1=not at all; 5=affected strongly).

### **8.5 Validity and reliability**

When conducting a research the aim is to get as high validity and reliability as possible.

Validity measures to what extent the answers and information collected by the researcher truly reflects the subject or phenomenon that is being studied. The relevance of the study and whether the research method used really gives the information that the researcher is looking for is measured. (Veal 2006, 41)

Reliability measures how reliable and accurate the results of a study are. For a study to be completely reliable the findings should be the same if the research were to be repeated later on by someone else and with a different sample of subject. This is, however, rarely the case in the social sciences, including tourism and leisure research, because they deal with human beings in differing and ever-changing social situations. (Veal 2006, 41)

The validity of this research is quite high. The research method that is used in this study is suitable for the aim of the study and the questions are formulated in the best way possible to give the answers that the researcher is looking for. All questions are related to the subject that is being studied. With that said, some of the questions could have been worded differently so that it would have been easier for the respondents to understand and answer the question and to prevent a few misunderstandings.

The reliability of this research is relatively high. The results would most likely be the same if another person conducted the same research. However, more answers could have been collected to make the reliability even higher. Another factor that lowers the reliability is the way the respondents were selected. The link to the questionnaire was published in groups for backpackers on Facebook and people could fill in the questionnaire if they wanted to. The result of this might be that

only one type of people answers the questionnaire and therefore the results might be different than what they would have been if the respondents were randomly picked. This also made the distribution between men and women very uneven since women are generally more willing to fill in these kinds of questionnaires.

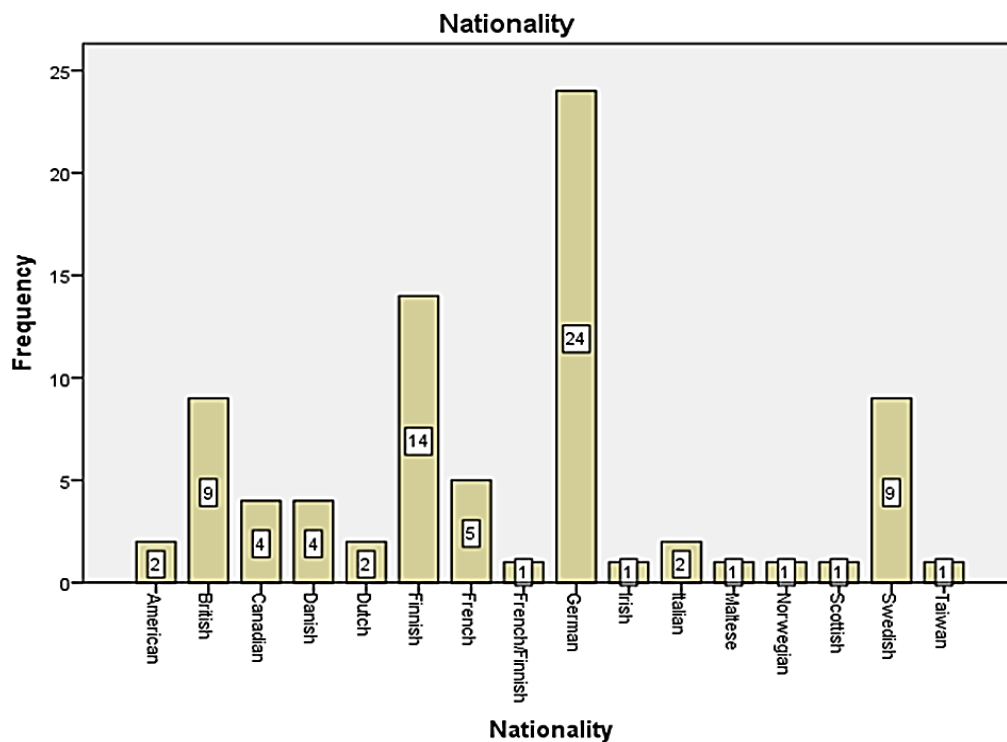
## 9 RESULTS

After all the responses were collected the data was transferred to and analysed in SPSS, which is a program used for statistical analysis.

### 9.1 Demographic information of the respondents

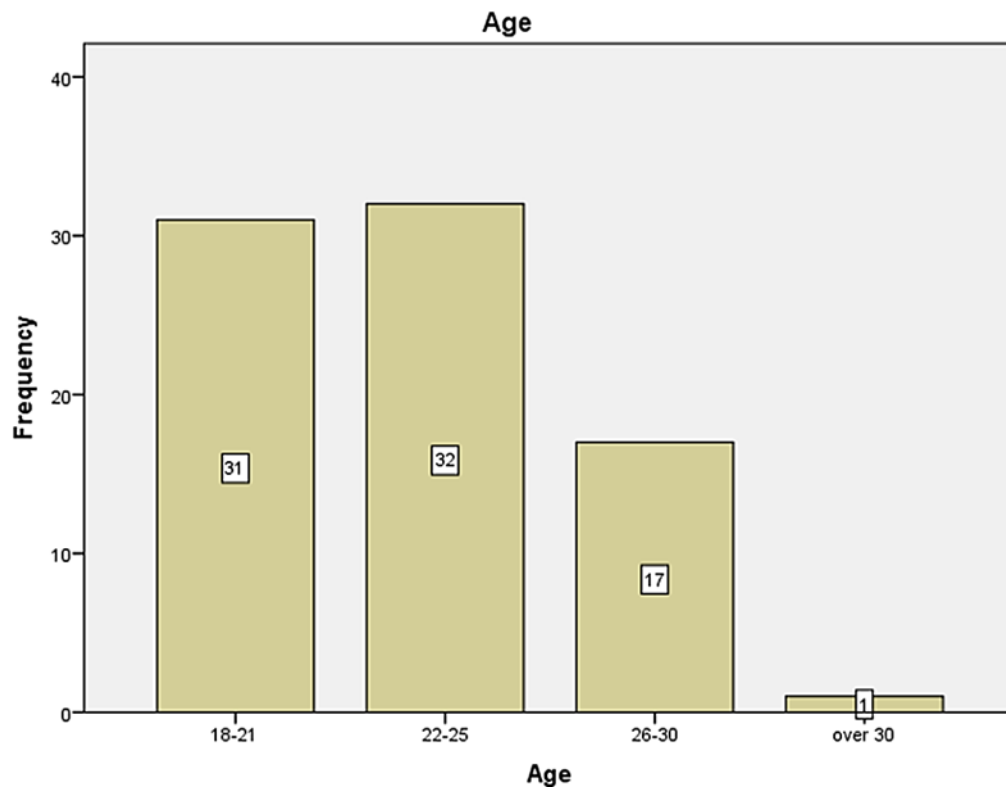
Out of the 81 respondents 67 were female and 14 were male. Such a significant difference between men and women was quite surprising since the questionnaire was published in groups where the members were both male and female backpackers. One can only speculate why so many more women than men responded to the questionnaire but it could be that more women than men feel the need to be helpful and therefore answered the questionnaire. One cannot assume that these results show the accurate distribution between men and women who travel as backpackers.

In total people of 16 different nationalities responded to the questionnaire; most of them were Europeans. Six of the participants were from North America and only one from Asia. As shown in figure 5 the biggest share of the respondents, with 24 responses, was Germans. The second largest group, with 14 responses, was Finnish people, followed by British and Swedish people with nine responses each. The high number of German participants was relatively expected since Germany is a country with a large population and it is very common among Germans to travel to Australia as backpackers. The fact that the second largest group was Finnish people was somewhat unexpected because, even though it is fairly common among Finns to backpack in Australia, it is far more common among e.g. Swedes and British people to travel to Australia as backpackers. The big number of Finnish respondents could be explained by the fact that the researcher herself was Finnish and therefore many Finnish people who saw the post wanted to participate in the research. Only six of the respondents were French, which was a lower response rate than expected. The number of French respondents could probably have been much higher, if it would not have been for the language barrier, since it is very common among French people to travel to Australia as backpackers and just like Germany France is a country with a very large population.



**Figure 5.** Nationality

Almost all of the 81 participants were aged between 18 and 30 years old. Only one was older than 30 and none of the respondents were younger than 18. These results were quite expected since a person has to be in the age of 18 to 30 years old to be able to get a working holiday visa for Australia. Because a lot of people who travel to Australia as backpackers want to stay longer than what a tourist visa allows them to a working holiday visa is required. The most commonly chosen age group was 22-25 years old with 32 responses closely followed by the age group 18-21 years old with 31 responses. This corresponds very well to the theory that backpackers usually are young people. Figure 6 shows the distribution of all the age groups.



**Figure 6.** Age groups

## 9.2 Travelling habits

From the questions in section two the aim was to find out the respondents' travelling habits and what type of tourists people who travel as backpackers are. The main goal was to find out if they are more allocentric or psychocentric in nature and to see if they fit into one of Cohen's four tourist types.

Table 1 shows the mean values of all the statements that were listed in question 4. The three statements that most people agreed with and therefor received the highest mean values were "I like to explore new destinations", "I want to interact with locals" and "I like to get familiar with the local culture". On the statement "I like to explore new destinations" 66 people answered that they strongly agree and 11 that they agree. The statements "I prefer travelling to safe/well-known destinations" and "I usually buy package holidays" were statements that received the lowest mean values. Only 6 of the respondents agreed with the statement "I usually buy package holidays" while 63 of the respondents strongly disagreed or dis-

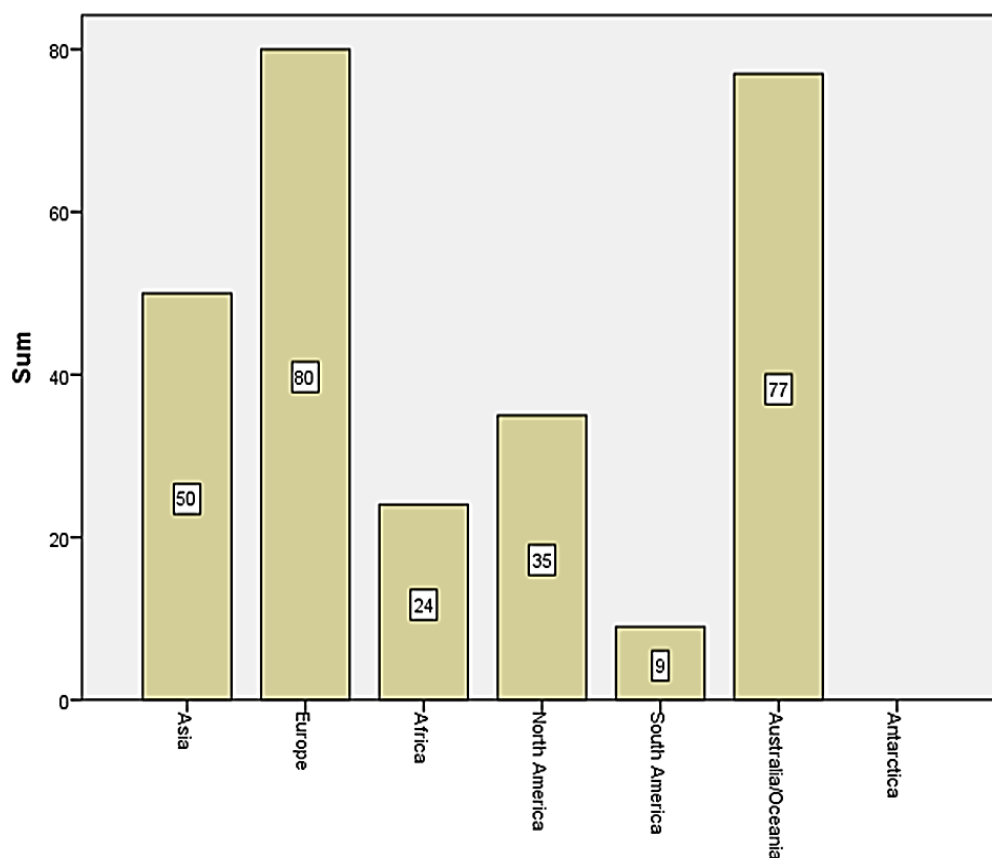
greed. According to these results the typical backpacker would be a very allocentric type of tourist who fits quite well into Cohen's definition of the *explorer* or *drifter*. However, most of the respondents also agreed on the statement "I like to meet other travellers/tourists". Out of the 81 respondents 70 agreed or strongly agreed on this statement and only 4 disagreed. This does not correspond to Cohen's definition of *the drifter* and *the explorer*. On the statements "I prefer travelling to destinations recommended by friends and family" and "I rarely travel to the same destination more than once" most respondents answered that they neither agree nor disagree.

**Table 1.** Choose the option that best describes you (scale: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neither agree nor disagree; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree)

<i>Choose the option that best describes you</i>	Mean
I like to explore new destinations	4,69
I want to interact with locals	4,49
I like to get familiar with the local culture	4,38
I like to meet other travellers / tourists	4,36
I want to organize the trip myself	4,26
I rarely travel to the same destination more than once	3,20
I prefer travelling to destinations recommended by friends and family	3,14
I prefer travelling to safe / well-known destinations	2,90
I usually buy package holidays	1,81

In question 5 the respondents were asked which continents they have visited. The most popular continent was Europe, which 80 of the respondents had visited. Since most of the respondents were from Europe this was quite expected. According to the results of this question only 77 out of the 81 respondents had visited Australia/Oceania but it can be assumed that the rest of the respondents simply

forgot to tick this box because, judging from the answers on some of the other questions, all of the respondents had been backpacking in Australia. Other popular destinations were Asia and North America, with 50 and 35 respondents respectively. None of the respondents had visited Antarctica and only nine had been to South America. The results of question 5 are shown in figure 7.



**Figure 7.** Which continents have you visited?

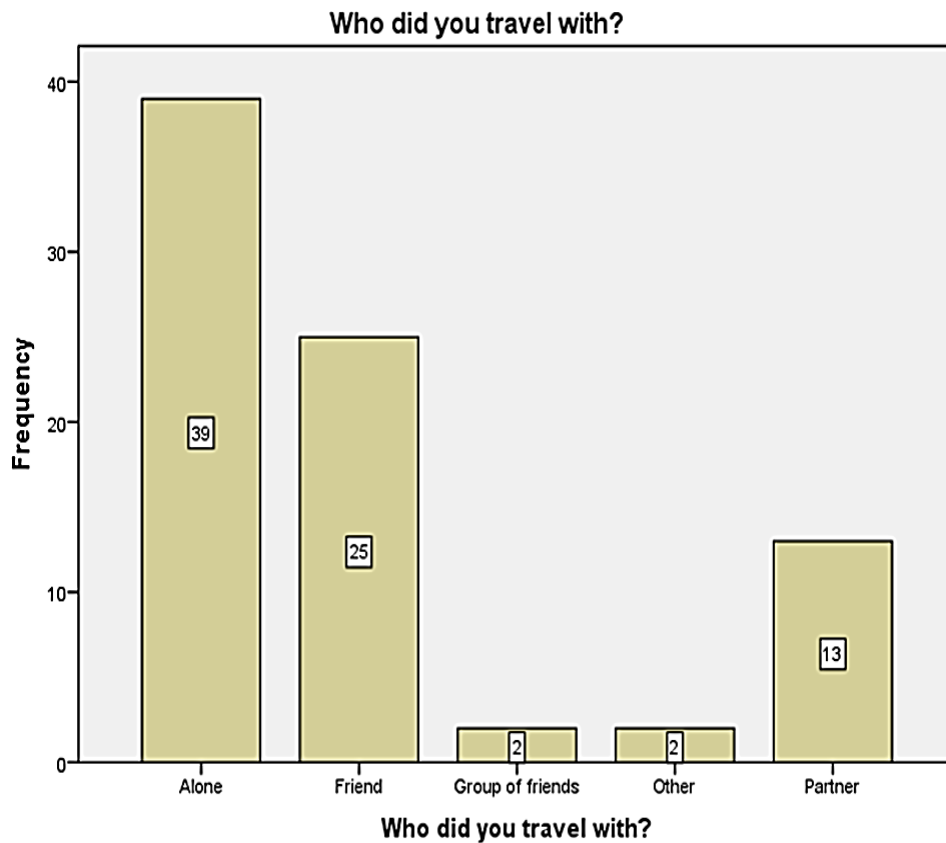
On the question “Have you ever travelled to a destination more than once?” 65 of the respondents answered yes and 16 answered no. The aim with this question was, again, to find out what kind of tourists backpackers are; do they play it safe and visit the same destination as last time or do they want to see a new place? Respondents who answered yes to this question were given the chance to elaborate in the next question and explain why they travelled to the same destination again. It became clear from the answers that the question was quite poorly executed since

the respondents had understood the question in different ways. Some of the respondents answered yes because they have visited the same country more than once and some because they have visited the same particular destination in a country more than once. It should have been clearer in the question that what was meant by destination was a particular place in a country not just a country. However, the most popular reason for visiting the same destination again was to visit friends they had met there the first time or to visit family. 19 of the respondents listed this as the reason for going back to the same place. Other popular reasons were because they loved the place so much and wanted to get the same feeling again and because they wanted to see more of the place. Some of the respondents only went back because they went on a family vacation and therefor “had to go”. The results of this question might have been different if the question would have been clearer and are therefore not 100% reliable. One cannot draw any conclusions about what type of tourists backpackers are based on these results.

### **9.3 Trip to Australia**

In the last section of the questionnaire the respondents were asked about their backpacking trip to Australia.

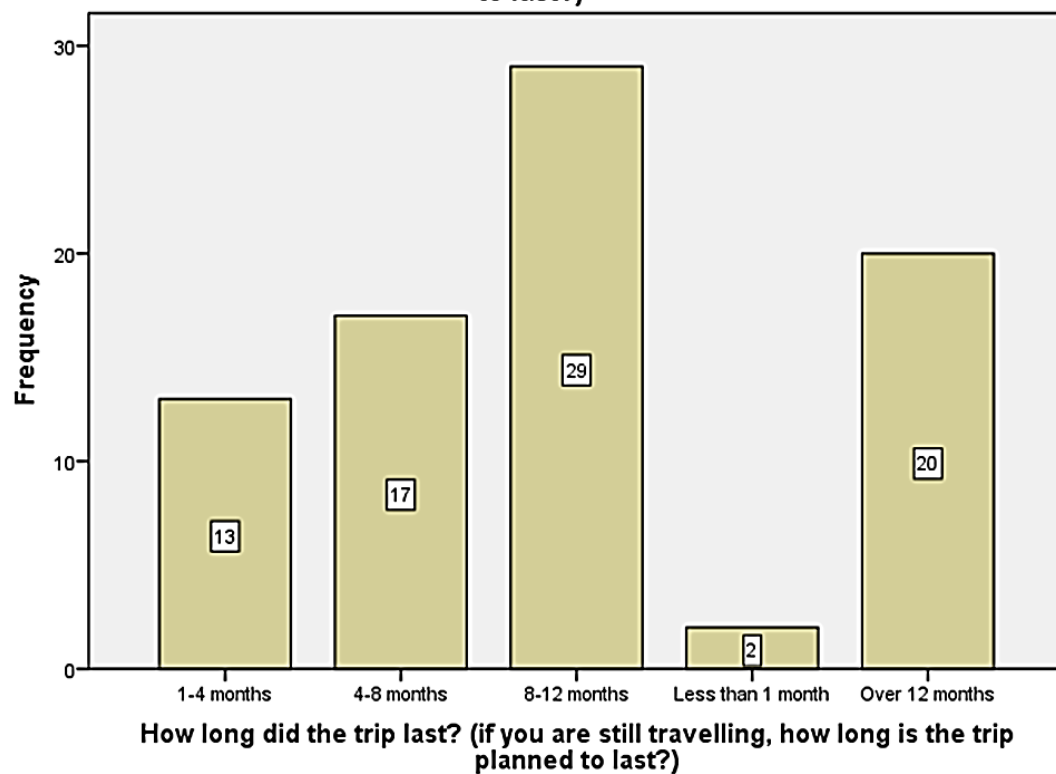
The first question in this section was “Who did you travel with?” and the respondents could choose from five options; alone, friend, group of friend, partner or other. Almost half of the respondents answered that they travelled alone and the second most common option was to travel with a friend. The results of this question, which are shown in figure 8, shows that it is more common to travel alone or with one other person than to travel with a group of people. Only two of the 81 respondents answered that they travelled with a group of friends.



**Figure 8.** Who did you travel with?

In the next question the respondents were asked about how long their trip lasted, or if they are still in Australia how long the trip is planned to last. It becomes very clear from the results of this question that Australia is in fact a destination for long term travelling, just like the theory suggests. As can be seen from figure 9, 29 of the respondents chose the option 8-12 months on this question and the second most common option, with 20 respondents, was over 12 months. Only two of the respondents stayed less than one month in Australia.

How long did the trip last? (if you are still travelling, how long is the trip planned to last?)



**Figure 9.** How long did the trip last?

For most of the respondents the trip to Australia was their first backpacking trip. 48 of the respondents answered no to the question “Have you travelled to other destinations as a backpacker before travelling to Australia?” and 33 answered yes. The reason why so many people choose Australia as their first backpacking destination might be that it is a safe place to travel to and the official language is English which makes it easier, for most people, to communicate with locals. The respondents who answered yes to this question were asked which other destinations they have travelled to as backpackers and the most popular answers were Asia and Europe with 19 and 10 respondents respectively. The most popular destinations in Asia were countries in South East Asia like Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Bali in Indonesia. Some people also mentioned India, China and Russia. Five people had been backpacking in New Zealand, four people in South America and

one in Africa. Some of the respondents had been backpacking in several different places before backpacking in Australia.

### **9.3.1 Motivations for undertaking the trip**

In question 13 several different motivating factors were listed and the respondents were asked to choose from 1 to 5 (1=of no importance; 5=very important) how important each factor was in the decision making process. All factors and the mean value that they received are listed in table 2.

The most important motivating factor, with the mean value 4,57, was to get away from routine life. 57 of the respondents thought that this factor was very important, 18 that it was important and 3 thought that it was important to some extent. Other factors that the respondents found important were to challenge themselves, to experience excitement, to meet new people, to increase their knowledge, to develop as a person and to explore other cultures. According to the theory the definition of a backpacker is someone who is looking for adventure, wants to meet new people and learn about new cultures and these results correspond quite well to that definition. These results are shown in table 3.

**Table 2.** Motivations for undertaking the trip (scale: 1=of no importance; 2=not so important; 3=important to some extent; 4=important; 5=very important)

<i>Motivations for undertaking the trip:</i>	Mean
To get away from routine life	4,57
To challenge myself	4,49
To experience excitement	4,41
To meet new people	4,32
To increase my knowledge	4,31
To develop as a person	4,30
To explore other cultures	4,25
To find myself	3,75
To relax	3,49
To develop close friendships	3,11
To gain a feeling of belonging	3,06
To party	2,88
To get recognition / attention from others	2,00

**Table 3.** The most important motivating factors (scale: 1=of no importance; 2=not so important; 3=important to some extent; 4=important; 5=very important)

	To get away from routine life	To challenge myself	To experience excitement	To meet new people	To increase my knowledge	To develop as a person	To explore other cultures
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Valid 1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
2	1	0	0	1	1	2	2
3	3	2	7	8	7	7	5
4	18	25	26	28	31	29	37
5	57	51	46	42	40	41	35
Total	81	81	81	81	81	81	81

As can be seen in table 2 the factors that were generally considered not so important were to party and to get recognition/attention from others. These factors received the mean values 2,88 and 2,00 respectively. 34 of the respondents thought that it was only important to some extent to get to party and 27 thought that it was not so important or not of any importance at all. 60 of the respondents were of the opinion that it was not so important or not important at all to get recognition/attention from others while only six thought that it was important and two that it was very important.

Even though many of the respondents considered meeting new people to be an important reason why they decided to go backpacking, developing close friendships and gaining a feeling of belonging was not as important. While 70 of the respondents found it important or very important to meet new people only 30 thought that it was important to develop close friendships and 26 that it was important to gain a feeling of belonging. This shows that many people travel as backpackers because they want to meet new people but only a few are actually interested in developing close friendships that will last.

50 of the respondents answered that finding themselves was an important motivating factor, 15 thought that it was only important to some extent and 14 did not think it was very important. To relax was generally considered to be only important to some extent.

According to Maslow's theory of motivation self-actualization is the highest level in the hierarchy of needs and that is the need that people want to fulfil. The results of question 13 show that backpackers are very motivated by this need since many backpackers feel that developing as a person and increasing their knowledge are important motivating factors. The results also show a strong connection between backpackers and the intellectual and social component in the leisure motivations scale. Backpackers want to explore and learn new things and they also find social interaction very important. The results of the research also show that out of McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie's four categories cultural and interpersonal motivators affect backpackers the most while status and prestige motivators do not.

Question 14 was an open ended question where the respondents had to answer with their own words why they decided to go backpacking instead of taking a normal holiday. The most common answer to this question was that they wanted to get away for a longer time, not just take a short vacation, a few of the respondents said that they wanted to take a gap year and therefore had the time to go on a longer trip. Many people also mentioned that it is more spontaneous and adventurous to travel as a backpacker and they wanted more of a challenge and more freedom. According to some of the respondents backpacking is a better way to explore the world and you get a more real experience and learn more about the culture of the country that you are visiting. Another common answer was that it is a better way to meet new people, not just people from the country you travel to but also other likeminded backpackers from all over the world. A few of the respondents just wanted to do something completely different in order to develop as a person and find themselves, which they felt was not possible by just taking a normal vacation. Someone also mentioned that backpacking is cheaper than a normal vacation and since you have more time you have the possibility to work as well. A couple of the respondents said that it is a good way to learn or improve their English.

### **9.3.2 Reasons for choosing Australia as the destination**

The last two questions in the questionnaire were about which pull factors and attributes of the destination made the respondents choose Australia as their backpacking destination.

Question 15 was an open ended question where the respondents could answer with their own words why they chose Australia as their destination and if they considered any other destinations before making their final decision. The reason that most people mentioned for choosing Australia was the nature and wildlife, also the good weather was an important factor. Many of the respondents also said that they had heard a lot of good things about Australia from friends and family and also read about it on the internet and therefore wanted to go there. Some said that it for some reason always has been a dream to visit Australia and that is why

they chose it as their backpacking destination. Another popular reason for choosing Australia as their destination was the fact that it is a very popular and great place for backpacking and it is also safe to travel there as a backpacker. It is also quite easy to get a working holiday visa and there are many jobs suitable for backpackers in Australia which was an important factor when making their decision. Many people also felt that the culture and the English language played an important role in the decision making process. Some of the respondents said that one reason for choosing Australia was the fact that there is no language barrier and some of them said that they wanted to learn English better. The fact that the culture is similar to many of the European countries and that Australians are considered to be nice and friendly people was important to some of the respondents. Many of the respondents chose Australia because it is such a huge country with a lot to discover and the fact that it is so far away seemed to be very important to some of them.

For most of the respondents Australia was their first choice and they did not really consider any other destinations, the most common reason for this was that it was their first time backpacking and they felt that Australia was the safest option. However, among the respondents who did consider other destinations Canada, New Zealand, South America and Asia were the most popular ones. The reason why they ended up choosing Australia in the end was usually that it was easier to apply for a visa to Australia or that it is safer and easier to travel to Australia as a backpacker. This was important especially if it was their first backpacking trip.

In the last question 15 different pull factors and other factors affecting the destination choice were listed and the respondents were asked to choose from 1 to 5 (1=not at all; 5=affected strongly) how much each factor affected their choice of destination. The mean values are shown in table 4.

The results of this question correspond very well to the results of question 15. The most important pull factor is, according to the results, the climate of the destination which received the mean value 3,99. 12 of the respondents chose 3 on this question which means that they thought that it affected the decision at least a bit, 32 of the respondents thought that this factor affected their choice of destination

and 29 thought that it affected it strongly. Undisturbed nature/wildlife, beaches and the image of the destination also had a great impact on the destination choice. These factors received similar results as climate. While quite many of the respondents thought that recreational activities affected the decision at least a bit, and some even answered that it affected the decision strongly, cultural resources like events and festivals were generally considered not to have such a great impact on the decision. Safety was generally considered to affect the decision at least a bit and recommendations by friends and family affected some of the respondents a lot while some of the respondents answered that it did not affect their decision at all. Factors that were generally considered not to have such a great impact on the destination choice were the opportunity to party/the nightlife at the destination, how popular/fashionable the destination is and marketing of the destination. The price level at the destination also did not affect the destination choice for most of the respondents. This was not very surprising since Australia is a quite expensive country to live in. 42 of the respondents said that previous own experiences did not affect their decision at all, probably because it was their first time travelling to Australia. Group pressure and the status it will give you, having visited the destinations were factors that most of the respondents answered that did not affect their destination choice at all. 62 of the respondents thought that group pressure did not affect their choice of destination at all and 42 felt the same about status and prestige.

**Table 4.** How much did the following factors affect your choice of destination? (scale: 1=not at all; 2=not so much; 3=affected a bit; 4=affected; 5=affected strongly)

<i>How much did the following factors affect your choice of destination?</i>	Mean
Climate	3,99
Undisturbed nature / wildlife	3,86
Beaches	3,85
The image of the destination	3,70
Recreational activities	3,42
Safety at the destination	3,38
Recommendations by friends and family	3,04
Cultural resources (events, festivals etc.)	2,86
The opportunity to party / the nightlife at the destination	2,68
How popular / fashionable the destination is	2,41
Marketing of the destination	2,35
Price level at the destination	2,32
Previous own experiences of the destination	2,10
The status it will give you, having visited the destination	1,80
Group pressure	1,44

## 10 CONCLUSIONS

The outcome of the research was fairly good. The research method was suitable for this kind of study and the questions in the questionnaire gave the answers that the researcher was looking for. Some of the questions could, however, have been worded in a different way so that it would have been easier for the respondents to understand what the researcher meant. Misunderstandings could have been prevented by testing the questionnaire on a small sample group before publishing it. This was not done due to lack of time. The results were quite reliable, but to get even higher reliability more answers could have been collected. This could have been done by having the questionnaire available online for a longer time. Also, it would have been good if the distribution between men and women would have been more even.

Since I have been backpacking in Australia myself I had some expectations about what kind of results I would get before the research was conducted. The results that I received correspond quite well to my expectations. Judging from the results of this research it can be said that people who travel to Australia as backpackers, or people who travel as backpackers in general, are usually young people in the age of 18 to 30 years old and most of them travel alone or in the company of a friend or partner. Most of the backpackers who travel to Australia are Europeans. People who choose to travel as backpackers are very allocentric in the sense that they want to discover new places, interact with locals and get familiar with the local culture. They are very spontaneous and they prefer organizing their trips themselves rather than buying package holidays. However, they are not really drifters or explorers since their aim is not to completely stay away from all connections to the tourism industry; in fact, they actually want to meet other travellers and backpackers.

The biggest motivation for backpackers is to get away from routine life. They want to feel free and get away for a longer time and their aim is not necessarily to relax and unwind themselves, instead they want to experience excitement, chal-

lenge themselves, develop as a person and learn something new about the world. Meeting new people is also an important motivating factor for backpackers.

Australia has many appealing attributes which backpackers are drawn to. The fact that it is a very big country with beautiful nature and interesting wildlife seems to be the most common reason why people choose to travel there as backpackers. The nice weather and the fact that it is so far away are also important reasons. Many people choose Australia as their destination because it is a safe place to travel to as a backpacker and many people have heard a lot of good things about it from friends and family. Because it is so safe to travel there a lot of people choose Australia as their first backpacking destination. Another big reason why so many people choose Australia as their backpacking destination is because they want to both work and travel and it is fairly easy to get a working holiday visa for Australia. Lastly, Australia simply has a good image and reputation among backpackers.

### **10.1 Suggestions for further research**

Since this research was quite small scale it leaves many possibilities for further research on the subject of backpacking. One could do a qualitative research on the same topic to get a more detailed understanding of just a few backpackers' travel motives. It would also be interesting to do a research about backpackers' consumer behaviour and travel patterns in Australia to see which places are most popular, what kind of transportation is most commonly used among backpackers and so on. Another possible research would be to compare different backpacking destinations (South East Asia, South America, Australia etc.) to each other, to determine what kind of backpacker usually travel to what kind of destination.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Motivations to travel as a backpacker

My name is Antonia Fellman and I study tourism at VAMK University of Applied Sciences in Vaasa, Finland. At the moment I'm writing my final thesis about motivations to travel as a backpacker to Australia. If you have travelled to Australia as a backpacker, I would appreciate it if you could take some time to answer this questionnaire to help me in my work. It will only take a few minutes and all answers will be treated confidentially. Thank you!

#### Basic information

Gender Female / Male

Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

Age under 18 / 18-21 / 22-25 / 26-30 / over 30

#### Travelling

Choose the option that best describes you (1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neither agree nor disagree; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree)?

	1	2	3	4	5
I like to explore new destinations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I prefer travelling to well-known/safe destinations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I usually buy package holidays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to organize the trip myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to meet other travelers/tourists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to interact with locals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to get familiar with the local culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I prefer travelling to destinations recommended by friends and family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I rarely travel to the same destination more than once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which continents have you visited?

- ☐ Asia
- ☐ Europe
- ☐ Africa
- ☐ North America
- ☐ South America
- ☐ Australia/Oceania
- ☐ Antarctica

Have you ever travelled to a destination more than once?

Yes / No

If yes, which one/s? What made you travel there a second time? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 1

### Trip to Australia

The following questions refer to your backpacking trip to Australia.

Who did you travel with? Friend / Group of friends / Partner / Alone / Other

If you chose "other", please elaborate \_\_\_\_\_

How long did the trip last? (If you are still travelling, how long is the trip planned to last?) Less than 1 month / 1-4 months / 4-8 months / 8-12 months / more than 12 months

Have you travelled to other destinations as a backpacker before travelling to Australia? Yes / No

If you chose "yes", which other destinations have you travelled to? \_\_\_\_\_

Motivations for undertaking the trip. (1=of no importance; 2=not so important; 3=important to some extent; 4=important; 5=very important) ?

	1	2	3	4	5
To experience excitement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To relax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To party	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To explore other cultures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To get away from routine life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To find myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To meet new people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To develop close friendships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To gain a feeling of belonging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To get recognition/attention from others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To develop as a person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To increase my knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To challenge myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer the following two questions with your own words.

Why did you decide to go backpacking instead of just taking a "normal" vacation? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you choose Australia as your destination? Did you consider any other destinations? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 1

How much did the following factors affect your choice of destination? (1=not at all; 2=not so much; 3=affected a bit; 4=affected; 5=affected strongly) ?

	1	2	3	4	5
Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Undisturbed nature/wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreational activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural resources (events, festivals etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The opportunity to party/the nightlife at the destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Price level at the destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The image of the destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety at the destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing of the destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Previous own experiences of the destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations by friends and family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How popular/fashionable the destination is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The status it will give you, having visited the destination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proceed

Thank you for your time, have a nice day! /Antonia