

# **THE ROLE OF NICHE TOURISM PRODUCTS IN DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**

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# PhD by Published Works

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## Abstract

Niche tourism refers to how a specific tourism product can be tailored to meet the needs of a particular audience/market segment. Locations with specific niche products are able to establish and position themselves, as niche tourism destinations. Niche tourism, through image creation, helps destinations to differentiate their tourism products and compete in an increasingly competitive and cluttered tourism environment. Academic literature has paid little attention to the role and positioning of niche tourism products. Through the use of the niche tourism life cycle it is clear that niche products will have different impacts, marketing challenges and contributions to destination development as they progress through it.

This critical appraisal presents an important reflection on my research in this area. The core of the critical appraisal is the eight published journal articles; two book chapters and three fully refereed conference papers upon which it is based but it also derives from the broader perspective of my research over the last ten years. The research context is set, with niche tourism products and destination development introduced, developed and seen in the perspective of the authors work in this field of tourism enquiry. The pragmatist research paradigm that has guided the publications is introduced and the adoption of mixed methods to produce results that are practical, relevant and progress both tourism business theory and practices, is discussed. The research methodologies and methods used are analysed against current developments in tourism research.

My contribution to academic knowledge and understanding within this area is summarised within the three key themes of *niche tourism product development*; *niche tourist profiling* and *destination development through niche tourism*. To illustrate this, my research has focused primarily on two significant niche tourism products: wine and festivals and events. The benefits of this work to the academic community are the presentation of insights into niche tourism consumers, and an understanding of the challenges

destinations face along the niche tourism life cycle. Finally, the practical benefits of this work to industry include a greater understanding of niche tourist behaviour to better aid them in positioning and targeting their products. It concludes with an identification of the limitations of this body of work and proposes areas for future research.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction and Overview

#### 1.1 Introduction

This critical appraisal is a narrative setting out the stages of the research journey, and the evolution in thinking, that I have taken over the last ten years, as an academic in Australia, the UK and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It seeks to rationalise a number of pieces of work each of which are self-contained but at the same time emerge as part of a consistent theme – *The Role of Niche Tourism Products in Destination Development*. A PhD by Publication, unlike a traditional PhD, is a retrospective attempt to construct a series of research articles and papers, within a critical contextual perspective. Thus the narrative takes on a different form. Instead of a single in depth investigation into a specific subject, a coherent, thematic body of work around several research areas is presented. The aim of this critical appraisal is to present the justification for a body of work that I have developed and to demonstrate my contribution to the field of tourism research to substantiate the claim for the award of Doctorate of Philosophy. As part of the research journey a research philosophy has been explored and developed, spanning the conception and development of the research contribution.

The publications encompass eight published journal articles; two book chapters and three fully refereed conference papers to reflect the particular contribution of the author's work. The work presented is only a sample drawn from a wider body of work that is still progressing and includes numerous other articles, international conference papers and the co-authorship of three seminal text books in the area of Festival and Event Management (see Appendix 1). The publications presented here are both sole and co-

authored and are those where there is a clear contribution to the research area. This is reflected in the number of citations they have received in academic debate, which is discussed in Chapter 4. Much of my research has been collaborative in nature, due to the opportunities and benefits that have arisen, successfully establishing research across different methods, perspectives and continents.

The remainder of this chapter identifies the aim and objectives of the research in the context of the discipline of niche tourism and destination development. The research philosophy is introduced and an overview of the submission presented. These areas are critically explored in detail in subsequent chapters.

## **1.2 The Role of Niche Tourism Products in Destination Development**

Novelli (2005) discusses how the term 'Niche Tourism' is largely borrowed from the term 'Niche Marketing' which refers to how a specific product can be tailored to meet the needs of a particular audience or market segment. This is then extended into the idea of 'niche tourism products' and 'niche tourism markets'. She further describes how at one level niche tourism can be defined as breaking down tourism into still relatively large homogeneous market sectors – 'macro niches' i.e. cultural tourism and event tourism – each then capable of further segmentation – 'micro niches' i.e. wine (cultural) tourism and sport (event) tourism. In addition to the focus on tourist activities and what tourists engage with at a destination there is also a dimension by which locations with specific niche products are able to establish and position themselves as niche destinations. Godfrey and Clarke (2000) discuss how destination development often begins with new ideas and initiatives; it is as much to do with attractions and services as it is

about marketing and promotion. Thus, the development of specific tailored products at a destination level is seen to be a way of attracting high-end, high-yield tourists through an extremely personalised 'niche' service i.e. wellness holidays. Of interest to the research presented here, the example that Novelli (2005) uses is that of a wine growing region using the niche product 'wine' to position itself as a niche destination. Offering wine related tourism activities acts as a pull and increases tourist visitation to the region. Direct expenditure on a range of tourism and related businesses, therefore, translates to a boost in economic fortunes, which explains why so many wine regions develop wine tourism products and host wine festivals and events.

Niche tourism is, therefore, seen to be a response to an increasing number of more sophisticated tourists demanding specialist tourism products. It is a means by which destinations can focus their offerings to differentiate their tourism products and compete in an increasingly competitive and cluttered tourism environment (Sharpley and Telfer, 2002). This critical appraisal presents an exploration of various forms of niche tourism i.e. wine, student, festivals and events and yoga/wellness. How destinations develop themselves to create unique products and images, which appeal to the tourism market, is a critical component of the research. It is this product-led approach, shaped by a more discerning and experience seeking tourist consumer, which will provide the context for the publications presented and examined further in this critical appraisal.

### **1.3 Overview of the Publications**

The work that has been chosen for this PhD submission reflects the author's contribution to *The Role of Niche Tourism Products in Destination Development*. As standalone areas of research, there is considerable literature in the areas of wine tourism and festival and event management. The main focus and contribution of this body of work, however, is an examination of how these tourism

products help to market, promote, develop and differentiate a tourism destination. An understanding of the motivations and needs of tourists who seek these products and services, as well as the tourism businesses and the destination management organisations (DMOs) that provide them is key.

Appendix 2 presents a summary of publications by theme, methods, contribution and focus. The papers are presented in Tables 1 – 3 under three key themes that permeate my research:

- niche tourism product development;
- niche tourist profiling; and
- destination development through niche tourism.

To illustrate this, my research has focused primarily on two significant niche tourism products: wine and festivals and events. The individual papers are discussed thematically, rather than chronologically, to give a clearer insight into the contribution to knowledge of the major research areas. Some papers also contribute across more than one thematic area.

### **1.3.1 Niche Tourism Product Development**

Papers 1 – 3 (Ali-Knight and Charters, 1999; 2000; 2001) present a pragmatist paradigm and are focused in the area of wine tourism marketing and development. These reflect the development of conceptual and empirical wine tourism research from the work of Macionis and Cambourne (1998) to the present day replicating Carlsen's (2004) review of 'Global Wine Tourism Research'. Carlsen's framework identifies the need for future studies to be more analytical, multi-disciplinary and systematic rather than being purely descriptive. Papers 1 – 3 (Ali-Knight and Charters, 1999; 2000; 2001) address the key research areas identified, which include educational development and progression at wineries and wine tourism product development.



Evidence of empirical research examining intrastate travel behaviour and student perceptions of Western Australia (WA) as a tourist destination is provided in Paper 5 (Shanka, Ali-Knight, and Pope, 2002). The economic importance of the niche student travel market to WA as a tourism destination is explored.

Papers 6, 8 and 9 (Ensor, Robertson and Ali-Knight, 2007; Frew and Ali-Knight, 2009; Carlsen, Andersson, Ali-Knight, Taylor and Jaeger, 2009) represent a maturity of approach and change in research direction as the author begins to explore other ontological approaches that are more exploratory, fluid and pragmatic in approach. This is evidenced through the use of more qualitative research methods such as content analysis and repertory grids in papers 6 and 8. The niche product in focus also transforms from wine to festivals and events. The areas of festival leadership; stakeholder involvement; and arts festival culture and atmosphere are examined.

Paper 11, (Ali-Knight, 2009) is exploratory in nature and addresses a facet of a topical and developing niche tourism area that I am currently researching – wellness tourism. A case study examining yoga tourism and discussing its essential attributes is presented.

### **1.3.2 Niche Tourism Profiling**

Five papers attempt to create profiles of niche tourists. One of the first attempts at profiling the wine tourist, their needs and expectations is presented in Paper 4 (Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002). Papers 1 and 3 (Ali-Knight and Charters, 1999; 2001) draw attention to the role of personal growth through education as a motivating factor for tourists to wine regions and are significant in attempting to define wine tourism in broader terms. Awareness of wine tourism as a form of consumer behaviour with the application of needs-based motivational theories to the wine tourism consumer is also presented in Paper 10 (Ali-Knight, 2000).

Research into another niche tourist - the yoga tourist is revealed in Paper 11 (Ali-Knight, 2009). The yoga tourist is observed as a distinct market segment whose motivation and decision making are primarily influenced by their interest in yoga.

### **1.3.3 Destination Development through Niche Tourism**

There are six papers in the last thematic area of my work which addresses how niche tourism products can contribute to destination development.

Wine tourism can help to create a brand and image of the winery and wine region, providing a major motivating factor for tourists to visit a destination. Paper 4 (Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002) comments on how the development of wine tourism represents a valuable marketing opportunity to increase the value of the destination. Paper 12 (Ali-Knight and Carlsen, 2003) is included as it explores the area of regional regeneration and diversification through wine tourism and examines the nexus between wine tourism and festivals and events. The benefits of wine festivals and wine tourism, in the context of the economic and social transformation of rural areas in old and new world wine regions, are case studied.

Strategic research development and the contribution of festivals and events to destination development is further explored in paper 7 (Carlsen, Robertson and Ali-Knight, 2007). Paper 9 presents the findings of a collaborative research project examining the changes and challenges confronting festival managers in four geographic locations – Sweden, Norway, the UK and Australia. Future prospects and scenarios for festivals based on increased innovation or festival failure are offered and festival managers are challenged to address these critical issues.

An analysis of how the image of Edinburgh as a tourist destination is defined and enhanced by its reputation and representation as a Festival City is presented in paper 13 (Ali-Knight and Robertson, 2003). The role of festivals as a vital part of the urban landscape, creating a brand image for the destination is also explored.

Finally, the rise in the popularity of yoga within primary tourism generating countries and the development of yoga-based tours and holidays as pull factors for destinations is discussed in paper 11 (Ali-Knight, 2009).

Thus the range of publications presented in this proposal should be regarded as the framework, in its present form, of the author's contribution to the area of *The Role of Niche Tourism Products in Destination Development*. This is obviously fluid and likely to develop further as research progresses in the future.

#### **1.4 Research Aim and Objectives**

The overall aim of this critical appraisal is:

*To demonstrate the understanding and contribution to knowledge that this body of research reveals of the Role of Niche Tourism Products in Destination Development.*

In order to achieve this aim, several objectives need to be fulfilled. These include:

1. An evaluation of the critical role of niche products, such as wine and festivals and events, in developing tourism destinations.
2. A critical examination on, and reflection of, the authors work in the context of the literature of niche tourism, product-led niche tourism and destination development.
3. An evaluation and analysis of the research methodology and key methods underlying the individual articles which comprise the main body of the critical appraisal.
4. An assessment and presentation of the author's contribution to knowledge in this area of study and further research possibilities.

### **1.5 Overview and Structure of the Submission**

This critical appraisal is presented as a series of chapters which aim to explore and fulfil the research objectives of this body of work. This chapter presents an introduction to the area of study and provides an overview and context of the work, introducing the research aims and objectives and key research articles presented.

In Chapter 2 the concepts of niche tourism and niche tourism products are introduced and developed and seen in the perspective of the authors work in this field of tourism enquiry. Gaps are identified in the literature. Key tourism products, such as wine, festivals

and events, students and yoga, are examined in greater depth and their contribution and relevance to 'niche' tourism examined. Further examination of niche tourism as a response to the postmodern tourist concludes the chapter.

Chapter 3 introduces the research philosophy that has guided this series of publications and introduces the methodological issues and implications faced by the author. It identifies and explores a series of research methods and approaches that have been taken to meet the aims and objectives of the critical appraisal. In addition to the philosophical and theoretical background, the chapter also explores the applied nature of the research and its limitations.

Chapter 4 identifies the author's contribution to knowledge and practice and the insights and understandings presented of the research area. This involves reflecting on the author's research in the field of niche tourism and destination development and critically analysing the theory and processes used.

The final chapter, 5, offers conclusions and the research aim and objectives are revisited and qualified and research limitations discussed. The critical appraisal concludes with an identification of areas for future research.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Role of Niche Tourism Products in Destination Development**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The research context for this critical appraisal is niche tourism. This chapter explores the nature, purpose and evolution of niche tourism products in the context of contemporary tourism destination development. It reviews the academic literature surrounding the role of niche tourism products in destination development, examining a range of different approaches which can be adopted. The growth of niche tourism from niche marketing and its parallels with special interest tourism is evaluated and the identification and positioning of niche tourism products explored. It then proceeds to explore in detail a selection of niche tourism products, considering their contribution to the subject area and showing how they contribute to destination development. Psychographic and demographic characteristics of niche tourists are discussed in an attempt to clarify this particular market segment and its relationship with the traditional and post modern tourist. Finally, the relationship between niche tourism and the destination is investigated further. The importance of developing niche tourism products to differentiate and position destinations in a highly competitive tourism environment is considered.

The intention of this chapter is to integrate key theories, concepts and concerns that affect the development of niche tourism within this research context. Current academic theory is examined to gain a clearer understanding of the issues involved and the areas that require further research. This chapter provides the underpinning for the subsequent examination, in Chapter 4, of the influence and contribution of the author's work in this area of research highlighting any gaps in the literature; identifying challenges and

issues of this topic and providing a critical context for analysis. The following section will examine the key work that has been written in this area and how it has been developed. Specific niche markets, reflecting the author's own work in this area (i.e. wine and festival and events), will be explored in greater detail. Reference will also be made to other emergent niche markets (i.e. yoga).

## **2.2 A Perspective on the Development of the Niche Tourism Concept**

Lew examines how, for the past two decades, tourism researchers have been debating tourism in the context of globalisation and rapid technological change. He states how this 'new tourism' can be seen in the context of 'the emergence of niche marketing tourism' (Lew, 2008, p.411). Huh and Singh (2007) also discuss how the maturity of the tourism marketplace, coupled with fierce competition and, a more engaged consumer has led to this desire to seek out new tourism markets or niches.

Although previous work has been conducted investigating the growth of special interest tourism (see 2.2.3), and specific niche markets in tourism (Appendix 3), niche tourism as a disparate concept and theory was not examined in full until the new millennium. In 2002 the Crichton Tourism Research Centre at the University of Glasgow held a one day conference. The theme was 'Niche Tourism in Question: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Problems and Possibilities.' One of the outcomes of the conference was a set of published proceedings (Macleod, 2003) which attempted to draw together for the first time academics from different tourism related disciplines to debate this 'new tourism.' This provided some of the first collective thinking on niche tourism and its multiple aspects.

Novelli's (2005) seminal text on the subject progresses the work of Macleod (2003) as she attempts to provide the rationale for niche tourism production and consumption and through a series of theoretically underpinned case studies, introduces the two extremes of niche tourism (Figure 1). Novelli (2005) is clear, however, on defining the following characteristics:

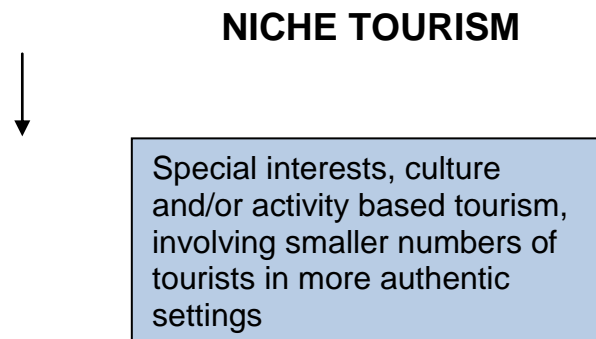
- the term 'niche tourism' has its roots in the concept of 'niche marketing';
- is a counterpart to the undifferentiated mass tourism product;
- refers to specific tourism products focused to meet the needs of particular market segments or niches;
- the existence of a niche tourism continuum with macro niches on one end occupying relatively large market shares (e.g. ecotourism) and further segmented micro niches at the other end of the continuum (e.g. wildlife tourism).

### 2.2.1 Niche Tourism Framework

Following on from the work of Macleod (2003) and Novelli (2005) we begin to see the emergence of a Niche Tourism Framework

#### Figure 1: Niche Tourism Framework

*Adapted from Novelli (2005)*





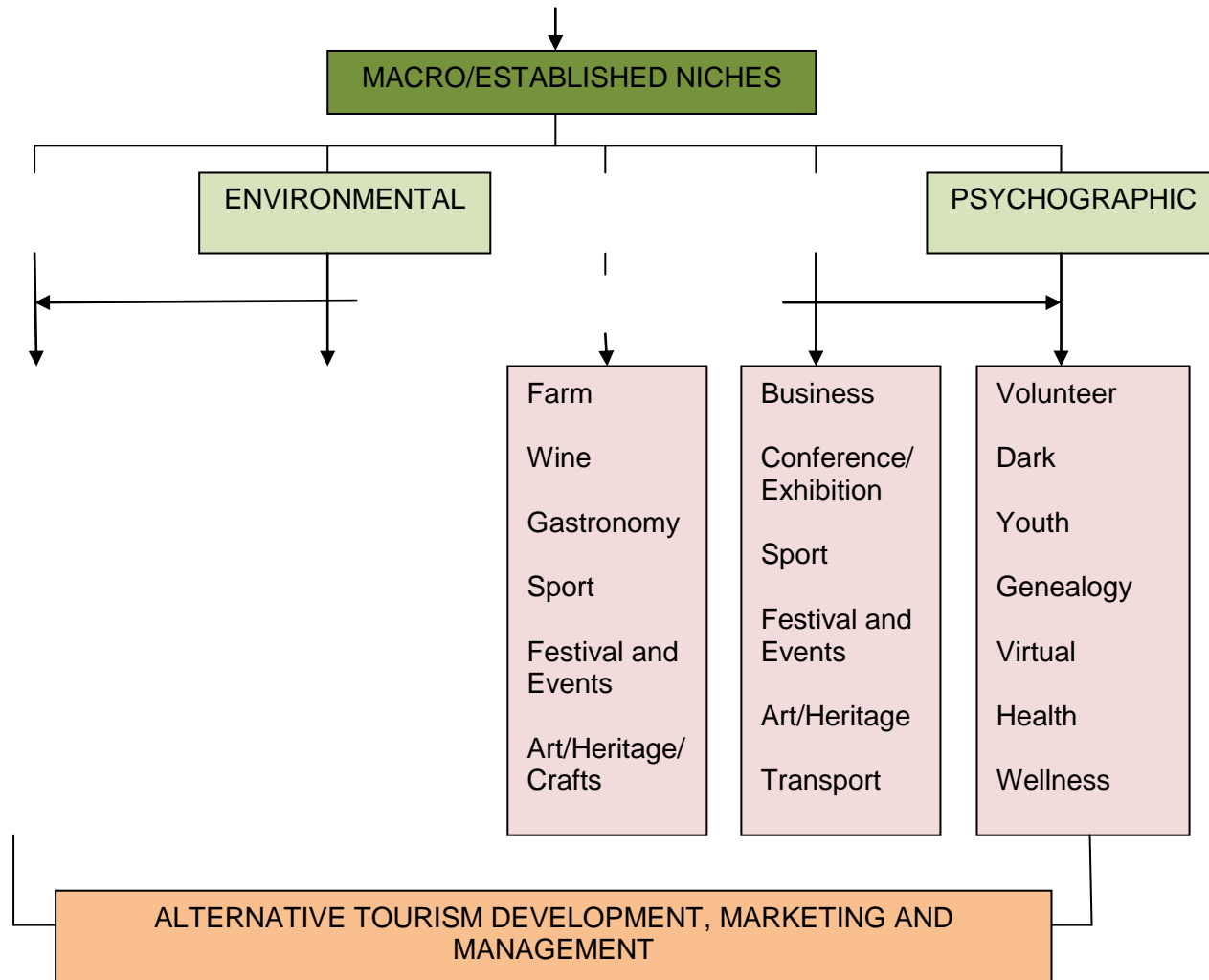


Figure 1 illustrates the appearance of a niche tourism spectrum, or continuum, with large market sectors or macro niches (i.e. cultural tourism) at one end and each of these larger sectors capable of breaking down further into smaller, more specialised micro niches (i.e. wine, photography and film) at the other. It is these highly specialised, distinct segments that allow a destination to differentiate itself and compete as a tourism destination.

Early writings in the area identify a complexity that begins to emerge as at the macro level niche tourism can be criticised as being another packaged form of tourism. This is evidenced in its use by a large number of tourists and large multinational companies (e.g. a packaged summer Cultural Tour of Florence including queuing at the Uffizi Museum) offering a fairly standardised and homogenised product. At the other end of the spectrum smaller, community-based and locally-owned enterprises occur offering highly individualised experiences (e.g. a locally run winery tour in Tuscany). This raises further research questions such as the need to examine the extent to which a niche is authentic and real or manufactured and created (Hall, 2003).

### **2.2.2 From Niche Marketing to Niche Tourism**

Hutchinson (1957) is largely credited with introducing the idea of 'niche' referring to an optimum location that an organism can exploit against its competitors. A later definition is given by Keegan *et al.* (1992), describing a niche as a smaller market not served by competing products. The term 'niche' was subsequently adopted by the business literature inventing the phrase 'niche marketing'. As Tofton and Hammervoll (2010) state, there appears to be no widely accepted definition of niche marketing. However, a number of similarities have emerged. Existing definitions include, a method to meet customer needs through the tailoring of goods and service to small markets (Stanton *et al.* 1991); 'small, profitable, homogeneous market segments which have been

ignored or neglected by others' (Dalgic and Leeuw, 1994, p.42) and a 'process of concentrating marketing resources and efforts on one particular market segment' (Huh and Singh, 2007, p.213). Kotler (2003) also characterises niche marketing as focusing on customers, with a distinct set of needs, who will offer a premium to the company who best fulfils these. Thus markets can be reached and served and products and services matched to people's specific needs and wants. Dalgic and Leeuw (1994) summarise by saying that niche firms generally focus their marketing activities to a limited part of the market, with relatively few customers and competitors, through the application of company specialisation, product differentiation, relationship marketing and customer focus.

Huh and Singh (2007) highlight how most studies published since the 1990s have emphasised new segmentation within existing marketplaces rather than identifying new or niche markets. They attribute four key criteria by which these markets are segmented: socioeconomic/demographic; geographic; psychographic and psychological and behavioural. The limited academic literature available has mainly focused on market specific factors centring on the characteristics of what a niche is and what causes it to exist (Tofton and Hammervoll, 2010; Jarvis and Goodman, 2005). Dalgic and Leeuw remark how 'despite its growing interest and increasing popularity there seems to have been limited research' and existing research is '...predominantly from a practitioner's point of view' (Dalgic and Leeuw, 1994, p.39). What are lacking are studies focusing on internal issues such as the strategic capabilities, in terms of skills and resources, which can differentiate companies from their competition (Tofton and Hammervoll, 2010). Dalgic (2006) also comments on the international aspect of niche marketing. No longer confined within national boundaries, it is an opportunity for companies to develop their internal strategic capabilities. A niche market strategy has the potential to help a company identify its most profitable market segments and hold off import competition (Parrish, Cassill and Oxenham, 2006).

Niche marketing has evolved since the 1980s and niche marketers are 'steadily eating up parts of the formerly traditional mass markets' resulting in a myriad of fractured markets in contrast to one mass market (Dalgic and Leeuw, 1994 p. 43). Companies are realising that they have to tailor their products and services to customer needs and tastes. Thus the focus shifts to the customer, and on profit, rather than pursuing the whole mass market. The marketing literature (Dalgic and Leeuw, 1994; Dibb and Simkin, 1993; Kotler, 1989; Linneman and Stanton, 1991) has numerous examples of how companies are abandoning traditional mass marketing techniques and applying niche marketing. Linneman and Stanton's (1991) research amongst Fortune 1,000 companies revealed that most of these companies had started to serve smaller segments, but selling to as many niches as possible, where each niche is a small market aggregating to larger ones.

Many companies usually have niche markets at the initial stage of their product life cycle. In order to remain competitive, as their product life cycle develops into maturity and then saturation starts, successful companies need to reinvent their products. At this stage innovation occurs and former mass markets tend to go back to niche markets. Dibb and Simkin (1993) observed this to be the case with the Body Shop. From the discovery of a niche market in natural beauty products not tested on animals, they are a clear example of one of the world's fastest growing and successful niche retailers. In Niche Marketing the focus is on the customer and as Dalgic and Leeuw, state 'if you can involve your customer in the design of your product, you are half way there' (Dalgic and Leeuw, 1994, p.46). This is even more pertinent today with the growth of e marketing and the prevalence of online social networks. Apple has achieved this, working with customers to create new applications and as a result found new niche markets in music and mobile phone technology.

Toften and Hammervoll's research focused on niche producers in the salmon and wine industries. They use differentiated and high-quality products basing their operations on limited target markets, specialisation and strong customer relationships. The findings suggest that 'strategic capabilities are perceived to be of vital importance for niche firms' success' (Toften and Hammervoll, 2010, p.749), especially the ability to offer a unique product for a unique group of customers. Other managerial implications include access to high-quality raw materials; strong relationships with their wholesaler-distributors; long term supply contracts; reliance on only a few key and long term business customers; limited use of controlled marketing communications; production location or geographical presence and expertise in producing the product.

Parrish, Cassill and Oxenham (2006a; 2006b) also conducted illuminating research into niche markets in the international textile and apparel industry. The industry currently faces many challenges from the increased predominance of China and other skill producing nations; an overcapacity of goods and a deflation of world market prices. Linneman and Stanton (1991) comment that there are 'riches in niches' and decreasing profits is a key reason for companies to adopt a niche marketing strategy. In depth interviews with leading US textile and apparel executives revealed niche marketing to be a critical rejuvenation strategy alongside other importance factors such as focused customer communication; market size and value; differentiation and brand image and reputation.

Applying these niche markets to tourism, introduces a new tourist typology, whereby tourism clusters or groupings are characterised by specific travel motivations attracted to the differentiation on offer. Thus, the marketing strategy becomes more localised, focusing on the key local aspects and interacting with the environment and its resources. Tarlow (2003) illustrates how niche marketing appeals to tourism officials as they try to target their product towards the section of the public that has the highest

propensity to travel to their locale and then speak highly of it. Theoretical frameworks then guide this niche marketing as the relationship between the local tourism community and the type of people it attracts is examined further.

### **2.2.3 Special Interest Tourism: the Roots of Niche Tourism**

According to Read (1980), in Hall and Weiler (1992), the conceptualisation of the term 'Special Interest Tourism' (SIT) emerged during the 1980s and can be seen as the predecessor of 'Niche Tourism'. Early discussion of SIT set the context for the development of niche tourism markets, and was seen to be a prime force associated with the expansion of tourism and the motivation around which tourist activity was planned and advanced. It marked the move from tourism as a commodified, mainstream offering to one that was more specialised and unique. Initially SIT products were seen to focus on relatively homogeneous groups of consumers such as eco or cultural tourists and were compared to Stebbins' (1982) specialised, serious leisure consumers. However, what began to emerge in academic debate was that there existed another softer end of the spectrum often linked to individual operators' expertise within that special interest field and desire to tap the latent consumer demand for that niche market. This 'casual' end of the spectrum Stebbins (1982) points out as still being in the majority and is seen as pursuing a 'relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it' (Stebbins, 1982, in Bartram, 2001, p.5).

Trauer (2006) observes how the growth of the SIT sector is said to reflect the diversity of interests of contemporary society – increasing concerns for the conservation of the environment; the desire for self improvement; personal fulfilment and new experiences and the thirst for knowledge (Wearing, 2002; Urry, 1990; Opaschowski, 2001). The significance of the market is illustrated by the fact that 'a remarkable 81% of US adults who travelled in the past year or 118 million are considered historic/cultural travellers' (Keefe, 2002, in McKercher and Chan, 2005, p.1). Furthermore SIT tourists are seen to be higher yield than other tourists staying longer, spending more and participating in more activities (Keefe, 2002; Mackay, Andereck and Vogt,

2002; Stronge, 2000). Morgan and Pritchard (1999) highlight how SIT serves to indicate qualitative differences from those of mass tourism, promoting tourism that is more socially responsible and community focused.

Difficulties arise in academic debate when trying to define SIT. Hall and Weiler in their original work propose SIT to occur when 'travellers' motivation and decision-making are primarily determined by a particular special interest,' (Hall and Weiler, 1992, p.5). Further definitions (Swarbrooke and Horner, 1999; Derrett, 2001; Douglas, Douglas and Derrett, 2001) expand this to characterise SIT as:

- motivated by a desire to engage in new or existing interests in a novel or familiar location;
- the opposite of mass tourism;
- tourism undertaken for a specific or distinct reason; and
- having emerged because of the desire to deliver a more sustainable tourism product.

Douglas *et al.* (2001) expand this debate to define the characteristics of SIT as 'flexible delivery, market segmentation and advances in technology affecting management and distribution' (Douglas *et al.*, 2001, p.3).

Similarly, when setting SIT in a broader tourism framework Brotherton and Himmetoglu's (1997) work proposes a 'Tourism Interest Continuum'. This emerges through increased travel experience, resulting in a maturity of the tourist life cycle from safe to more experimental and adventurous forms of tourism activity, enabling the tourist to seek self prestige and self enhancement. Their work sought to refine SIT theory from the global/macro to the local/micro also focusing on levels of involvement. This motivational approach is also apparent in the various typologies that have emerged from other SIT studies (Trauer, 2006). Trauer (2006) also raises an interesting area for discussion, examining how various special interest segments (e.g., sport, rural, event and adventure)

can merge with other SIT categories. For example, although sport, rural, event and adventure tourism can be seen to be distinctive segments, a challenging mountain bike championship held in a mountainous region can be seen to cross all four SIT segments. There is little published work that realises that the individual segments are not mutually exclusive and often there is an overlap (Hall, 2003).

McKercher and Chan (2005) challenge previous research asking the question 'How important is SIT?' They argue that tourists participate in a wide variety of activities at a destination which are often secondary to their reason for travel. For example, tourists who visit a museum as part of their tourism experience are not necessarily cultural tourists. Their visit could be only to the museum shop and/or cafe or as part of a wider tour of the destination. They argue that the interest shown in SIT rarely translates into strong commercial opportunities, and often activities are periphery to the destination. Further research is needed to confirm their assumptions. However, what is apparent is that research into SIT has set the context for discussing niche tourism products that are part of a wider, multi product offering at the destination. For single product destinations this can be seen as a core activity and for a smaller, focused group forms the special interest and sole motivation to visit the destination.

#### **2.2.4 The Move from Mass to Niche Tourism and the introduction of the Niche Tourism Lifecycle**

Any discussion of niche tourism needs to be considered against the other extreme of mass tourism. The rise of mass tourism, fuelled by the growth in the aviation sector in the 1950s and 1960s, also gave rise to the backpacker tourist who later became the highly specialised and sophisticated middle class traveller of the developed world (Lew, 2008). Poon summarised the move towards niche tourism stating:



‘The economics of the new tourism is very different from the old - profitability no longer rests solely on economies of scale and the exploitation of mass undifferentiated markets’

(Poon, 1989, in Lew, 2008, p.411).

Mass tourism was no longer seen to be the dominant paradigm, and the special interest tourism segment became the new tourism of the 1980s and 1990s. As Knowles and Curtis emphasise, mass tourism will not disappear but be replaced by ‘a more responsible and more realistic, variety of mass tourism, where price is no longer the critical factor’ (Knowles and Curtis, 1999, p.95). Trufino, Petruzzellis and Nigro (2006) attribute this process of commoditisation to the predominance of Northern European tour operators generating tourism concentration through economies of scale, and stimulating rapid unplanned development in coastal resorts. As destinations move into a mass tourism industry, major changes in demand directly influence the destinations due to their heavy reliance on the tour operators. Uncontrolled mass tourism is no longer attractive as it offered threats to destination development and environmental planning; exploiting and damaging the natural and cultural assets that the tourist seeks to experience (Poon, 1993). Other factors such as the growth of a more sophisticated, experienced consumer; global economic restructuring; the evolution of tourist buying behaviour; and, the search for differentiation, heralded a move away from standardised and rigid mass tourism, with destinations and consumers seeking alternative modes of delivery.

Academics began to publish work on ‘alternative’ tourism, recognising its huge potential to balance mass tourism by seeking smaller numbers with higher spending power (Hall and Weiler, 1992). Trufino *et al.* (2006) relate the above to the development of a new tourism typology in Italy. As a mature tourism destination with 39% of travel sold through European tour operators, they have finally realised the benefits and positive impacts that a more alternative and niche tourism can have. Thus, the exploitation of cultural, gastronomic and environmental resources offers a new opportunity to the destination. Truffino *et al.* (2006) use Butler’s

(1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle model (TALC) to chart the development of tourism (Figure 2). The case in Italy is repeated in many mature destinations, where traditional tourism, suffering from intense competition, requires differentiation and revitalising strategies to revive and extend the tourism life cycle.

There is little published work however, that examines the relationship between niche tourism and Butler's (1980) destination life-cycle model. He introduced the concept of the TALC as a model linking the development cycle of tourism destinations to that of products in the product life cycle model, established earlier in consumer marketing (Butler, 1980). Based on the S shaped curve he describes six stages that a destination would go through as tourism develops: exploration; involvement; development; consolidation, stagnation and ending with either rejuvenation or decline. Baum (1998) notes Butler's contribution to the tourism literature, through this model, as 'seminal' due to its subsequent influence on, and use by, students and researchers.

Johnston (2001) however comments that within contemporary academic research there is little consensus about the model's validity and usefulness. Opperman remarks that 'almost everything that can be said about the advantages and disadvantages of Butler's model has indeed been said already.' (Opperman, 1998, p.179). The depth and breadth of the criticism has been vast. Lagiewski (2006) offers an overview of the work that has challenged, supported and expanded Butler's TALC over 20 years. Its limitations have been emphasised both in conceptually based critiques (Choy, 1992; Haywood, 1987; 1992; Johnston, 2001; Prosser, 1995; Wall, 1982) examining the validity of the resort cycle itself and in its application in case studies (Bianchi, 1994; Getz, 1992; Hovinen, 1982; Russell and Faulkner, 1998). Several types of destinations have been used as case studies. Niagara Falls (Getz, 1992) and Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Hovinen, 1981) were used in earlier applications. Hovinen (2002) revisits his Lancaster County case study and uses chaos/complexity theory as an alternative and complimentary perspective. It has also attracted

particular attention in describing the decline of European coastal resorts (Cooper 1990; 1992) and latterly, in cultural and natural heritage settings (Boyd, 2006; Lundgren, 2006; Russo, 2006; Weizenegger, 2006).

However, Butler's discussion of each stage is generalistic and the nature of the destination entity; the type of destination and the spatial scale requires further examination (Johnston, 2001). Numerous studies (Formica and Uysal, 1996) have been done on destination areas larger than a resort or city scale, containing multiple destination entities, and these are all aggravated into a single life cycle. It is difficult to compare for example an inland British resort, with a historic European destination or a coastal resort in a developing country. Furthermore, tourism may just be one component of the local economy or its driving force. Russell (2006) also discusses the major role that entrepreneurship can have in destination development thus again influencing the s shaped curve.

Butler's classic sequence of events has, however, withstood the test of time and scrutiny well, but a number of criticisms focusing on the stages of the life cycle have emerged. Young (1983) added two 'pre-tourism' stages, as well amending the final stages of stagnation into rejuvenation or decline. These are critiqued as few destinations seem to focus on the most crucial aspect of what happens in the post stagnation stage (Knowles and Curtis, 1999). Agarwal, (1994) and Hovinen (2002) also discuss the possibility of alternative or additional stages after the stagnation stage. Aragawal (1994) argues that the rejuvenation stage can be repeated to offset decline, resulting in a series of peaks and troughs in this final stage. Using the development of Spanish coastal resorts as examples, Knowles and Curtis (1999) describe three post stagnation stages: market volatility and partial rejuvenation; spiralling decline and stabilisation. Baum (1998) also discusses additional stages constituting the total or partial abandonment of tourism as a destinational activity, or an exit and re-entry strategy replacing the original tourism paradigm with an emergence into new, alternative, niche markets. Another inherent problem in applying the TALC is the lack of accurate trend data for most destinations.

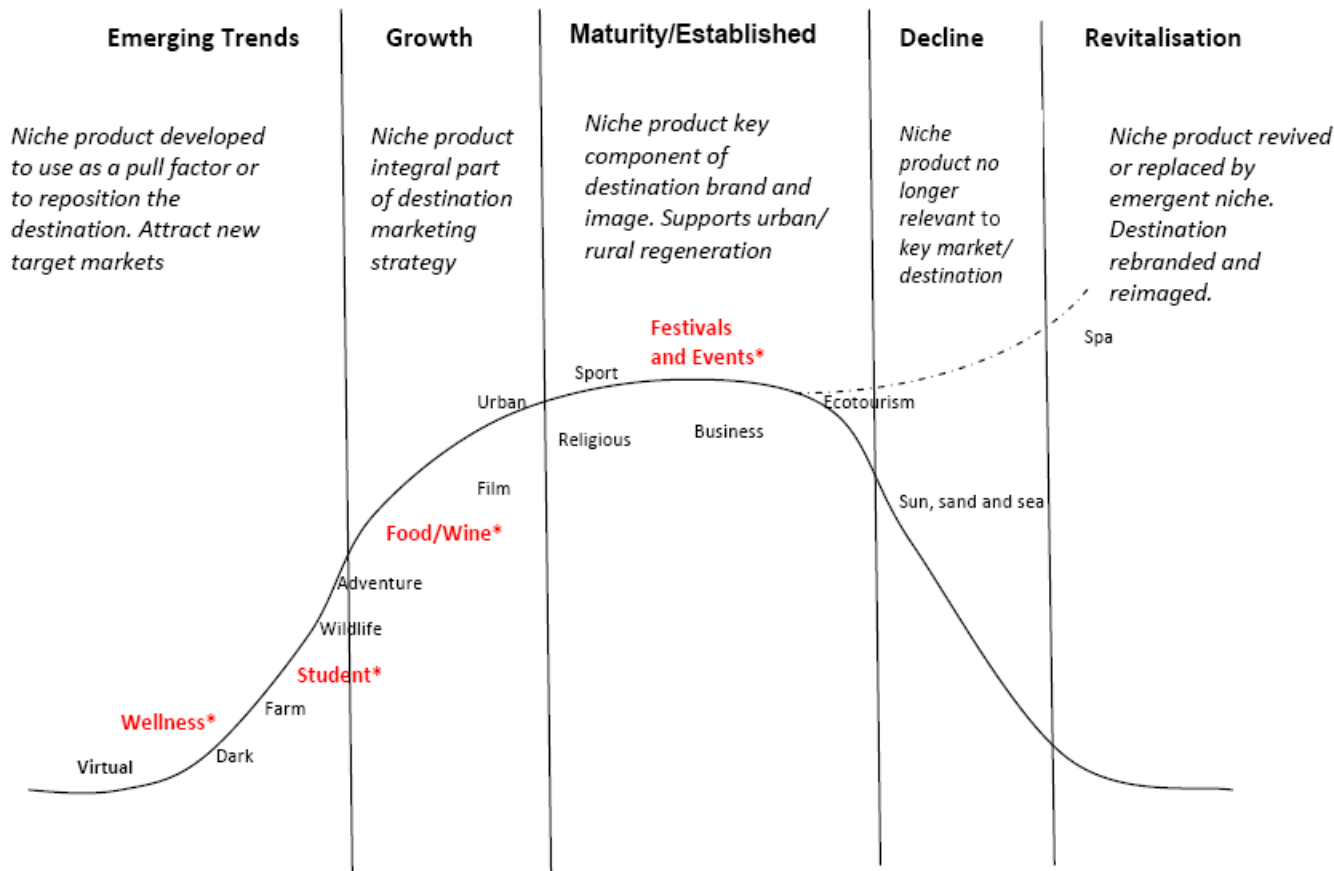
Empirical testing through case presentation and analysis would extend its validity (Baum, 1998; Hovinen, 2002). Lundtorp and Wanhill (2001; 2006) present a mathematical model to try and formulate the exact number of tourists over the stages of the model.

The important contribution that the TALC has made to the tourism literature is emphasised by Hall (2006) stating the fact that an entire two volume book, in addition to numerous articles, has been written about the concept. These texts present the original 1980 article, its origin, implementation and application across a number of destinations and a body of contested theory and concepts surrounding it. Butler has also continually revisited the model (1998; 2006) and asserts that he did not anticipate the scale or positive nature of the reaction to the model; the rapid rate of tourism growth; increasing consumption of tourism destinations and the diminishing time taken to progress through the cycle. What is apparent is that the TALC is a useful framework, but not a rigid model with over literal application, and much of the criticism has been based upon the application to detail rather than the recognition of generic attributes and strengths.

Applying Butlers (1980) TALC model, Buhalis (2000) suggests that destinations that are at the later stage of their development should focus on repositioning their tourism products with alternative niche marketing strategies. Novelli (2005) cites how niche tourism is positioned in tourism policy and strategy as being in opposition to mass tourism, offering a more small scale, individualised service that is more palatable to host communities and environments than uncontrolled, commercialised tourism. It can be thus used as a valuable tool to reposition the destination at the rejuvenation or reinvention stage (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Niche Tourism Life Cycle**

*Adapted from Butler (1980) and Trufino, Petruzzelli and*



**\*Research areas covered by this critical appraisal**

### **2.2.5 Positioning of Niche Tourism Products**

Academic literature has paid little attention to the positioning of niche tourism products. Novelli considers 'the notion of an increasingly experienced group of tourists demanding specialist holidays to meet their specific desires' (Novelli, 2005, p.7), and how this has provided the conditions necessary to facilitate the growth of niche tourism. Sharpley and Telfer (2002) reflect on how tourist behaviour has produced a more segmented and sophisticated consumer market, and how niche tourism is a response to these specialised consumer needs and preferences. The development of niche tourism products has been a response by the tourism industry to diversify their product base to capture new, emergent tourist markets and build a more diverse customer base. Therefore, establishing very defined and individualised niches has allowed smaller independent tourism operators to compete in the highly price sensitive and competitive tourism marketplace. Niche tourism product development is often associated with high levels of entrepreneurship at the destination and an individual desire to carve out specific market niches (Novelli, 2005). Little work has been published however, examining the relationship between niche tourism development and entrepreneurship. In trying to portray the range and diversity of niche tourism products a comprehensive theoretical framework begins to emerge (Figure 1) and niche tourism can be seen as an important subset of tourism activities.

### **2.2.6 Contesting Niche Tourism**

In her opening chapter on niche tourism Novelli contends that the 'usage of the term is not without its semantic problems (but) has taken on a commonsense meaning' (Novelli, 2005, p.7). Hall (2003) questions the validity of the niche tourism concept, lamenting the lack of a clear definition or understanding resulting in difficulties when operationalising it. He states further that there are multiple conceptual niche tourism as well as multiple operational niche tourism. The terms absence from both Jafari's (2000) and

Beaver's (2002) tourism dictionaries/encyclopaedias further complicates a clear definition. Hall, however, offers its constituent parts stressing that it concerns:

'Identifying and stimulating demand, segmenting consumers into identifiable groups for targeting purposes, and providing and promoting supply by differentiating products and services from those of competitors' (Hall, 2003, p.18).

In the glossary of their text 'The Business of Tourism Management' Beech and Chadwick present niche tourism as a 'small specialised sector of tourism which appeals to a correspondingly tightly-defined market segment.' (Beech and Chadwick, 2006, p.557). However, the assumption that sectors such as eco or cultural tourism are a small segment of the tourism market, and that they are 'tightly-defined', is flawed. Tarlow (2003) recognizes that there is no one single niche as people often fall into more than one category.

Apart from the problems with defining niche tourism, a series of shortfalls and gaps also emerge in the literature. Huh and Singh in their examination of people with disabilities as an emergent niche tourism market lament that 'investigating niches has not yet reached the mainstream of hospitality and tourism research' (Huh and Singh, 2007, p. 215). To date, most research undertaken has focused on the niche product, i.e., the facilities and marketing, with little emphasis on determining a demand side profile of niche tourists, illustrating their tourism behaviour patterns and interest and involvement levels in participating in niche activities (Hsu *et al.*, 2002; Tassiopoulos and Haydam, 2008). Supply side research has tended to dominate the literature, with little insight given into who the niche tourism consumer actually is and how to determine consumer interest in niche tourism products. Few Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) have considered or explored the markets for their various niche products (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride, 2002).

### 2.3 Wine Tourism and the Exploration of Wine as a Niche Tourism Product

Wine was chosen as an example of a mature niche tourism market that is worthy of an in depth study. Cambourne (1998) commented on how wine tourism has replaced eco-tourism as 'the hot new tourism buzzword' and as an important niche market with significant growth potential. The tourism and wine industries have, over the last two decades, become increasingly identified in the tourism and wine literature as being natural symbiotic partners. This relationship is now embraced in the term 'wine tourism'<sup>1</sup>. Many authors have pointed to the potential benefits that may arise from this relationship (Dodd, 1997; Dodd and Bigotte, 1995; 1997; Fuller, 1997; Hall, Cambourne, Macionis and Johnson, 1998; Getz, Dowling, Carlsen and Anderson, 1999; Hall, Johnson and Mitchell, 2000). Wine Tourism has been defined in a variety of different ways. For example, The Western Australia Wine Tourism Strategy identifies it as 'travel for the purpose of experiencing wineries and wine regions and their links to the Australian lifestyle, and encompasses service provision and destination marketing' (Dowling *et al.*, 2000, p.8). Wine Tourism is seen as a newly emerged form of alternative tourism that overlaps both the wine and tourism industries and has been recognized as part of agricultural tourism; rural tourism; cultural tourism and industrial tourism, where the tourist motivation is linked to an interest in wine (Yuan *et al.*, 2005). Cambourne *et al.* however, note how there has been minimal research into 'the development of wine tourism, the manner in which it is managed and marketed and the people who visit wine regions and experience the wine tourism product' (Cambourne *et al.*, 2000, p.320).

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<sup>1</sup> 'visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors' (Hall, 1996; Macionis, 1996).



In some destinations, wine tourism rates highly as a domestic tourism pursuit (Williams and Kelly, 2001). Both the wine and tourism industries achieved high levels of growth within Australia in the 1990s, and as invisible exports, are significant contributors to the GDP. In 1999 Australia was responsible for just 3.7% of world wine exports by volume, but by 2005 this figure has increased to 8.7% (Winemakers Federation of Australia, 2008). Australian wineries witnessed an 8% average annual increase in international visitors, during 2000 to 2006, with domestic and day visitors increasing by 6% and 5% annually (Tourism Research Australia, 2007). Research by Tourism Research Australia (2007) also revealed that international winery visitors represent 13% of the total international tourist market in Australia. This growth was mirrored in California with 10.7 million visitors in 2002 spending US\$41.2bn (Napa Valley Vintners Association, 2003). There are a number of key factors that explain this growth in wine tourism. First, there are more wineries than ever before. Thach and Olsen (2006) note that the number of wineries in the U.S. is estimated to have grown from 1,817 in 1995 to over 3,700 in 2004. Second, more wine is being sold directly to the consumer (Wine Business Monthly, 2005). In 2000 the British Columbia Wine Institute highlighted the need for more empirical information on the domestic wine tourism market. This would enable a more accurate definition of the most appropriate mix of wine tourism products suited to this niche market and help to fully integrate this within broader wine marketing initiatives (BCWI, 2000). Due to the competitive and emergent nature of the wine industry, understanding the characteristics and differences of the wine tourism market is important to product development and for marketing purposes (Williams and Kelly, 2001).

On the demand side, successful wine tourism is dependent on effective market segmentation to attract the wine tourist. Although considerable research exists concerning the location of wineries and their engagement with wine tourism activities, there is little published information relating to the characteristics of visitors to wineries (Dodd and Bigotte, 1995; 1997; Hall and Johnson, 1997; 1998; Hall and Macionis, 1998; Johnson, 1998; Williams and Kelly, 2001). There has been much generic literature written on

market segmentation and positioning (Kotler, 1980; Ries and Trout, 1981; Dibb and Simkin, 1994) stressing how recognition of market segments will enable an industry to position its product in the marketplace and target its sales more effectively. Information on tourist behaviour derived from segmentation studies is therefore an essential component of marketing and development. Hall *et al.* (2000) note the need for further research and more in-depth knowledge of this unique niche. More sophisticated market segmentation studies for destination specific wine tourism are also needed. Wineries attract a whole host of different visitors the majority of whom visit wine regions for their rural ambience, rather than the possibility of drinking wine. Getz (2000) expands this to define a key determinant of wine tourism as a form of consumer behaviour in which wine lovers and those interested in wine regions travel to preferred destinations. The changing trends and motivations in travel have driven wine tourism into more of a lifestyle and personal development experience than a primary recreational pursuit (Beames, 2003). Engaging in wine tourism enables today's more educated travellers to look for authenticity, uniqueness, social contact, novelty, and education (Hall and Weiler, 1992). Although commonalities exist there is a growing realisation that distinct geographic, socio economic and behavioural segments exist (O'Neill and Charters, 1999; Mitchell and Hall, 2001).

Researchers have called for more in depth analysis of the unique niches of these tourists, as information concerning the internal motivations of wine tourists can help to segment the market into useful niches (Johnson, 1998). The work of Hall *et al.* (2000) attempts to further segment the wine tourist into three distinct categories: 'Wine Lover', 'Wine Interested' and 'Curious Tourist'. What is apparent, however, is that like other niche tourism segments, wine tourists are not homogeneous and differ in terms of their expectations and preferences (Charters and Fountain, 2006). Understanding this difference becomes very important for destinations trying to attract the niche wine tourist market. In an analysis of previous studies Hashimoto and Telfer (2003) suggest that the wine tourist is normally 30 – 50 years old, in the moderate income bracket and comes from within a close proximity to the

wine region. Both push (internal desires such as learning about the wine) and pull (external motives such as eating at the winery restaurant) factors exist in a wine tourist decision making process as visiting a winery is rarely a casual decision (Yuan *et al.*, 2005). Brown, Havtiz and Getz discuss how, in terms of involvement, wine is 'the type of product with which consumers may become totally immersed or which may leave them relatively ambivalent' (Brown, Havtiz and Getz, 2006, p.34). Lockshin and Spawton (2001) also attempt to differentiate between high and low involvement wine tourists. This idea is progressed by Ravenscroft and Westering who whilst referring to Stebbins (1996) work on serious leisure, describe wine tourists as people acting 'as an amateur in a moral career' (Ravenscroft and Westering, 2001, p.159) through which they engage with wine professionals. Although some researchers (Lockshin and Spawton, 2001; Charters and Pettigrew, 2006) have discussed the nuances of high-end and high-involvement consumers in relation to wine consumption, little research has been done to explore 'the relative heterogeneity of high involvement participants' (Brown, Havitz and Getz, 2006, p.32). Charters *et al.* expand this to state that 'understanding the wine tourist tasting room and experiences is important to allow winery manager to better meet those expectations' (Charters *et al.*, 2009, p.131) There is also a need to differentiate between the tourist's experience with a small wine tourism operator offering a wider cultural experience, and with a mass tourism experience (Charters *et al.*, 2009).

Visiting wine festivals is one activity within the overall wine tourism experience. Wine Festivals can therefore provide substantial public relations value, help to attract a greater range of attendees, diversify the visitor base and help to create loyalty to the destination and the individual wineries thus revealing a 'unique synergy between wine, special events and leisure travel' (Yuan *et al.*, 2005 p.54). Taylor and Shanka's (2002) work examining the use of festivals in the Swan Valley region of Perth show how as a

'rurban'<sup>2</sup> periphery the use of festivals is critical in bringing both local residents and leisure travellers to visit the wine region. However, there have been few cross-cultural studies of events and tourism. The various factors specifically affecting niche markets such as wine and event tourism have not been well explored in the tourism literature.

Carlsen and Charters discuss how, since the initial work of Getz (2000) and Hall *et al.* (2000), wine tourism research has accelerated to an extensive body of knowledge becoming 'more specialised and eclectic, evolving from conceptual case study approaches to more comprehensive and expansive investigation into the wine tourism phenomenon' (Carlsen and Charters, 2006, p.1). They identify five thematic groupings in terms of global wine tourism research. It is within the theme of wine tourism marketing that its role as a niche tourism product emerges, relating it to special interest markets and the destination image and brand. Carlsen (2004) proceeds to frame wine tourism research into two approaches – macroeconomic and microeconomic. At a macro level wine tourism's contribution to regional identity, image and branding is what ties its importance to the destination. At a micro level Dodd and Beverland (2001) identified an organisation life cycle view of winery tourism, identifying the five key stages of winery establishment, winery recognition, regional prominence, maturity and regional decline. This connects back to Butler (1980) whilst also linking clearly back to destination development. Wine can therefore become the catalyst for the revival of tourism for destinations that are struggling at a critical stage of the TALC (Kivela and Crofts, 2005). Finally, Carlsen (2004) recognises that wine production and tourism are essentially on two ends of the industrial spectrum and this contextualises the current research that has been done in the area. There is much work to be done however to identify how these diverse industries converge.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Rurban' relates to the dichotomy between rural and urban areas and the merging of the two. Rural-urban can be seen as a continuum within which individuals, communities and tourist activity is distributed.

When discussing the nexus between wine tourism and destination development, wine is seen to be a significant niche tourism product that acts as a key destinational pull factor as it is inextricably linked to the destination and its image (Kivela and Crotts, 2006; Novelli, 2005). Wine tourism has surfaced as a growing area of special interest tourism significant to the regional tourism product and a key factor in the business strategy and development of the wineries and the supply side at the destination (Yuan *et al.*, 2005; Charters and Carlsen, 2006). Kivela and Crotts (2006) discuss how food and wine can provide a viable alternative to destinations that cannot benefit from other more traditional forms of tourism, or substantial natural or cultural resources. It offers rural destinations the opportunity to attract visitors who will come and spend time and financial resources liberally within their region. There exists a symbiotic relationship between wine and a tourism destination as the destination provides the wineries, and the natural and cultural backdrop that make it an ideal product for tourist consumption (Kivela and Crotts, 2006). As wine is tied to its geographic location, wineries can use this to their advantage working on their own, or collaboratively, to promote the region as part of a wider destination brand. Beverland (2004) expands the academic debate to include a 'dedication to place'. Peters (1997) further links this concept of wine tourism to the land referring to wine regions as 'winescapes' and highlighting how successful wine tourism development can transform the local landscape to a combination of agriculture, industry and tourism. Hjalager (2002) expands this to highlight that authentically marketed and delivered food and wine images can result in a tourism destination being increasingly sought after. In order for a destination to survive it has to compete with other destinations and regions thus the regional brand or 'appellation' becomes an important source of differentiation and value for the rural area (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993). A number of benefits may accrue including the immediate addition of new and additional tourists and tourist expenditure; education and employment opportunities; development of local entrepreneurial activity and the enhancement of local culture and civic pride. However, wine tourism can also be threatened by over commercialisation, and through the lack of adequate land use controls, pollution or erosion contribute to the destruction of the attractive rural 'winescape' that the wine tourist seeks. As a result, the wine

tourism industry must take a role in protecting and conserving key resources necessary to facilitate further growth and development (Williams and Kelly, 2001). Finally, although a consumer may develop a strong partiality for the wine of a particular country this does not necessarily lead to the consumers visiting those wine regions. 'Destination- specific wine tourism' will not necessarily lead to repeat visitation unlike wine purchasing repeat behaviour (Brown, Havitz and Getz, 2006). Although there is a clear correlation between wine tourism and destination development, Hall *et al.* (2000) comment on how the impacts of wine tourism at a destination level are seldom researched and analysed.

## **2.4 Contribution of Festivals and Events to Niche Tourism**

Festivals and events were chosen as a secondary area for in depth study and to further contextualise the contribution of niche tourism to destination development. The academic debate around festivals and events emerged over ten years ago, as festival tourism was termed 'an emerging giant' (Getz and Frisby, 1988). The term was used to incorporate special event tourism and festivals of any size, content or interest (O Sullivan and Jackson, 2002). Festivals and events are seen to extend the tourist season, encourage investment, generate revenue and boost the local economy. Getz identifies how 'as with any niche market, or special interest travel segment' (Getz, 2007, p.140) we can define event tourism from two different perspectives – that of the destination and that of the consumer. He discusses five key roles that events can have as Attractions, Animators, Place Marketing, Image-Makers and Catalysts. It is these key roles that will frame the subsequent discussion whilst identifying the shortfalls and gaps in the event tourism literature.

An event's 'drawing power' or 'attractiveness' can be measured by the numbers of tourists who will visit the event and their frequency of travel. The key strategy adopted by government tourism bodies of many 'event tourism' destinations is, rather than focusing on tourism volumes, to try to attract high yield, dedicated event tourists and develop a balanced and well managed portfolio of events that generate the optimum benefits for the destination. Tourists can encounter events and festivals in a number of different ways. Often, mega or hallmark events can be the key motivator to visiting the destination, and in commercial terms are packaged to these niche markets with the festival or event as the core product. The recent hosting of the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Grand Prix in Abu Dhabi is a key example of this with the event being used to position Abu Dhabi internationally as a high yield tourism destination. The biggest event ever to be held in the UAE it achieved a media reach of over 600 million, becoming more

than a sporting event - a regional cultural celebration integrating local residents, and placing Abu Dhabi on the international events circuit (Vorano, 2009). In other contexts, however, festivals merely form a part of, and are used to support the overall cultural and tourist offer of the destination. Tourists may indeed 'stumble upon' festivals and events as part of their total tourism experience and exploration (Picard and Robinson, 2006). There have been few studies however on this policy dimension of event tourism. Hall and Rusher state that 'there still remains relatively little analysis of the political context of events and the means by which events come to be developed and hosted within communities' (Hall and Rusher, 2004, p.229).

In terms of events acting as 'animators' this relates to how special events can make a place come alive through the use of sensory stimuli and the creation of an appealing atmosphere (Getz, 2007). Consequently, events are designed to help extend the life cycle of the product through the encouragement of repeat visitation. Essex and Chalkey argue that major events provide an urban spectacle enabling cities to 'express their personality, enhance their status and advertise their position on a global stage' (Essex and Chalkey, 1998, p.188.). The concept of 'destination personality' has also emerged where identified human personality traits can be attributed to a destination (Tyler and Guerrier, 1998). This can be clearly seen in the analysis of the New Zealand destination brand – 'Pure New Zealand', which was hugely successful in linking the brand to the pure, natural strengths of the country. They recognised the need to deliver a clear, consistent brand across all markets emphasising what is unique to New Zealand and the emotional benefits of the destination (Morgan *et al.*, 2002). Reid (2006) exploring the impacts of Edinburgh's hosting of the 2003 MTV Europe Music Awards examines the politics of city imaging around an event. He also cites Edinburgh as an example of a city aiming to, through public-private sector partnership, deliver high profile events that transform the city into a spectacular product. Postmodern theory has been used to describe how cities have moved from being centres of production to centres of consumption (Reid, 2006). Bourdieu's (1984) symbolic capital is revisited as the destination aspires to produce economic capital through



increased tourism numbers and inward investment. While there was a direct economic benefit to Edinburgh, a £4 million increase in occupancy levels, through hosting the MTV event it was the indirect benefits that were most prominent. Edinburgh was given the opportunity to reposition itself as a city, reaching to a different, more contemporary niche market and creating a more youthful and dynamic city economy. Edinburgh and Lothian's Tourist Board officials believed that this would have taken another five years to achieve through traditional marketing routes and is therefore a clear example of the symbiotic role of events in changing perceptions of cities (McCarthy, 2005).

Festivals and events have long been considered tools that can differentiate a place and much work has been written to substantiate this (Getz, 1991; Hall, 1992; Janiskee and Drews, 1998) and as Beeton (2005) suggests, act as a key differentiator and give 'life' to non-descript sites. Place or destination marketing therefore provides a key framework to evaluate event tourism. Higham (1999) in his work on small scale sport event tourism in New Zealand discusses how events can help to provide marketing opportunities, minimise seasonality and fuel economic development for small destination regions. Research on the Super 12 Rugby Union competition in New Zealand and Australia (Higham and Hinch, 2002; Ritchie and Adair, 2002) revealed the potential of the competition to attract domestic and international tourist spend and contribute towards destination image and branding. The World Tourism Organisation (1998) classify the sports tourism niche by stating that it can be used effectively in a destination's positioning strategy helping to minimise the seasonality associated with a traditional mass tourism strategy and thus attract more tourists to the destination in low season. Getz (2007) describes how events can adopt multiple roles as image makers, quality of life enhancers and tourism attractions.

Festivals have strong place identification. Successful festivals create a powerful sense of place, which is local, as the festival takes place in a locality or region, but which often makes an appeal to a global culture in order to attract both participants and audiences (Waterman, 1998). Picard and Robinson discuss how festivals 'utilise, create and transform social spaces' (Picard and Robinson, 2006, p.11). Thus, in the search for innovation, public spaces take on a whole different meaning and become integral to the festival experience. One example of this is the presence of an upside down purple cow (The Udderbelly) in the centre of Edinburgh during August, as a Festival Fringe venue. Reid (2006) highlights key weaknesses in the academic literature relating to a destinations use of cultural events in place/destination marketing strategies. There is little debate however concerning how the place features of the cultural event often become part of the event owners marketing plan and the local interests are subsumed under political issues and tensions.

Ritchie (1993) suggests that it is the events uniqueness and significance that helps to create interest and generate attention for the destination. The destination therefore tries to equate and integrate the destinations brand with these equitable 'hallmark' events. For example, it would be difficult to stage the running of the bulls anywhere else but in Pamplona, Spain. Jago *et al.* (2003) however believe that neither the event nor the destination marketing organisation is often successful in harnessing this potential. Robertson and Darby (2007) identify a clear gap with the use of image as a strategic destination management tool and the measurability of the effects of a development strategy to facilitate this change. What is apparent however, is the power that events have to help develop an image, re-image, and create a legacy for a destination. Global media attention can be focused on the destination and the public relations value is therefore huge. However as Morgan *et al.* (2002) state, the challenge for place marketers is to promote an image distinctive enough to achieve a competitive advantage. The role of events in destination imaging has also undergone criticism particularly in terms of their long-term impacts: key concerns include the imbalance of benefits and

burden to the tax payer (Jones and Wilks-Heeg, 2004); loss of the city as a source of personal identity; diversion of public money away from more urgent areas such as education and housing (Garcia, 2003); and, the lack of thorough, rigorous post event impact studies and evaluation (Higham, 1999; Crompton, 2001).

Finally, events can be used as catalysts, particularly in urban physical and cultural regeneration. Weiler and Hall (1992) discuss how events are attractive to industrial, entrepreneurial cities keen to rid themselves of their industrial heritage and to signal to potential tourists, investors and residents that the city is undergoing a vibrant transformation. The examination by Kokosalakis *et al.* (2006) of place image and urban regeneration in Liverpool is another example of the above, as after a long period of industrial decline, Liverpool, like other UK cities, saw investment in event tourism and its cultural heritage as a means to facilitate the economic and social regeneration of the city. Through their successful acquisition of the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) 2008 status they strove to reconstruct an image of the city as a place of cultural consumption (Bourdieu, 1984). Jones and Wilks-Heeg (2004) highlight how they saw it as a means to replicate the 'Glasgow' effect of using the ECOC brand as a part of wider urban regeneration. It was hoped that it would result in 12,000 new jobs, increase visitor numbers and generate £2bn of additional spending to the local economy. The city's marketing strategy, although placing an emphasis on their cultural and heritage offerings, also aimed to attract higher yield visitors and the affluent short break market (Bramwell and Rawding, 1996). The problem with this approach though is that images are often taken out of context and become mainstream and standardised, projecting an image similar to other cities and resulting in the creation of placeless generic festival forms to attract tourism audiences (Robinson, Picard and Long, 2004). Larger scale events and their tourism potential can often provide a good justification for the allocation of resources to areas that would otherwise struggle to receive funding. Carlsen and Taylor's (2003) work on the regeneration of Manchester through the hosting of the 2002 Commonwealth Games is a pertinent example of this. There is potential for mega

events to be viewed as 'white elephants', exposing destinations to huge financial risk and not fully utilising the additional infrastructure developments, however this was not the case in Manchester (Getz, 1997). It was clear from the start of the planning for the Manchester Commonwealth Games that the key themes of the organisers and management team were economic regeneration and the enhancing of the image of Manchester. Through the use of educational, environmental, social and community programmes the games facilitated not only the economic regeneration of a deprived area of the city but provided world class sporting facilities for future events and helped to develop a cultural legacy with little ongoing costs to the local residents (Carlsen and Taylor, 2003).

Moving away from mega events to smaller niche market, or special interest, festivals<sup>3</sup>, research is limited. The work of Frew (2006) examines the role of these festivals in establishing and developing tourism at destinations, and the vital role they play in developing repeat visitation. The anticipation of Reisinger's (1994) deep cultural experience during the festival may act as a key differentiator for the festival destination. Festivals have been described by Hughes (2000) as special events where activities are concentrated over a short time frame and tend to have a more cultural focus. There is a substantial body of work around the area of 'Festival Tourism' (Formica and Uysal, 1998; Robinson, Picard and Long, 2004; McKercher *et al.*, 2006), often revealing a lack of concern for tourism development, customer needs and commercial realities. Frew (2006) discusses the characteristics of niche market festivals, linking them to Stebbins (1996) serious tourism to explain attendance and satisfaction levels. Prentice and Anderson (2003) also suggest that serious leisure consumers represent a distinct niche market of the visitors to the Edinburgh Festivals that they examined. Reisinger links the concept of cultural tourism to niche market festival consumers as they are often looking for a

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<sup>3</sup> A niche market festival is 'one with a highly specialised content which appeals to particular aficionados and/or connoisseurs and requires a certain level of expertise, knowledge or skill to fully appreciate the festival' (Frew, 2006, p.75).

deep cultural meaning of an 'aesthetic, intellectual, emotional or psychological nature' (Reisinger, 1994, p.24). Thus Festival Tourism has become a key issue in cultural studies research particularly the idea of cultural authenticity, innovation and the commodification of culture (Quinn, 2006).

Festival and Event tourism however is not, in itself a sustainable process and it must be related to a more significant development plan encompassing leisure, social and employment activity of visitors and local residents, respectively. This has to be seen as part of a developing and collegiate narrative of destination image change and value (Varley and Crowther, 1998; Govers and Go, 2003; Robertson and Wardrop, 2004). The Edinburgh economic impact survey 2004-05 estimated the economic contribution of the summer festivals to be in the region of £127m of new expenditure or output into Edinburgh and £31m of income. In addition, 2,500 full time equivalent jobs were supported by the festivals (Edinburgh City Council, 2005). Moreover It is concluded that there is a clear gap between the awareness of the importance of the use of image of Edinburgh's Festivals as a strategic destination management tool (Hankinson, 2000), and how valuable any given attempt to change the image of a destination is when measured against the aims and outcomes of the development strategy from which it was based, i.e., the measurability of its effects.

What is clear from the above is that more longitudinal and retrospective research of the dynamic elements of events tourism is needed. Beverland, Hoffman and Rasmussen's (2001) event life cycle is a significant temporal theme, that to date has received little interest from researchers, yet it is an important part of framing the debate about event tourism's contribution to the development of the destination. Getz's (2000) detailed analysis of articles in Festival and Event Management revealed the key areas of recent studies to be: economic impacts; event marketing and sponsorship, general management and marketing including motivation and segmentation. A study by Harris *et al.* (2001) a year later highlighted the following areas of concern within the

events literature. Governments were seeking more information on why events fail, risk management and standardising research methods, whilst academics were searching for more research on risk management, valuing the events industry and the reasons behind the failure of events. The environmental, cultural and social aspects of events have also been neglected (Getz, 2008), particularly the concept of 'festivalisation'<sup>4</sup>. Getz (2008) in his discourse on event tourism also highlights key research questions that need to be addressed in the field. Of most relevance to this critical appraisal are the following questions:

- What makes event tourism experiences memorable and transforming?
- What leadership, planning and decision-making styles and processes are most effective for event tourism development?
- What strategies are most effective in achieving event tourism competitiveness and sustainability?
- Which stakeholder management strategies work best for event tourism?
- What are the forces shaping the future of event tourism?

(Getz, 2008, pps. 415, 418, 419.)

Paradoxically, what is apparent however within the existing literature is the power of events as attractors, image makers and catalysts for destination development. Both events and tourism can exist without each other but there are many mutual benefits in the event-tourism nexus.

## **2.5 Niche tourism as a response to the Post Modern Tourist.**

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<sup>4</sup> 'Festivalisation' refers to how cities or destinations exploit cultural events.

Many authors highlight the experiential and emotional nature of the tourism industry (Arnould and Price, 1993; Schmidt, 1997; Arnould, Price and Tierney, 1998). Academic tourism research however has paid little attention to emotionally driven consumption and niche tourism needs to be viewed beyond psychographic or behavioural indicators to more participatory and experiential ones. Niche tourism can, therefore, be seen within the context of the emergence of Pine and Gilmore's (1999) 'Experience Economy'. They discuss how consumers crave experiences and want to make an emotional connection with their brand. Lew (2008) discusses how postmodern society has created the postmodern tourist or post-tourist (Feifer, 1985). The post modern tourist lives in a world of 'hyper-consumerism' where a plethora of products serve a crowded global marketplace with the role of market differentiation and segmentation increasingly important. Lew (2008) also notes that 'branding, image and prestige remain important to the post tourist' (Lew, 2008, p.412) and as they are time poor and experience hungry they are willing to spend money in return for a quality, efficient and specialised service (Opaschowski, 2001). The result of the above trends in the consumer market is the rapid growth in self directed travel and SIT and the development of specialised niche tourism products.

Destinations are now under greater pressure to develop products and services that elevate the experiences of tourists satisfying their desire for personal self enhancement and fulfilment (Formica and Kothari, 2008). This can be seen in the growth of the holistic or wellness tourism<sup>5</sup> niche sector (Smith, 2003; Smith and Kelly, 2006). It is also reflected in the recent trend for Western tourists to 'seek solace in Eastern philosophies and therapies....Such alternatives already pervade many Western societies, but tourists are often just as keen to visit the origins of the practice' (Smith and Puczko, 2009, p.9.) This had led to micro niches being developed in the wellness tourism sector such as yoga and spa tourism. The destination is therefore critical as it offers an alternative space

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<sup>5</sup> 'that which provides people with a range of activities and/or treatments aimed at developing, maintaining, and improving the body-mind-spirit' (Smith and Kelly, 2006 in Kelly and Smith, 2009, p.73).

where tourists can relax and rejuvenate themselves, away from the stresses of daily life. Research is sparse, but Lehto *et al.* (2005) produced the first profile of yoga tourists as mainly female, professional, well-educated, aged 35-54, spiritual but not religious and, interested in holistic therapies and healthy lifestyles.

Destinations can specialise their experience offerings and package them in such a way that they will resonate with this new post tourist market. In Florida's (2002) '*Creative Class*' he cites travel to interesting locations that engage with them physically and intellectually as being paramount. They are seeking experiences, specialisations and display an understanding and respect for the environment. Thus, by focusing on niche markets in which a destination has particular strengths (i.e., the growth of Yoga and Wellness Tourism to India has resulted in one state, Kerala, promoting its Ayurvedic practices and marketing the destination as 'Gods own Country') and appealing to distinctive and focused market segments and the use of psychographic and demographic profiles, the destination can help to create a long terms sustainable competitive advantage (Hsu *et al.*, 2002).

## **2.6 Niche Tourism as a contributor to Destination Development**

In 1981, Ries and Trout argued that the concept of positioning is not only applicable to a brand but also to a place. The positioning of a destination therefore involves the positioning of that place in the eyes and mind of the consumer (Gartner, 1989). Most studies examining destination image and positioning have followed the traditional approach based on image creation through attributes that reflect the destinations most attractive products. However, it has been suggested that for effective destination positioning it is important to first identify the attributes that the visitor perceives as important and those that are unique and differentiate it from other destinations (Crompton *et al.*, 1992; Botha, Crompton and Kim, 1999; Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott, 2002).



Destination image research has been dominant in tourism and Pike (2002) identified 142 studies published between 1973 and 2000. Echtner and Ritchie (1991) propose that most studies lack any real conceptual framework and most definitions were vague and did not allude to the unique properties of destination image. Chon's (1990) review of 23 of the most cited works in this field found that the most popular themes were its influence and role of consumer buying behaviour and satisfaction.

Echtner and Ritchie (1993) also believe that destination image should contain components that are holistic and based on attributes. Therefore, the identification and analysis of these attributes incorporated with personal variables such as tourist needs and wants can help to identify the potential niche markets that could be used to develop the destination. The use of well developed niche based products can act as a destinational pull and lead to growth of market share. As a result, to ensure the successful positioning of a destination it is important to identify the image of the destination and the associated attributes that satisfy the needs and desires of the tourism consumer. This can then be used to identify specific niche markets for the development of the destinations positioning strategy (Ibrahim and Gill, 2005). The targeting of niche tourism segments is considered to encourage repeat visitation as it allows DMOs to focus on tourist needs and wants enabling more effective product positioning (George, 2001). There is little published work however on the development of niche tourism at a destinational level, particularly in relation to tourist needs and profiles.

### **2.6.1 The 'Long Tail' approach to Niche Tourism**

Long Tail tourism is seen to exemplify the tourism economy of the 2000s and is important as it provides some of the latest theoretical research examining destination development. The Long Tail theory (Lew, 2008) highlights the behaviour of economic

sectors that although providing products in low volume are able to make a profit by providing a greater variety of products, contrasting the short head theory where profit is based on a narrower product range sold in high volumes. From a tourism perspective the long tail destination is one which is highly individualised providing specialised products and services that are demanded by niche consumers. The Long Tail approach emphasises creating value for niche markets and individual consumers and success is measured by the value that the volumes of consumers places on the product (Lew, 2008). Long Tail product development therefore focuses on small, niche market segments supporting and growing diversity and innovation (Anderson, 2004). The supply side is marketed and sold on-line and the demand side is the wealth of information that is available to tourism consumers leveraged through social media tools such as blogs, discussion groups and podcasts (Brynjolfsson, Hu and Smith, 2006). This internet based approach therefore enables small, niche tourism operators to compete and expand in a global marketplace and is worthy of further debate.

## **2.7 Destination Development through Niche Tourism Products.**

Research has also shown the importance of studying emerging or micro niches and the final part of the research context will examine the contribution of this element of the niche tourism framework to destination development. Due to the emergent nature of these niches the literature is scarcer and the areas chosen cover a small, but significant, segment of the micro niche tourism spectrum.

Morgan *et al.* comment how 'a handful of countries attract 70 per cent of international tourist arrivals' (Morgan *et al.*, 2002, p.350). In this highly competitive tourism market, destinations have focused development around the expansion of a whole range of niche tourism products at the destination. These products straddle the entire niche tourism spectrum and are linked to DMO policy and strategy guidelines. Niche tourism was identified as an important market by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in the UK in 1999. This was followed in 2000 by the Scottish Executives strategy on developing tourism (a new strategy for Scottish Tourism) attempting to create niche tourism markets by capitalising on Scotland's major assets such as golf, heritage and genealogy. Using the example of golf, it is seen to be a primary motivator for travel and a key factor in destination choice and a key tourist activity during the trip (Tassiopoulos and Haydam, 2008). Golf tourism is worth over £100 million to the Scottish economy as well as the image creation and prestige generated through the hosting of International golfing tournaments. The realisation of the importance of this niche market to Scotland's tourism industry led to the development of a Golf Tourism Strategy and a Golf Tourism development manager based at the DMO, VisitScotland. Research into South African Golf Tourism (Tassiopoulos and Haydam, 2008) also revealed the need for DMOs to accurately segment and niche the destinations, especially as South Africa is a lesser known destination to the golf tourism target market. It is crucial also that research into the needs and expectations of the golf tourist are realised in order to implement successful niche marketing strategies.

Along with sport, culture is another key niche driver to a destination and as a micro niche product much has been written about the power of film (Beeton, 2005; Carl *et al.* 2007; Ward and O Regan, 2009) to bring tourists to the places that they were filmed or depicted. Film or Film-Induced Tourism trades on the reputation that the films have obtained through cinema marketing, box office performance and reviews and the distinct relationship between film, tourism and place. The emotions and feelings evoked by film are seen to motivate a desire to visit those locations (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006). One of the most recent examples of this is the

increase in New Zealand tourism associated with the Lord of the Rings trilogy and the tourist expectations and experiences evoked when revisiting the places used in the films (Carl *et al.*, 2007). A report by Hydra Associates in 1997 in Scotland analysed the tourism value of three films made in Scotland in 1994: Rob Roy; Braveheart and Loch Ness. The report highlighted that 5% of visitors to Scotland were influenced by the films made there representing an additional £7.2 million in tourism spending (Doyle, 2003). Riley and Van Doren (1992), when discussing niche tourism markets, also liken film-induced tourism to that of hallmark events 'major one-time or recurring events of limited duration developed to primarily enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a destination in the short and/or long term' (Ritchie, 1992, p.268). The influence of film to re-image urban and rural destinations is therefore obvious.

The tourism revenue that niche groups bring to destinations is undisputed – the U.S. gay and lesbian travel market spends more than \$17 billion in tourism related products and services (Fellman, 1998). This led California's division of tourism to launch its first tourism programme, 'Cultures Edge', targeting niche tourism groups and promoting ethnic, cultural and lifestyle based itineraries. The innumerable Gay Pride events that take place all over the world also provide their own impetus for international gay travel to destinations holding these events (Russell, 2001). The Sydney Mardi Gras is one of the most prominent and successful events enjoying extensive media coverage from the mid-80s onwards and a growth in crowds, from 200,000 in 1989 to over 500,000 in 1993. It survived bankruptcy in 2002 rebuilding its reputation, to be voted by Conde Nast Traveller magazine as one of the world's top ten costume parades in the world in 2006.

Huh and Singh (2007) also identify family travellers with a member with a disability as another viable niche market to destinations that can be effectively and efficiently reached. The Harris Interactive Study asserts that people with disabilities represent the largest

single minority group in the US ignoring the growing worldwide aging population. People with disabilities and their families would be able to spend at least \$27bn per year if certain needs were met on their trip, especially as most developed countries now have disability legislation that the tourism sector has to adhere to. This confirms Novelli's (2005) findings that niche markets are not influenced by generational differences and share common values across multiple generations.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

The research context detailed above highlights the development of the key literature in the area of the role of niche tourism products in destination development. It explores the niche tourism framework, the positioning of niche tourism products; wine and festival and events as niche tourism products and niche tourism as a contributor to destination development. Clear gaps are identified in the literature, revealing that the area of study lacks a mature research base and ongoing research is imperative to move the debate forward. The development, marketing and management of the niche tourism product, although key, has received an over concentration in the literature with a dearth of data defining and understanding the niche tourism consumer. This dominance in academic debate on the product and supply side is heavily criticised by key academics who seek a more balanced view (Hall *et al.*, 2000). Novelli (2005) highlights also how certain niche tourism segments, such as heritage, sport and culture, are easily known and recognisable whilst emergent micro niches, such as wellness, have received little attention in the tourism literature. Further investigation and debate is needed to assess how niche tourism can be strategically managed and developed as a viable sustainable option for destinations. Niche tourism is 'characterised by a complex mechanism of issues' (Novelli, 2005, p.248) that provide both positive and negative implications and pose a series of challenges for the host destination. The key

contribution to knowledge, therefore, of this critical appraisal is to attempt to close some of these gaps and challenges identifying the critical role of niche tourism products in destination development.

## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology and Methods

#### 3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the paradigms that have influenced my research and the methodologies and methods that have been used in the work presented in this critical appraisal. Some of the key methodological issues that have arisen, and how they have been addressed, will be explored. These methodologies will also be examined in the critical context of current ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies being used by tourism researchers.

From a methodological viewpoint a PhD by Publication varies from a traditional PhD in that there is no single research process being woven through the work but rather an eclectic range of methods that are only being examined at the end of the process rather than at the start and throughout. The model of PhD by Publication is not new and as Park has observed for the UK, 'the traditional PhD model is now being challenged by a growing diversity of types of doctoral degree, including PhD by publication' (Park, 2005, p.190). Wilson also notes, 'the introduction in the mid-1960s of the published work route to a British PhD was a major, if somewhat controversial, innovation' (Wilson, 2002, p. 71). Powell however, credits the PhD by Publication route as a means of delivering 'a central tenet of doctoral research...that the work achieved should have an impact on other knowledge in the field' (Powell, 2004, p.7). One of the key advantages of using this route is that it facilitates development of its authors as scholars and practitioners. It allows professional experience and skills to be woven into the research process, exposes the researcher to a wider community within their research domain and enables the development of new perspectives.

Figure 3 demonstrates the range of research methods that have guided and been adopted by the papers presented in this critical appraisal. Developing a tourism research model presented by Pansiri (2005) the figure illustrates the methodological journey my research has taken.

### **3.2 The Development of Critical Tourism Research**

It is constructive to analyse my research methodology against the development of current research in tourism. Tribe (2007) observes that there have been between three and five key paradigms – positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and constructivism – which have informed tourism research. Chambers (2007a) also notes how to date there have been two critical evaluations into the state of tourism enquiry. The first in 2000 by Riley and Love (pre 1996 research) and the second in 2004 by Phillimore and Goodson (post 1996). Both focused specifically on the evaluation of qualitative tourism research within Denzin and Lincoln's (1998) framework. Riley and Love (2000) concluded that tourism research is heavily dominated by positivist research with little critical contribution by interpretivist researchers. The examination of post-1996 articles had similar findings notably the lack of any reflexive accounts and the domination in the text of the author's voice as 'expert' (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004). Positivistic tendencies were seen to be prominent in research design and methodology. These included studies - based on predetermined rigid research agenda; that place little or no emphasis on methodological issues; that seek to quantify qualitative data and studies aimed at tourism typologies. The latter is important to this critical appraisal as research aimed at generating these typologies (Cohen and Taylor, 1976; Urry, 1990; Doxey, 1975; Smith, 1977) has failed to provide valuable insights into the complexity of tourism interactions at an experimental or emotional level. Wearing and Wearing argue for a move away from simplistic typologies to a more analytical and flexible conceptualisation within the research process enabling the recognition of 'the 'tourist gaze'; the tourist 'destination'; the marketing 'image' and the 'visit' (Wearing and Wearing, 2001, p.151). The review also revealed that, like this



author, the researchers dipped in and out of Denzin and Lincoln's (1998) five moments of qualitative research<sup>6</sup> to fit into their current research focus. This hybrid research approach is also reflective of the interdisciplinary nature of tourism studies. Phillimore and Goodson (2004) comment on how this has contributed to the dynamism of tourism research with the introduction of multidisciplinary ideas and practices. However, this has also led to fragmentation and debate within the field and disputes in research objectives between those who adopt a practitioner and economic approach and those focusing on a more theoretical or socio-cultural stance.

Tribe (2007) highlights the development of critical theory in tourism and questions the existence of a 'business of tourism' paradigm that could be hostile to other interpretivistic approaches. Veal (1997) also notes how tourism research has been driven by the demands of business to a much greater extent than other disciplines. There are promising signs for criticality when introducing the idea of the Foucauldian notion of discourse<sup>7</sup>, using the tourist gaze (Urry, 1990) and showing how it acts in tourism research to direct how we perceive reality. Such studies focus on tourism's involvement with travel to different places to 'see things' in contrast to the mass of tourism which is domestic. This has been expanded with the current research tendency to move away from the concentration on mass tourism to an examination of the behaviour and motivation of smaller, more specialised groups, engaged in 'special interest' or 'niche' tourism, as evidenced by this critical appraisal (Veal, 1997). Hollinshead identifies ten commonplace ontological issues in tourism studies. Issue two is pertinent to the research presented here as its focus is: 'the varied and often

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<sup>6</sup> Denzin and Lincoln's (1998) five 'moments' include the traditional period emphasising positivist research; the modernist period attempting to formalise qualitative research; blurred genres moment where researchers begin to choose from different theoretical models; the crisis in representation moment where the role of researcher as all-knowing creator of knowledge was challenged and the final stage – the fifth moment which sees the end of the grand narrative and the focus on specific, delineated, local research.

<sup>7</sup> 'a group of statements which provide a language for talking about....a particular topic at a particular historical moment' (Hall, 1997, p.44)

incoherent meaning of sites and experiences to tourists who visit foreign places' (Hollinshead, 2004, p.87). He notes how little work has been done into the held identity of places and how tourists interpret and receive the places that they visit.

Jennings comments how tourism research has 'yet to move substantially beyond the descriptive and applied nature of much of its research' (Jennings, 2001, p.5). Tribe (2007) and Chambers (2007b) note the move towards a more critical tourism approach but this is far from being a major paradigmatic shift (Kuhn, 1970). Key moments in the development of critical theory are highlighted (McCannell, 1976; Urry, 1990; Smith, 1977,1989; Butler, 1980; Poon, 1993) and cutting edge research is seen to embrace 'new discourses and practice of tourism' and help to define current thinking in tourism research (Chambers, 2007b, p.234). After over 30 years of study there is a need for tourism research to move to a more 'knowledge-based and informed research' (Jennings, 2001, p.5). Phillimore and Goodson also state that 'the time has come for tourism researchers to be more self critical and more adventurous', trying new techniques in the field and with research participants, as well as developing a more reflexive approach to their work (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004, p.193). Pansiri (2006) confirms this making a plea for future tourism research to involve both positivistic and interpretivistic philosophical traditions using both qualitative and quantitative data and groups of researchers rather than just individuals.

### **3.3 Research Philosophy, Epistemology and Ontology**

The approach that my research journey has taken is one that is underpinned by pragmatism, with a belief that mixed methods (i.e. the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies), or cross-method triangulation, allows for a more in depth investigation of some of the key issues that are reflected in the highly interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary nature of tourism (Botteril, 2001).

Pragmatism is a fairly recent philosophical paradigm, distinct from the traditional positivist/post-positivist and interpretivist positions.

Powell argues that:

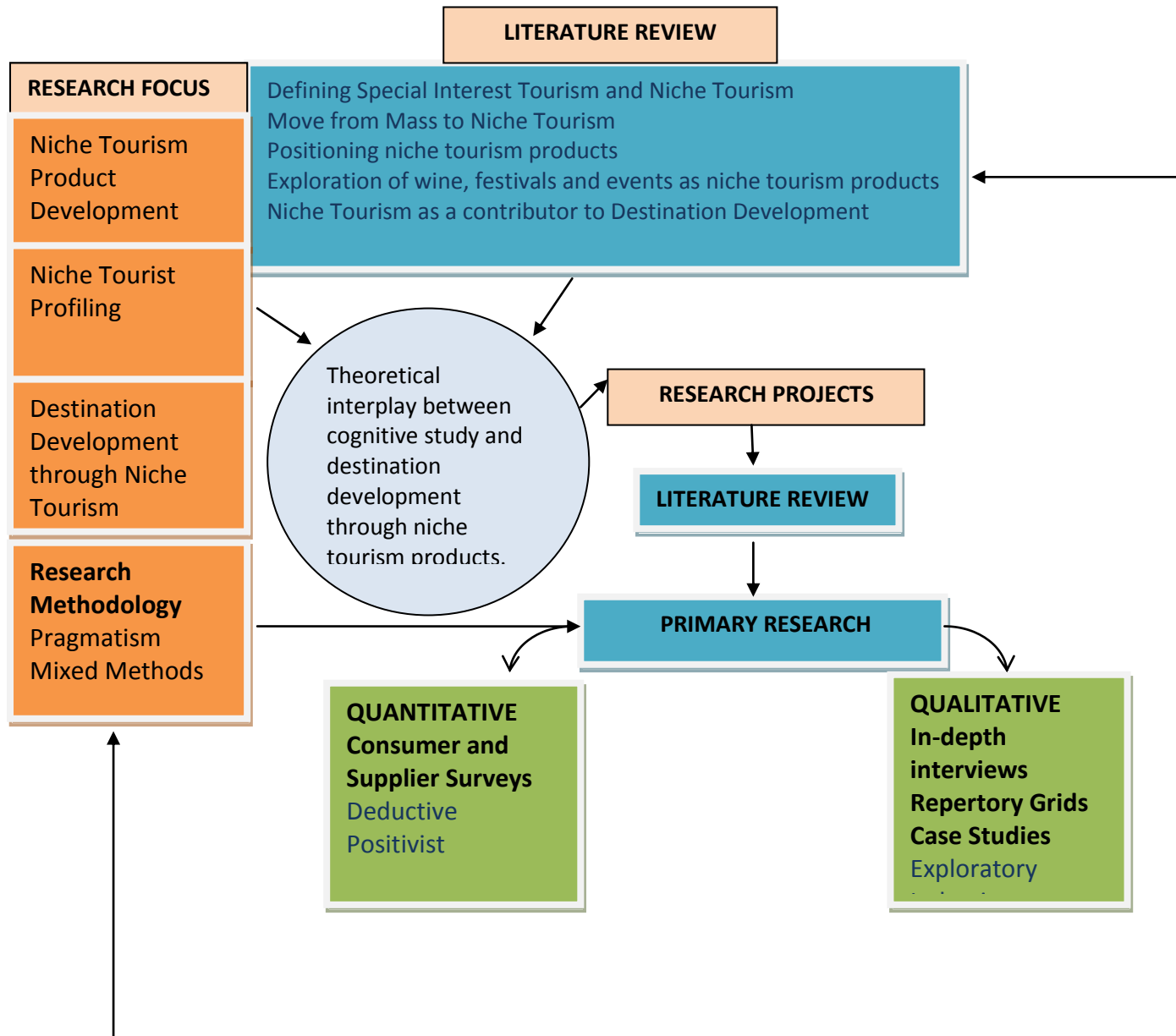
Pragmatism, on the other hand, rejects positivism, on grounds that no theory can satisfy its demands... and rejects anti-positivism because virtually any theory would satisfy them. As such, the pragmatist proposes to reorient the assessment of theories around a third criterion:

the theory's capacity to solve human problems (Rorty, 1989; Stich, 1990).

(Powell, 2001, p.884)

**Figure 3: Model of Research into the Role of Niche Tourism Products in Destination Development**

*Adapted from Pansiri (2005)*



**SECONDARY  
DATA/DESK RESEARCH**  
Exploratory  
Interpretive



**DATA ANALYSIS**  
Statistical Analysis  
Content Analysis  
Thematic Analysis



**CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTION**  
Niche Tourism Framework  
Niche Tourism Product Lifecycle  
Niche Tourism Profiling  
Insight into the role of niche tourism  
products in destination development

**Industry Performance**



**Theory  
Development**



Baert, when analysing the development of pragmatist theory, notes how there is 'not a pragmatist party line that all have to toe' (Baert, 2005, p.129), but there are a number of key ideological stances that are commonly shared. These include the view of the active acquisition of knowledge as a way of coping with life's demands;

the use of a conceptual system; the recognition that human inquiry need not imply the subjectivity of people's knowledge and the settling of theoretical disputes by determining what effects they have. Seale *et al.* also report that 'the real is never abandoned by the pragmatist, but rather sensibly put to the test of everyday life' (Seale *et al.* 2004, p.4). Therefore the ontological position of pragmatists is that the 'mandate of science is not to find truth or reality, the existence of which are perpetually in dispute, but to facilitate human problem-solving' (Powell, 2001, p.884). The pragmatist explanation of reality is closer to the researcher's values. As Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) state, instead of searching for truth, pragmatists consider truth to be 'what works'. They continue that the pragmatist point of view rejects the forced choice between positivism and interpretivism choosing to use 'the dazzling array of both qualitative and quantitative methods' (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998, p. 24) dependent upon the research question and the phase of the research project. It is this principle that has heavily influenced the approach that I have taken in the field of tourism enquiry. My research is framed not only in the belief of the existence of the 'real', which disconnects knowledge from everyday life, but also in the belief in collaborative knowledge production with industry partners and other key researchers in the field.

The epistemological positions of pragmatists are that of 'belief', 'doubt' and 'habit' (Pansiri, 2005, p.197). For pragmatists, therefore, both knowledge and social reality are based on beliefs and habits which are socially constructed. Berger and Luckmann (1967) argue that knowledge is historical and linked to legitimation, institutionalization and socialisation. The epistemological position of my research involves the use of the most appropriate approach to developing knowledge with a focus on interaction with the subjects

of the enquiry to attempt to understand their perspectives and feelings. The knowledge base and outputs of tourism research should help to guide and influence the industry on which it is based.

Tribe (2004) comments on how tourism research tends to fall within two main fields. The first he identifies as 'tourism business studies' including marketing, management and tourism corporate strategy, the second 'non-business tourism studies' including areas such as tourism perceptions and social and environmental impacts, with the most consolidated area being the business aspects. There has, however, only been limited application of critical tourism research within a business or managerial context (Chambers, 2007a). However an emphasis on business research does not have to be focused on positivistic approaches to knowledge creation but must embrace other perspectives and methodologies. This has been apparent in my own research journey. Working as an early career researcher there was a concentration on using a quantitative approach. My ontological stance perceived the tourist world to be real and predictable, guided by external forces such as governmental policy and economics. This was reflected also in the epistemological basis of my research with quantitative research conducted under strict procedures with little input or influence from the researcher. However, as I have matured, developed and gained confidence as a researcher I have embraced using more mixed methodologies with a focus towards a more qualitative/interpretative approach to research. Seeking to understand from an insider's perspective that, from an ontological stance, there are multiple explanations or 'realities' that inform my research.

This work can also be seen within the conceptual framework of Denzin and Lincoln's (1998) five 'moments' of qualitative research. Their third moment is termed 'blurred genres' and this is highly relevant to the work presented here. It relates to how 'theories, techniques and approaches could be borrowed, mixed and matched according to the research task' (Phillimore and Goodison,

2004, p.14). It recognises multiple approaches combining more innovative approaches to data collection with more traditional techniques for collecting qualitative data such as in-depth interviews and focus groups. Thus the researcher works as a *bricoleur*<sup>8</sup> within the methodologies that best fit their needs in relation to the research problem and setting. Pansiri comments on how 'pragmatism has been hailed as the best paradigm for justifying the use of mixed-methods research' (Pansiri, 2006, p.223). Pragmatically orientated researchers often use a mixed methodology which contains both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The essence of my research has been a mixed-method approach where both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used independently, or together, to develop analysis, explain results and provide fresh insights into the research fields being examined.

### **3.4 Research Methods**

The length of time in which my research has been conducted (ten years) indicates that a range and mixture of methods have been employed throughout the research process. Figure 3 demonstrates the array of different research methods presented in the papers used for this critical appraisal. What is evident is the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research (Pansiri, 2005; 2006). Often qualitative methods have been used to test ideas and theories and to help frame the quantitative survey instrument and collect and generate data. Research methods were chosen that would help to achieve the research objectives of each area of study. This was often a linear process where previous research findings would help to mould and shape subsequent research processes (Papers 1 – 4).

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<sup>8</sup> 'an individual who pieces together sets of practices to make a solution to a puzzle' (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004, p.34)



### **3.4.1 Primary Research – Consumer and Supplier Surveys.**

Personal one to one site surveys – interviewer completed were chosen as the data collection method ( $n = 368$ ) in Papers 2 - 4. As Veal (1997) states this method is more accurate, yields higher response rates with fuller and more complete answers. The surveys were carried out with consumers of six different wineries at two different wine regions in Western Australia (WA). Interviews lasted between 15 to 20 minutes focusing on the respondent's previous experience of wine education, educational experience at the winery and how far their expectations regarding wine education had been met. Postal self-completion surveys (Paper 3) were also conducted with Western Australian wineries ( $n = 195$  at the time). This method was chosen as it enabled a geographical area to be targeted, had low implementation costs and removed interviewer bias (Neuman, 2000).

Paper 5 used the largest sample size of all the research presented ( $n = 3,946$ ; 3,185 undergraduate and 761 postgraduate students). From this original sample 789 students were targeted on the assumption that a 30 – 50 per cent response rate could be expected (Sekaran, 2000). Again postal self-completion surveys were used as the research instrument. The survey comprised of three sections highlighting: socio-demographic/study behaviour; travel experiences and visit frequency of family members and friends. The research was a continuation of previous research by Shanka (2000) examining the importance of positioning rural WA as a tourist destination.

In response to Pansiri's (2006) demands for more tourism research involving groups of researchers, Paper 9 again used a postal self-completion survey that was distributed by research teams in Western Australia, United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway ( $n = 194$ ). The survey instrument was an extension of previous festival stakeholder research developed and applied to the Swedish

sample and was significant as it was the first time that cross country festival stakeholder research had been completed. Conclusions were drawn from within the four country survey sample frame to exemplify festival management innovation and failure.

### **3.4.2 Primary Research – Key Informants and in depth Interviews**

Semi-structured, informal, key informants interviews were conducted with owners and managers of eight wineries in the Margaret River and Swan Valley regions of Western Australia (Papers 1 and 3). Semi –structured interviewing is one of the most widely used qualitative techniques as they are somewhat easier to arrange than other forms of data collection and data can be analysed in a variety of ways (Willig, 2008). Jordan and Gibson (2004) also applaud the flexibility afforded by the use of interviewing as a tourism research method. They cite key advantages as: providing contextual background for studies using multiple methods (Papers 1-4); allowing for comparability across interviews; providing rich, descriptive data with illustrative examples of different tourism experiences; probing of special themes (Paper 7) and ensuring high validity as interviewers can ensure that questions are understood to elicit more in-depth responses (Jordan and Gibson, 2004, p.222). The interviews lasted up to an hour and revolved around a set of predetermined research questions concerning the perception of the education experience; the understanding of the concept of consumer education; the importance of wine education to the winery visit and the perceived benefits of consumer education.

In-depth interviews were also held with representatives from the major Edinburgh Festivals, public funding agencies and government bodies (Paper 7). Prior to the interview they were sent a copy of the proposed research agenda for the Edinburgh Festivals (ACCESS) allowing for critical reflection. At the interviews stakeholders were then asked to analyse the ACCESS

research questions commenting on their appropriateness and applicability. Thus, responding to Chambers (2007a) plea for critical research within a business context.

The final exploratory paper, presented here, that uses in depth interviews was Paper 11. Selected yoga tourism operators were interviewed to gain an insight into the size and nature of their operations; the key components of the yoga tourism package; consumer expectations; their target market and marketing and promotional techniques.

### **3.4.3 Primary Research – Repertory Grids**

Repertory grids (Paper 6) were employed, as an interviewing technique, to allow the identification of key constructs that three festival experts found within their own professional environment. The repertory grid is a technique for identifying the ways that a person construes (interprets/ gives meaning to) his or her experience. It is underpinned by Kelly's (1955) 'Personal Construct Theory'. Two festival directors were from large festivals occurring at different times of the year and the third expert was working in festival and event strategic policy at a national level. This technique is more experimental than other qualitative techniques and has had limited application within tourism research (Canning and Holmes, 2006; Jansen- Verbeke and Rekom, 1996; Coshal, 2000). The key benefits identified in the use of repertory grids is the pragmatic value to the festival community and government policy makers in offering meaningful data; the robust nature of the data they yield and importantly the bridge they create between the desire for quantitative data, whilst dealing with issues more suited to qualitative methodologies (Canning and Holmes, 2006).

### **3.4.4 Primary Research – Case Studies**

The use of short, case studies as part of journal articles, research papers and book chapters was used in papers 11 and 12. The use of a case study is highly relevant and illuminating when exploring key issues and seeking to introduce new research areas (Paper 11) and explain or determine previous research findings (Paper 12). Jennings (2001) highlights the following advantages that are associated with case study research: in-depth data is collected via single or multiple cases; evidence is grounded in the research environment; study members can check for accuracy thus removing researcher bias and it can allow for methodological triangulation to be used. Paper 11 presents a case study examining yoga tourism. As little has been written to date about yoga or holistic tourism (Smith and Kelly, 2006) the case study provides exploratory research to elicit and identify the essential attributes of this new form of niche tourism. The rise in popularity of yoga within tourism generating countries is explored alongside an examination of the consumer behaviour of the yoga tourist. One of the key exploratory findings is the exploration of yoga tourism's links with other forms of niche tourism at a destination level.

The final use of case study research is in Paper 12. This paper is an important part of the critical appraisal as it embraces two previous areas of my research – wine tourism and festivals and event tourism. Little research to date has examined the role of wine festivals in rural regeneration or promoting wine regions through urban centred festivals. Four diverse case studies are presented, both geographically and historically, and excellent practical insights are given into their role on the regeneration and transformation process. These case studies seek, therefore, to illustrate the growth of wine festivals in socio-economic terms and the significant role they play in transforming traditional rural regions into thriving wine tourism destinations. Insights are given into how wine festivals are an integral part of the wine tourism experience.

### **3.4.5 Secondary Research**

Three papers are presented that are exploratory in nature and the findings yield from the use of desk research or secondary data (Papers 8, 10, 13). The limited academic and practitioner based research in this area has led to a focus on primary research methods. However, where emerging research areas and agendas were highlighted (Paper 8) the research journey began with a focus on existing data accessed through industry and governmental publications, policy documents and academic journals. Jennings (2001) draws attention to the importance of using secondary data in tourism research as the ability to re examine tourism phenomena; quick and easy access; spontaneity and data is not mediated by the interaction between the researcher and the researched; data usually meets high research standards and is of a high quality; it allows for comparative research with primary data collection and they are non-reactive. Paper 8 considers the promotional materials produced by a sample of independent theatres, in Edinburgh and Melbourne, and the associated atmosphere created at their respective Fringe Festivals. Research into the creation of atmosphere falls into the realm of environmental psychology and few studies have examined this in relation to a festival perspective (Taylor and Shanka, 2002; Taylor, 2001). Thus the paper adds to the limited research on fringe festivals and lays the foundations for primary research into this festival phenomenon.

Paper 10, although related and guided by my previous research in the field of wine tourism (Papers 1 – 4) is exploratory in nature and aims to provide a snapshot of the progression of wine tourism research into defining the motivations, attitudes and lifestyle attributes of international wine tourists. Thus the study expands previous WA research to adopt a more international focus. Carlsen in his review of global wine tourism research identifies 'our knowledge of the target market for wine tourism is not developed...the identification of the characteristics, values and needs of wine tourist has not been systematically analysed with most studies being descriptive rather than strategic in approach' (Carlsen, 2004, p.7). Secondary data was analysed from a variety of different sources such as the Australian Bureau of Tourism Research; various state and wine industry publications and the work of an emergent

group of wine tourism researchers. The exploratory paper formed the basis for subsequent qualitative focus group work within wine regions, informing the content and development of questioning.

The final exploratory Paper, 13, addresses the under researched area of how a nations image can profoundly shape its socio-economic focus. The research aims to explore how the brand image of Edinburgh is defined and how its representation as a Festival city enhances its reputation. Again secondary data from key festival policy documents; festival industry publications and academic research in this field was analysed. The concluding paragraphs offer a series of research questions that need to be addressed in future research and a framework for effectively evaluating the strategic management value of place marketing and image. This laid the foundations for the development of the ACCESS research agenda.

#### **3.4.6 Data Analysis**

Results from the surveys (Papers 2 – 5, 9) were analysed using the SPSS statistical package. In the first stage the data was analysed as a whole and descriptive statistics were produced to allow the aggregation of 'raw data in numerical terms' (Neuman, 2000, p.317). Evaluative research was then conducted on the variables to prove significance. The comparability of findings across the two locational subsets was examined, and the significance of observed similarities and differences investigated. Chi squared analysis was used to test for independence between the two samples and the difference in perceptions between the groups were analysed using independent t-tests (Papers 2 – 4). This enabled the identification of key issues which could be supported from the findings of the in depth interviews. The findings were then linked back to the wine tourism research objectives and disseminated to the winery managers, tourism industry bodies and the academic community. Similarities and difference within the student survey data (Paper 5) were also examined using ANOVA and independent sample t-tests. The tests showed statistically significant

differences in two of the demographic variables: age group and marital status. Again business implications of the research were identified and findings concerning the emerging international student market were fed back to the WA tourism industry. Means derived from descriptive statistics for each of the four country sample in Paper 9 were also compared to illustrate findings against two scenarios – festival innovation and festival failure.

Qualitative research has become increasingly valued as ‘thinking’ research where the research is viewed as more of a theoretical process than an activity (Bryman and Burgess, 1994). The process and value of qualitative data analysis is exposed by Neuman:

A qualitative researcher analyses data by organising it into categories on the basis of themes, concepts or similar features.

He or she develops new concepts, formulates conceptual definitions, and examine the relationship among concepts

(Neuman, 2000, p.420)

This is evidenced in the qualitative papers presented here (Papers 1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12). Where in-depth interviews were used as a research tool (Papers 1, 7, 11) interviews were transcribed and analysed to find common themes and ideas. Content analysis is widely used in tourism research to discover how destination images are formed and was used as the tool of analysis. For the content analysis of the written word the units of analysis were the interview text (Papers 1, 7, and 11) or the promotional brochures, the theatres entries in the fringe festival programme and the web pages (Paper 8). These were examined and the frequency of descriptor words (verbs, adjectives and adverbs) used in relation to the research questions. The researchers then codified the material and findings were drawn from the key words. Again mixed methods were used, with the qualitative research findings influencing the development of the quantitative research instrument, and findings were disseminated to the wine and tourism industries (Papers 1 and 11) and the theatre/festival directors and public bodies (Papers 7, 8, 12). The five festivals identified by the interviewees in Paper 6 formed the elements of the repertory grid and in generating constructs the ‘triading’ method was used

(Selby, 2004). Honey's (1979) method of content analysis was used in preference to a more highly statistical approach allowing the researcher to make use of individual meanings expressed through the interviewee ratings on the grid. The overall summary construct was creative/uncreative and all the other constructs were analysed in terms of how close or removed they were from this. Thus High, Intermediate and Low (H-I-L) values were allocated to each construct and they allow the researcher to establish exactly how important individuals rated the constructs. The application of repertory grids is particularly suited to grounds underrepresented in other more traditional forms of data collection research (Canning and Holmes, 2006) and yielded interesting insights into the creativity of festival leaders in Edinburgh.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

My research has been heavily influenced by a pragmatist approach, utilising mixed methods, as a highly practical way of investigating tourism research and producing results that are relevant and make a contribution to both tourism business theory and practices (Pansiri, 2005; 2006). Earlier on in my research career there was a heavy focus on more positivistic methodologies with extensive use of surveys as the key research instrument. As I have grown and developed as a researcher I have adopted a mixed methods approach using more qualitative research methodologies in line with the growing indication of increasing methodological diversity within tourism research (Morgan and Bischoff, 2003). Papers 3 and 9 are all essentially mixed methods based, using a combination of research methods, influenced by previous research processes (Papers 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7). Ryan asked the tourism researcher to be 'thorough, exhaustive, methodological, imaginative, emphatic, informed, decisive and communicative' (Ryan, 1995, p.282). The outcomes of tourism research can never be wholly positivist or prescriptive, but must inform the practice of tourism and guide tourism managers and organisations to achieve their core objectives in a practical and applicable manner. The role and importance of the consumer should become the focal point for future tourism research as highlighted in this critical



appraisal. This is reiterated by Jamal and Hollinshead (2001) in their plea for the use of more qualitative enquiry in tourism research as the tools of positivism are not fully equipped to deal with the dynamics of tourism. This critical appraisal has therefore presented a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods which confirm the author's pragmatist approach and explored the personal and situated nature of my research journey.

## Chapter 4

### Contribution to Knowledge

#### 4.1 Introduction

The focus of my research has been on niche tourism products with an emphasis on those products that are in the growth or maturity stage of the niche tourism life cycle. The outputs of this have contributed to knowledge in the field across the areas of **theory, practice and policy**. The contribution to **theory** has been across three themes which are examined further in this chapter. Firstly, in establishing visitor profiles of niche tourism consumers, highlighting distinct market segments with key preferences, motivations and expectations. The three-dimensional model developed in Paper 4 incorporating motivation, intention and integration of travel activities reveals five distinct market segments of winery visitor. A second strand to my contribution has been the substantiation that niche products can be a key motivating factor for tourists in destination choice, transforming and regenerating destinations through economic, social and political processes. Finally, the development of the niche tourism life cycle model (Figure 2) which outlines the contribution of niche products to destination development. Due to the diverse nature, and quantity of, different niche products at a destination level no-one can offer contributions across all aspects of niche tourism. The significance of my research however, is that it offers contributions along the various stages of the life-cycle.

This body of work has also helped to inform tourism **practice**. The key findings are important as they provide a critical insight into niche tourist profiles; travel preferences and behaviour and the economic value and contribution of key niche tourism market segments. This information is a valuable marketing tool for tourism operators and destination marketers when strategising

destination planning and development and trying to exploit more lucrative tourist markets. In wine tourism research, I have demonstrated a contribution in terms of creating insights into the benefits of wine education to the tourist, operator and destination and reinforcing that it is the experience that is fundamental to the tourist – not just the wine. The five distinct wine tourism profiles revealed in Paper 4 offer winery operators a clearer understanding of their customers. It is clear that increased consumer knowledge about wine is advantageous to both the consumer, and the wine industry, and can aid the winery manager in terms of increased sales, enhanced customer loyalty to the brand, ensuring a greater understanding of the product and expanding regional image awareness.

Festival and event management practice is also supported through this research. Festival managers are given valuable insights into how they need to be cognizant of their own performance, especially with respect to financing; marketing; programming and community involvement (cited in Robertson and Rogers, 2009). Their ability to respond to these challenges will determine their ability to compete and avoid failure. This is a critical finding, especially in today's crowded and competitive festival environment. Research into the niche area of fringe festivals illuminates the need for fringe festival organisers to work with independent theatres, to attract the key target audience and ensure consistency of brand, image and approach. Finally, my research has also helped DMOs and government event agencies to focus their operations, revealing the potential of festivals and events to image and position destinations, such as Edinburgh, to appeal to niche tourism markets. The need to concentrate on the opportunities offered by cultural activities, such as festival and events, and ensure that they are a visible component of any destination image and branding exercise is stressed. Festival managers also need to partner with DMOs to participate in the economic and social transformations that can be supported by innovation and creativity in festivals.

One of the key **policy** contributions of my research has been the development of a research agenda (ACCESS) to examine the wider implications of festival tourism i.e. socio- cultural and political practices which are instrumental in the development of any measurement tool to be used by policy makers and the industry. Hall and Rusher (2004) note the lack of research into the political dimensions of events The progression of Getz's (2002) work on festival failure in Paper 9 reveals its significance as the first cross country examination of festival and event stakeholders.

Through my work with the Edinburgh Festival leaders (Paper 6), greater insights are also given into festival stakeholder perceptions on creativity, innovation and failure within festivals. This addresses the gap in festival management research which to date has 'been post-hoc and outcomes-based with very little evaluation of festival formation, strategies or management processes' (Paper 9, p.4). At a time when festivals are facing increasing governmental pressure to be accountable, and competition between cities as hosts for festivals increases, these findings are significant and provide a valuable political tool for governments and local authorities. Langen and Garcia (2009) note a key research gap as being the lack of attention towards longer term impacts and longitudinal research. They also make reference to ACCESS and its attempts to focus wider than economic impacts, in order to understand the complex benefits and dis-benefits associated with festivals. Earlier research within the wine tourism sector also contributed to the development of governmental policy, with the launch of the 'Wine Tourism Strategy for Western Australia' (Dowling *et al.* 2000). This was one of the first and key regional wine tourism policies in Australia and was instrumental in guiding the development of wine tourism in the region.

The following sections of this chapter summarise my contribution to tourism theory, practice and policy. The individual papers are discussed under the key thematic areas of my work:

- niche tourism product development;

- niche tourist profiling; and
- destination development through niche tourism.

They are considered thematically, rather than chronologically, to give a holistic insight into the contribution to knowledge of the major research areas that have been the focus of my work (Tables 1-3). Again some papers, because of the varied and diverse nature of my research, cross over more than one thematic area.

## 4.2 Niche Tourism Product Development

**Table 1: Key themes, methods and contributions to knowledge of publications in the area of Niche Tourism Product Development**

Research theme	Research methodological approach and methods	Contribution to knowledge
<b>Niche Tourism Product Development</b>	<b>Papers 1 - 3</b> Pragmatism Mixed Methods Key Informants Interviews Consumer/Winery Surveys	Significance of education as part of the wine tourism experience. Insight into the benefit of education, not only to the wine industry, but to tourism, the region and market position.
	<b>Paper 5</b> Pragmatism Student Surveys	Recognition of the economic importance of the student market and their role as a distinct market with specific needs and preferences. Insight into key perception issues that lead international students to travel to tourism destinations.
	<b>Papers 6, 8 and 9</b> Pragmatism Mixed Methods Festival Surveys Repertory Grids Content Analysis Case Studies	Understanding of the factors festival leaders perceive as limiting and extending creativity. Insight into what affects the creative and innovative potential of festivals Contribution to Fringe Festival literature, first study examining the importance of atmospherics on the image of festivals

	<b>Paper 11</b> Pragmatism Mixed Methods Theoretical Yoga tourism Operator Surveys	Key contribution to the wellness tourism literature, awareness of the development of yoga tourism as a distinct niche market.
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The key contribution of the papers in this section is the recognition that niche tourism products are a critical component of the overall tourism product. This research reveals how their development can be seen as a response to the more contemporary, educated tourist who, no longer content with a homogenised mass tourism product, seeks holiday experiences that challenge and engage. A number of distinct niche tourism products are presented in this critical appraisal (e.g. wine; festival and events; students and wellness) and a key contribution of this work is the cross product evaluation and the placement of these products along the niche tourism life cycle (Figure 2). Two papers address the emergent niche products of student and wellness tourism. One key conclusion from paper 5 is the recognition of the student travel market as a distinct market segment with a major contribution to export earnings of the Australian economy and Western Australia's tourism industry. It contributes to the limited body of work available on international students travelling abroad by addressing key perception issues that lead international students to travel to tourist destinations. This is cited by Michael, Armstrong and King, (2004), Shanka *et al.*, (2005) and Poh and Townsend (2006) as providing a critical insight into the economic value and travel preferences of this valuable market to tourism providers and DMOs. Wellness tourism development is addressed in Paper 11, in my examination of the development of yoga tourism. The significance of this research is that it identifies the influences on the growth of yoga as a niche tourism product and is one of only a few studies (Smith and Kelly, 2006; Lehto *et al.*, 2006) that tries to identify the core concepts of the yoga tourism package. Another key finding of the research was the awareness of the promotion of yoga tourism, alongside other niche tourism products, to attract a wider

range of tourists and offer a broader experience. Smith and Puczko observe that 'yoga can be packaged with almost any activity provided it is attractive to the target market' (Smith and Puczko, 2009, p.229). These findings are important as they validate McKercher and Chan's (2005) argument that niche tourism products need to be seen not in isolation, but within the broader context of the existing tourist products and visitor mix. There are only a few destinations, such as those cited in the case studies in Paper 11, for which yoga tourism is the primary product opportunity at the destination and this contributes to its uniqueness.

My contribution in the growth area of niche products is centred on my work in wine tourism product development, particularly in the area of wine education (Papers 1 – 3). My research priorities have matched those of Getz (2000a) who proposes that wine tourism research should be based on wine tourists; marketing effectiveness; and, success factors for developing wineries and destinations. There is little attention given in the literature to what wine education is and how it benefits the wine and tourism industries. The work presented here demonstrates my contribution to an evaluation of the wine education experience at the winery (as cited by Fraser and Alonso, 2006 and O'Neill and Charters, 2006). Yuan *et al.* (2006) recognise my contribution to an understanding of the total wine tourism experience and how regions can provide what the consumers want in terms of cultural heritage; hospitality; education and festivals and events. Hall *et al.* (2000) also suggest that the wine tourism experience consists of the attributes of the wine tourist (as discussed in section 4.3) and the wine product. Thus, the research presented here confirms earlier discussions of wine tourists seeking a broader experience. 'Recent attempts to define wine tourism in broader terms have been made and Charters and Ali-Knight (2002) have noted the characteristics that have been incorporated' (Roberts and Sparks, 2006, p.48). My research reveals that winery managers share a similar broad perspective about the benefits of an educational dimension at the winery. This often leads them to miss the opportunity to meet visitor needs for education and expand their customer base. Papers 1 – 3 identify the relationship between the growth in wine tourism and the increasing levels of wine education sought by those interested in wine.



Another clear result of this research is the verification that wine education can 'value add' and provides something 'extra' to the wine tourism product.

My more recent work covering festival and event tourism (Papers 6 – 9 and 13), has adopted a more theoretical stance contributing to a limited body of work, particularly in the area of fringe festivals. Niche tourism products at the mature stage of the product life cycle, notably festivals and events, are a key part of this critical appraisal. The key contribution of the papers in this section is in providing insights into stakeholder involvement, festival leadership, festival management innovation and failure and the challenges festivals face in the event life cycle. Pasanen *et al.* remark on how 'festivals and events have become a critical component of the overall tourism product' (Pasanen *et al.*, 2009, p.126). Robertson *et al.* also comment on the need for further research into stakeholder interest, impact and conflict as existing research is limited to a small number of festivals and 'there are risks in attempting to generalise the findings' (Robertson *et al.*, 2009, p. 162). Paper 9 makes an original contribution to festival management and stakeholder analysis, and adds to the limited literature on festival management and innovation.

Paper 6 also argues for more creativity and innovation within festival leadership. Its key contribution lies not only in the research findings but in the methodology as it is one of the first festival and event studies to employ the use of repertory grids, producing data with a pragmatic value to the festival community. The constructs (leadership; focus; relationship with the community; decision-making; funding and history) identified in the research and sub-constructs presented figuratively give further insights into what affects the creative and innovative potential of festival leaders.

The final paper that looks at niche tourism product development is in the area of fringe festivals. It is the first study to examine the importance of atmospherics on the image of festivals, and adds to the limited research on fringe festivals. Its key theoretical contribution is in the development of a model to examine atmospheric stimuli at fringe festivals and, its exploration of independent fringe festival theatres' ability to produce an appropriate atmosphere for its visitors. The findings substantiate Kim and Chalip's (2004) appeal for event organisers to pay particular attention to the ways in which the atmosphere of their events is constructed, and are a response to Milman's (2001) suggestion that more research is needed on how atmosphere should be developed for different niche market segments.

#### **4.3 Niche Tourist Profiling**

**Table 2: Key themes, methods and contributions to knowledge of publications in the area of Niche Tourist Profiling**

<b>Research theme</b>	<b>Research methodological approach and methods</b>	<b>Contribution to knowledge</b>
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<b>Niche Tourism Profiling</b>	<b>Papers 1, 3 and 4</b> Pragmatism Mixed Methods Key Informant Interviews Consumer/Winery Surveys	One of the first attempts at profiling the wine tourist, their needs and expectations. Recognition that it is the experience that is fundamental – not the wine.
	<b>Paper 10</b> Pragmatism Theoretical Case Studies	Awareness of wine tourism as a form of consumer behaviour. Application of needs-based motivational theories to the wine tourism consumer
	<b>Paper 11</b> Pragmatism Mixed Methods Theoretical Yoga tourism Operator Surveys	Insight into the profile, preferences and motivation of yoga tourists.

The earlier works that have been included in this critical appraisal (papers 1, 3, 4 and 10) establish, through the use of extensive surveys, baseline data to inform and create insights into the important niche wine tourism market. My involvement in wine tourism research, at a very early stage in the development of this area, is significant as it reflects some of the first published work examining premium Australian wine regions. In Mitchell and Hall's paper examining the state of play of current wine tourism research, reference is made to the work presented here as an integral contribution to 'the pioneering research projects in wine tourism' (Mitchell and Hall, 2006, p.307) and the subsequent body of literature that has emerged.

In developing awareness of the niche tourist, my key contribution has been in providing an insight into motivating factors and visitor profiles for both wine and yoga tourists. Carlsen (2004) states how our knowledge of the wine tourism target market is not well developed and Charters *et al.* observe how 'less attention has been placed on the psychological and affective characteristics of the winery experience' (Charters *et al.*, 2009, p.122). They comment on the contribution of my previous work (Papers 1, 3 and 4) in highlighting the role of personal growth through education as a motivating factor for tourists to wine regions and an attempt to define wine tourism in broader terms (Roberts and Sparks, 2006). Charters *et al.* (2009) examine this work in the light of Pine and Gilmore's (1999) work on the 'experience economy' which is also examined in other wine tourism research (see Appendix 1) not presented here (cited in Mitchell and Hall, 2006). Indeed, writing recently in 2008, Yuan *et al.* still make an appeal for in-depth research 'to examine the nature of the consumers of wine tourism, namely wine tourists' (Yuan *et al.*, 2008, p.207). This recognition that wine tourists are not homogeneous and there is no stereotypical wine tourist (as cited by Galloway *et al.*, 2008; Charters *et al.*, 2009) is a critical finding of my work and has been important in better informing winery operators on how to meet visitor expectations and preferences and increase customer loyalty to their brand. Papers 3 and 10 have also helped to formulate a deeper understanding of wine tourism behaviour and 'what motivates them to visit a destination and purchase wine offerings' (Tassiopoulos and Haydam, 2006, p.142). Brown, Havitz and Getz (2007) also note how my work has recognised the need to describe wine tourism markets, not purely in demographic and behavioural terms, but to examine cross cultural motives and intentions and how to effectively segment the market. This has made a substantial contribution 'to the theoretical and conceptual understanding of wine tourist behaviour' (Yuan *et al.*, 2008, p.209).

Carlsen (2004) questions whether a discrete, niche wine tourism market exists and states that most visits to wineries are only part of an overall holiday experience. I would counter this, and argue that Paper 4, as cited by Galloway *et al.* (2008) reveals five distinct market segments of winery visitor (connoisseur; wine lover; wine interested; wine novices and hangers on). Within the first two

categories there is a clear indication that wine is a major motivating factor for their destination choice and, although a small segment, they are high yield tourists who can generate substantial benefits to the winery. To summarise, my contribution therefore has been in developing lifestyle typologies for wine tourists, taking Halls' (1996) segments and measuring their behaviour using wine interest.

'Importantly their research provides an attempt to describe the lifestyle characteristics of these segments by analysing the wider wine behaviour and attributes of the winery visit that are considered to be important by each segment'

(Mitchell and Hall, 2006, p.320)

The other area of my work that has attempted to provide profiles of niche tourists is my recent exploratory research into yoga tourism. Yoga tourism is an emergent niche tourism market that can be viewed as a subset of wellness or holistic tourism. Considerable debate exists as to exactly what wellness tourism is and how tourism actively contributes to this (Kelly and Smith, 2009). Smith and Puczko comment on how 'relatively little research has been undertaken about the profiles and motivations of the so called health visitors' (Smith and Puczko, 2009, p.132). Paper 11, therefore, makes an active contribution to this under researched, but growing, area of research and advances knowledge in areas identified by Lehto *et al's.* (2005) research into the yoga tourist. The yoga tourist is revealed to be a 'special interest person, whose motivation and decision making are primarily determined by their interest in yoga' (Paper 11, p.89). The identification of customer motivations, mapped against McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) and Plog's (1972) tourist typologies is a key contribution to understanding yoga tourist motivation. They are also a valid response to Swarbrooke and Horner's (1999) suggestion that academic typologies should be combined with market segmentation to build up a greater understanding of tourist profiles.

**4.4 Destination Development through Niche Tourism**

**Table 3: Key themes, methods and contributions to knowledge of publications in the area of Destination Development through Niche Tourism**

<b>Research theme</b>	<b>Research methodological approach and methods</b>	<b>Contribution to knowledge</b>
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<p><b>Destination Development through Niche Tourism</b></p>	<p><b>Papers 7, 9 and 13.</b>  Pragmatism  Theoretical  Mixed Methods  Festival Surveys  Repertory Grids  Key informant interviews  Case Studies</p>	<p>Agenda for researching festivals from an economic, social and cultural perspective  Awareness of the need to further evaluate festival benefits and dis-benefits.  .  Insight into festival management innovation, failure and the challenges they face in the festival life cycle.  Awareness of the need for festival managers to partner with DMOs to transform destinations through economic, social and political processes.</p> <p>Insight into how a nation's image can shape its economic and cultural focus.  Awareness of how a place is defined and enhanced by its reputation and representation as a Festival City.  Recognition of the gap between the use of image as a destinational tool and the measurability of its effects.  Appeal for a controlled measurement study to evaluate the strategic value of place marketing and image as a market positioning tool.</p>
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	<p><b>Papers 4</b> Pragmatism Mixed Methods Consumer and Winery Surveys</p> <p><b>Papers 12</b> Pragmatism Theoretical Case Studies</p>	<p>Substantiation that wine can provide a major motivating factor for tourists to visit a destination.</p> <p>Insight into regional regeneration and diversification through development of wine tourism. Application of event life-cycle model to wine festivals and events.</p>
	<p><b>Paper 11</b> Pragmatism Mixed Methods Theoretical Yoga tourism Operator Surveys</p>	<p>Power of 'yoga' as a destination brand and image</p>

The contribution to knowledge made by the papers in this section is in presenting how niche tourism products can help to develop a destination. Through the use of the niche tourism life cycle it is clear that niche products will have different impacts, marketing challenges and contributions to destination development as they progress along it. Destinations with emergent niche tourism products can act as powerful pull factors for newer destinations or can help to revive and reposition established destinations. This becomes evident in Paper 11, where research into yoga tourism revealed how holistic practices such as yoga, because of the powerful emotions they evoke, can create a powerful image that can be used in destination branding. The research conducted with



yoga tourism operators indicates how activities, such as yoga, offer destinations (i.e. India) a huge marketing opportunity to attract high yield niche tourists.

Another key contribution that my research has made is in revealing how wine tourism can help to create an image of the winery/region, providing a major motivating factor for tourists to visit a destination. Yuan *et al.* note how Paper 4 indicates how 'wine tourism represents a marketing opportunity, which increases the value of the wine destinations' (Yuan *et al.*, 2008, p.217). Mitchell and Hall (2006) and Mitchell (2006) acknowledge how research into post visit behaviour of winery visitors is rare. As part of a limited group of authors, they make reference to my research when discussing the significance of winery visitation for positive brand and image development at both the individual winery and at a regional level. My research demonstrates that for the first two market segments – the wine lover and the connoisseur – learning about wine and visiting the winery is a key component of their tourist experience. Yuan *et al.* (2005) evidence this when they state 'as asserted by Charters and Ali-Knight visitors to wineries rarely just drop in' (Yuan *et al.*, 2005 p.44). Therefore for a premium wine region, like Margaret River, destination specific wine tourism plays a key role in destination imaging and in the tourist experience.

The final area of contribution to destination development research is in the area of festivals and events. Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2002) comment on how for all destinations, especially niche destination players, event capitalisation can exert significant influence on branding the destination. They continue to note that 'the potential of such opportunities deserves attention from both academics and practitioners' (Morgan *et al.*, 2002, p.351). Although national destination images have received considerable research interest, little work has focused on how a nation's image can shape its economic and cultural focus and help to brand a nation. Paper 13, although exploratory in nature, addresses these issues and lays the foundation for developing the ACCESS

research agenda. Paper 13, contributes to the limited work on festival cities and its significance lies in the identification of a clear gap between the awareness of the importance of the use of image as a strategic destination management tool and the measurability of its effects. Festivals are enabling factors, but cannot be the sole image provider and must be seen within the complex array of other attractions at the destination. This research can also be seen as a key response to Garcia's (2005) comment on the disparate nature of academic and professional study which has not appropriated a clear conceptual framework for analysing festival and events.

Paper 7 develops this conceptual framework into the ACCESS research agenda. Pasanen *et al.* (2009) reference ACCESS in their evaluation of standardised measures for event evaluation, citing its benefit as a research method for collecting secondary data by interviewing event organisers. There is a growing recognition of a need for a holistic framework that can assess event impacts, beyond purely economic ones, and this has led to the author's input into a subsequent research project in this area (Pasanen *et al.*, 2009; Robertson *et al.*, 2009). Robertson *et al.* (2009) identify the need for further research into stakeholder needs, roles and their perceptions of event impacts. This is addressed in some of my recent collaborative research into festival and event stakeholder management (Paper 9). It is evident from the literature that festivals have a key role to play in attracting niche markets and transforming destinations. Festival managers, however, as key stakeholders need to be aware of their input into this process.

Finally, festivals are seen as a form of cultural capital that will help to develop and regenerate the host destination. This is evident in Paper 12, where through a case study approach; the benefits of wine festivals in economic and social terms are evaluated. The key contribution here is the suggestion of the significant role that festivals have in facilitating and celebrating rural rejuvenation and transformation. Beverland *et al.* (2001) comment how regional wine festivals are rarely examined and Yuan *et al.* (2005) note that

the role a wine festival has in promoting and enhancing the image of the destination should not be neglected. The case studies reveal wine festivals to be an integral part of the overall tourism experience in the wine regions, illustrating the growth of wine festivals and their significance in transforming traditional rural areas into thriving wine tourism destinations. Another interesting contribution was the recognition that the stage of the event life cycle (Beverland *et al.*, 2001) for each of the festivals had an influence on the extent of their contribution to destination development.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

In providing this critical reflection on my work, the main aim is to identify my individual contribution to the academic knowledge base in the niche tourism area of study and, to show the intellectual development of my thinking. The contribution of my work has been located within Tables 1-3. To summarise, I have contributed to greater knowledge and understanding of tourism theory, practice and policy in relation to the three key themes of *niche tourism product development; niche tourist profiling and destination development through niche tourism*. To illustrate this, my research has focused primarily on two significant niche tourism products: wine and festivals and events.

I have argued and demonstrated through my work that niche tourism is rarely a prime motivator for tourism - it is a valuable product for multiproduct destinations and a core activity for single product destinations. In addition, the papers presented here have developed an understanding of new perspectives in examining niche tourism and its contribution to destination development. Understanding why people visit a destination and the nature and motivations of the consumers of niche products is another critical component and contribution of my work.

The benefit of this work to academic theory is the presentation of insights into niche tourism consumers, to frame future research. There is also an understanding that no matter where destinations are in the niche tourism life cycle, as a result of multiple stakeholder involvement; composite, complex products and often little management control, they all face a number of challenges. Niche tourism products offer destinations the opportunity to differentiate themselves from their competitors, attracting high yield, low impact tourists. The promotion, through the work presented here, of a cross cultural perspective of niche tourism will aid a greater depth of understanding of this concept. Finally, the practical and political benefits of this work to industry include a greater understanding of niche tourist behaviour to better aid them in positioning and targeting their products. This will ultimately influence future purchase decisions. It offers the tourism industry and DMOs insights into how to creatively and innovatively market, promote and reposition their destination and product offerings, to attract this key market, in a time of immense competition for tourist revenue.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions

#### 5.1 Introduction and Contribution to Knowledge

As indicated in Chapter One, the aim of this critical appraisal is to draw together the information presented earlier to demonstrate my contribution to knowledge in the field of tourism. This critical appraisal has demonstrated how my research publications have contributed to the development of knowledge and understanding of the role of niche tourism products in destination development. The analysis of my publications is presented in Tables 1-3, in Chapter Four, as a vehicle to order my various contributions to this field of study. I consider that I have contributed to greater knowledge and understanding in tourism theory, practice and policy in relation to the three key themes of *niche tourism product development*; *niche tourist profiling* and *destination development through niche tourism*. My work emphasises the importance of profiling the niche tourist, their needs and expectations; an awareness of niche tourism as a form of consumer behaviour; recognition of the development of niche tourism as a distinct market segment and the substantiation that niche products can provide a major motivating factor for tourists to visit a destination. Through the use of the niche tourism life cycle there is also an appreciation that niche products will have different impacts, marketing challenges and contributions to destination development. This critical appraisal represents a culmination of a sustained period of tourism research and thought on the topic. The process of articulating and synthesising my thoughts from distinct areas of study, namely, wine tourism, festival and event tourism and other emerging niche tourism products, to present a coordinated, coherent view, has been extremely challenging. Through the multi-disciplinary nature of my work I have achieved a greater academic understanding of this

complex area of research. Collaborating with academics from economics, marketing and wine business, across a range of different institutions, has encouraged the cross-fertilisation of ideas and practices. This chapter revisits my research aims and objectives, confirms my contribution to knowledge and explores the limitations of my research, before identifying future research opportunities and directions.

## **5.2 Research Aim and Objectives Revisited**

In Chapter One, I identify the overall aim and objectives of the thesis which are then addressed in Chapters 2 to 5. Chapter Two specifies the research context for the critical appraisal and presents and critically analyses my work in the context of the literature of niche tourism, product-led niche tourism and destination development. An evaluation of the critical role of the niche products that have directed this research, in developing tourism destinations, is included. Chapter Three examines the research methodologies and methods that have guided and influenced this work, reflecting on my pragmatist research perspective and the use of mixed methods to explore specific issues within the research presented here. Gaps in current research are identified, and Chapter Four explores how my research had contributed to reducing these gaps in knowledge and practice in the field. From this critical appraisal, the individual contribution of each of the publications submitted here is explored and their collective contribution to the literature on the role of niche tourism products in destination development reinforced.

## **5.3 Limitations**

One of the key limitations of this critical appraisal is made apparent in Robins and Kanowski's (2008) work outlining the advantages and disadvantages of the PhD by Publication route. By its very nature, a PhD by Publication is fragmented and disjointed, as it aims to present work undertaken over a sustained period of time and, in this instance, work covering different continents, research projects and methods.

Each research project I have participated in, despite its limitations, has been considered in terms of its practicability, relationship with other members of the research team and its ability to produce research that is significant and has a theoretical and practical value.

In terms of specific limitations to the research presented here, the following applies. My work in emerging niche tourism products such as yoga and international students is, to date, limited in scope and needs developing internationally, targeting emergent niche tourism destinations and niche tourists. Further research from other international student populations, for example in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), would enhance the understanding of the contribution of international student travel patterns to destinations. Yoga tourism, as a distinct sub set of wellness tourism, also needs further development. Further research is needed on the infrastructure required to support yoga tourism, the motivations and expectations of the yoga tourist and how destinations can develop and facilitate demand.

My research in the area of wine tourism is limited in geographical scope. It's focus is on particular New World wine regions and there is a lack of cross cultural research. As wine tourism is increasingly international, distinct variations in the nature and expectations of wine tourism occur across regions. More comparable research across wine tourism destinations would yield greater

insights into wine tourist motivations and preferences. The research presented here also only focuses on two areas of wine tourism provision – education and festivals – more research is needed to examine other parts of the wine tourism experience.

Finally, in the niche area of festival and event tourism, research is again limited by sample size and geographical scope, especially in the case of the work with Festival leaders in Edinburgh. Although the stakeholder research employs a cross cultural approach, more insight is needed into the environmental, social and cultural dimensions of event impacts on destinations. Much of the research presented here has a supply side perspective and there is limited insight into festival and event tourist motivations and experiences and demand side influences at the destination.

#### **5.4 Further Research Opportunities**

Completing the PhD by publication route has been an incredible personal learning journey. The act of revisiting and reflecting on past work in this way, has enabled me to recognise its strengths and limitations, and helped in setting the future directions of my work. It has enabled the identification of a number of key opportunities to extend this work through further research.

One of the key benefits of completing this process has been an awareness of my development as a researcher. In epistemological and ontological terms I have progressed from a concentration on using a quantitative approach, perceiving the tourist world to be real and predictable, to embracing using more mixed methodologies with a focus towards a more qualitative/interpretative approach to research. This can be seen in the context of Davies (2003) who stresses the complementarity of quantitative and qualitative data as an important facet of tourism research. Because of the diverse nature of the research presented here, I have tended to adopt a



pragmatic approach. I consider this to be the most appropriate paradigm for studying niche tourism as it is concerned with what works practically, offering a broader range of approaches. Pansiri reinforces how pragmatism offers avenues for future tourism research that:

‘will be skilfully conducted, commanding an understanding of both positivist and phenomenological traditions, accompanied by an excellent grasp of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques’

(Pansiri, 2006, p.236)

I am already undertaking research in a number of new but associated areas. Recent published work examining the student population in the UAE is an extension of the work presented in Paper 5. This work needs to be developed further to include cross country comparisons of international student populations across the UK, Australia and the UAE. Research in the area of yoga tourism has been exploratory to date and I am keen to expand the demand side of this research to include more direct and participant observations of, and in depth interviews with, yoga tourists at key identifiable yoga tourism destinations to further explore their motivations and experiences.

Although my work in the area of wine tourism has not been revisited recently due to my current geographical location, I am keen to return to some of the Old World wine regions and conduct comparable research with wine tourists and DMOs in these destinations. Leaving Australia in 2002, I had started to examine wine tourism in the context of Pine and Gilmores (1999) work in the experience economy. I am keen to develop this area of research further examining the experiential nature of wine tourism.

Festival and event tourism has been my current research focus. The repertory grid research presented in Paper 6 is currently being expanded to include a wider number of festival leaders and also interviews are currently being held in the UAE and Australia to

expand the international dimension of the work. Current work in the area of fringe festivals (paper 8) has tended to be exploratory to date. The next phase of this research project will involve a more demand side led approach involving in depth interviews and focus groups with fringe festival tourists in Australia and Scotland. This will hopefully gain a greater insight into their motivations, expectations and preferences. Exploratory research into the growth and development of the UAE as an event tourism destination is also currently being employed. Responding to Getz's (2008) desire for more experiential, mixed methods, work in the area of tourism and events and my own desire to expand and integrate new methodological approaches and methods into my work. I am keen to progress qualitative visual research observing festival and event visitors participating in the festival experience. The use of visual techniques such as researcher-created video can facilitate a richer understanding of the motivations, preferences and experiences of festival and event tourists.

#### **5.4.1 Developing a Research Agenda**

One final outcome of this critical appraisal is the development of a research agenda for niche tourism researchers. Niche tourism is still largely under researched, with most research focusing on supply side perspectives giving little insight into what drives demand to niche tourism destinations. Franklin and Craig accuse tourism researchers of becoming 'stale, tired, repetitive and lifeless' (Franklin and Craig, 2001, p.5). Niche tourism offers researchers an opportunity to utilize innovative research methods, focusing on the complementary use of qualitative and quantitative techniques. As identified in this critical appraisal, there is a need to conduct more holistic research work in the area of niche tourism. Future research could be focused around the following key areas:

- Developing the niche tourism product life cycle further to examine the challenges and issues destination face as they progress through it.

- Researching demand led niche tourism to establish motivations, preferences and expectations of niche tourists.
- Comparison of macro and micro niche tourism development
- Examining niche tourism within the broader context of the product and visitor mix.
- Progressing research across niches, to examine how different niche products interact at a destination level.
- A focus on developing a profile of the niche tourist, examining how they participate and move within various niche products as part of their overall tourism experience.
- Investigating the experiential nature of niche products and how they help to brand and reimage a destination
- Developing case studies of how niche tourism products have helped to innovate and develop destinations and paradoxically examining what happens when they fail to achieve this.

The identification of a future research agenda would help to further academic understanding in the area and focus research priorities.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the purpose of this critical appraisal is to demonstrate my contribution to academic knowledge and understanding of the role of niche tourism products in destination development. This critical appraisal has contributed to knowledge and understanding in tourism theory, practice and policy across three thematic areas: *niche tourism product development*, *niche tourist profiling* and *destination development through niche tourism*. Tables 1 to 3 identify the methodological approach and the research methods used, outlining the key contributions in each of the three areas. These include an appreciation of the key perception issues that lead niche tourists to travel to tourism destinations; an awareness of the development of niche tourism as a distinct

market segment, the development of the niche tourism framework and niche tourism life cycle; insight into the profile, preferences and motivations of niche tourists; a recognition of niche tourism as a major motivating factor for tourists to visit a destination; the development of a research agenda for niche tourism; the importance of niche products to developing destination brand and image and an awareness of the need for niche tourism providers to partner with DMOs to transform and regenerate destinations through niche tourism activities.

My research publications have established that niche tourism products offer destinations an opportunity to differentiate and reposition themselves to a more distinct, lucrative market. Undertaking my PhD by Publication has presented an amazing opportunity for me to critically reflect upon my individual and collaborative work over the last ten years. It has enabled me to examine this work in the context of the pragmatist paradigm, reinforcing the practical and applied nature of my work.

Hall challenges the role and importance of niche tourism as a major driving force in tourism growth and the regeneration of destinations posing the questions 'is it a healthy sign that the industry should appear to be driven by niche tourism? Or is it actually the case that this is an overhyped, politically correct and convenient delusion?' (Hall, 2003, p.24). Through the research presented in this critical appraisal, I would challenge Hall's view and argue that niche tourism offers destinations a valid opportunity to reinvent and reposition themselves and has a key role to play in destination imaging and the development of the tourist experience.

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## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1      Research and Publications Profile 2010
  
- Appendix 2      Summary of Publications by Theme, Methods, Contribution and Focus
  
- Appendix 3      Key authors in the field of Niche Tourism
  
- Appendix 4      Publications for PhD
  
- Appendix 5      Contribution Statements for Joint Papers

## Appendix 1

### Research and Publications Profile 2010

#### RESEARCH GRANTS

##### **Edith Cowan University Small Medium Enterprise Research (SMERC) Grants 1999**

*Strategies for Capacity Management in the Western Australia Hotel Industry*

(\$5 000)

*The Attraction and Benefit of Wine Education to the Wine Tourist and Winery*

(\$5 500)

*Accessing the Disability Tourism Dollar - Implications for Small and Medium Sized Hotel Enterprises* (\$5 000)

##### **Curtin University New Researcher (CURG) Grant, January - December 2000**

*Building a motivational Framework for International Wine Tourists: A North American Case Study* (\$7 500)

##### **Curtin Business School Research Grant,**

*International Students Indirect Contribution to Western Australian Tourism*

(\$10 000) **July 2000 - July 2002**

*Extraordinary Experiences and Extended Service Encounters in Wine Tourism*

(\$10 000) **November 2001 - November 2002**

**Visiting Research Fellowship** Professor. C. M. Hall (\$2,350)

**The Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland**



*Extraordinary Experiences and Extended Service Encounters in Wine Tourism*  
(£1 470) **February 2003**

**Napier University, School of Marketing and Tourism**

*The Influence of Festivals on the image and representation of Edinburgh: paths towards cultural and economic evaluation of the Festival City*

(£948) **November 2004**

**Napier University, School of Marketing and Tourism**

*Festivals and Events: Beyond Economic Impact Research. A research agenda for Edinburgh, Scotland*

(£1400) **January 2005**

**Napier University**

*Developing a commercially viable toolkit that measures the socio/cultural impacts of festivals and events. **Principal's Award.** (£30 000) **June 2007***

**JOURNAL ARTICLES**

Williams, P. O Neill, M. and Ali-Knight, J. (1999). Strategies for Managing Capacity in the Western Australia hotel industry: An exploratory Study. *Australian Journal of Hospitality Management*, **6**(1), Autumn.

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Ensor, J., Robertson, M. & Ali-Knight, J. (2007). The dynamics of successful events – the experts' perspective. *Managing Leisure – an international journal*, **12**(3).

Carlsen, J., Ali-Knight, J. & Robertson, M. (2007). Access – a research agenda for festival and events. *Event Management – an international journal*, **11**(1).

Frew, E. and Ali-Knight, J. (2009). Independent Theatres and the Creation of a Fringe Atmosphere. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, **3**(3).

Barron, P., Ali-Knight, J., and Stephenson, M.L. (2009). An Empirical Assessment of Student Desired Learning Approaches: A Case Study of a Satellite Campus in the United Arab Emirates, *MU Dubai Research Series – Working Paper*, No. 10.

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## TEXTS/ BOOK CHAPTERS

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Gregory, R. and Ali-Knight, J. (2003). Marketing Western Australia in a Competitive Minefield. **In** Hall, C.M. *Introduction to Tourism: Dimensions and Issues* 4<sup>th</sup> Ed, Hospitality Press, South Melbourne.

## CONFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

**October 28th - 31st 1998 Ecotourism Association of Australia, National Conference, Margaret River, Western Australia.**

Don Getz, Jack Carlsen and Jane Ali-Knight '*Environmental Goals of Family Businesses in Rural Tourism and Hospitality.*'

**December 1st - 4th 1998 New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference, Akoroa, New Zealand.**

Jane Ali-Knight, Paul Williams and Martin O Neill '*Capacity Management: a strategy for overcoming volatility in the Western Australia Hotel Sector.*'

**February 10th - 13th 1999 Council for Australian Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) National Research Conference, Adelaide, South Australia.**

Jane Ali-Knight and Steve Charters '*The Attraction and Benefit of Wine Education to the Wine Tourist and West Australian Winery.*'

Paul Williams, Martin O Neill and Jane Ali-Knight '*Strategies for Managing Capacity in the Western Australia hotel industry.*'

**August 15th - 17th 1999 Second Australian Wine Tourism Conference, Rutherglen, Victoria**

Jane Ali-Knight and Steve Charters '*Wine Education: Its role and importance to the Wine Tourist*'

**September 1st - 3rd 1999 First European Wine Tourism Conference, Surrey, UK**

Jane Ali-Knight and Steve Charters '*Perceptions of wine education by winery visitors in Western Australia.*'

Jane Ali-Knight, Ross Dowling, Jack Carlsen and Steve Charters '*The West Australian Wine Tourism Strategy.*'

**October 14th - 14th ACER: National Business and Education Conference, Perth, Western Australia.**

Jane Ali-Knight '*In Search of the Grape: Towards Building a Motivational Framework for International Wine Tourism in Australia.*' **(Refereed)**

**October 15th - 17th 1999, Ecotourism Association of Australia, National Conference, Fraser Island, Queensland.**

Jane Ali-Knight and Ben Breheny '*Heritage Value Assessment of Wedge Island as a Tourist Attraction.*'

**February 10th - 13th 2000 Council for Australian Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) National Research Conference, Mt Buller, Victoria**

Martin O Neill and Jane Ali-Knight '*Accessing the Disability Tourism Dollar - Implications for West Australian Hoteliers.*' **(Refereed)**

**28th June - 1st July 2000 The Sixth Asia Pacific Tourism Association Annual Conference, Prince of Songkla University, Phuket, Thailand**

Jane Ali-Knight and Martin O Neill *'Accessing the Disability Tourism Dollar - An evaluation of Current Awareness and Provision by Hotel Enterprises in Western Australia.'*

**2nd - 7th September Tourism 2000: A Time for Celebration, Sheffield, UK**

Jane Ali-Knight *'In Search of the Grape: Towards Building a Motivational Framework for International Wine Tourists to Australia.'* **(Refereed)**

**November 21st - 23rd 2000 The First New Zealand Wine Tourism Conference, Marlborough, NZ**

Jane Ali-Knight *'What motivates International Lovers of Wine: A Californian case Study'*

Ross Dowling, Jack Carlsen, Steve Charters and Jane Ali-Knight *'The West Australian Wine Tourism Strategy'*

**February 7th - 10th 2001 Council for Australian Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) National Research Conference, Canberra.**

Jane Ali-Knight *'A Tale of Two Valleys: Wine Tourism Development in Napa and Sonoma'*

**December 1st - 5th 2001 Australian and New Zealand Marketing Association Conference, Bridging Marketing Theory and Practice, Massey University, New Zealand.**

Jane Ali-Knight and Leyland Pitt *'Attract, Engage and Entertain: Wine as an Experience'* **(Refereed)**

Tekle Shanka, Ruth Taylor and Jane Ali-Knight *'International Students, Graduation Ceremonies and Family/Friends Participation: A Preliminary Assessment'* **(Refereed)**

**February 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 2002 CAUTHE National Research Conference: Tourism and Hospitality on the Edge, Perth.**

Jane Ali-Knight and Leyland Pitt *'Are Wineries trying to become Disneyland? The Winery as a provider of extraordinary experiences.'*

**March 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 2003 12<sup>th</sup> Annual IFEA Europe Conference; Journeys of Expression II: Cultural Festivals/Events and Tourism**

Jane Ali-Knight and Jack Carlsen *'Wine Festivals and Regional Transformation.'* **(Refereed)**

Jane Ali-Knight and Martin Robertson *'Festival City: Influence of Festivals on the Image and Representation of Edinburgh.'*  
**(Refereed)**

**July 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 2003 APTA Conference; Current Research: Future Strategies, Bridging Uncertainty.**

Jane Ali-Knight and Marie Robertson *'Lessons from Across the Globe: Impact of National and Worldwide Disasters on SMEs within the Scottish Tourism Industry.'*

**July 26 – 27<sup>th</sup> 2003 Wine Marketing Colloquium, Adelaide**

Jane Ali-Knight and Jack Carlsen *'An Exploration of the Use of 'Extraordinary' experiences in Wine Tourism.'* **(Refereed)**

**September 24 - 27<sup>th</sup> 2003 TTRA Europe; Urban Tourism – Mapping the Future, Glasgow, Scotland**

Jane Ali-Knight and Martin Robertson *'Festivals and the City: An examination of the influence of festivals on the cultural image and representation of Edinburgh'*

**May 2 – 5<sup>th</sup> 2004, International Wine Tourism Conference, Margaret River, Western Australia**

Jane Ali-Knight and Jack Carlsen *'Managing Wine Tourism through demarketing: The Case of Napa Valley, California'*

**July 6 - 8 2005 LSA Conference, Festival and Events: Beyond Economic Impacts, Edinburgh, Scotland**

Jack Carlsen, Jane Ali-Knight and Martin Robertson *ACCESS: Developing a Research Agenda for Edinburgh's Festivals.*

**November 11 – 13 2005 AOIFE Conference, Waterford, Ireland**

Robertson, M & Ali-Knight, J *Access – a research agenda for festival evaluation*

**June 8 – 10 2006 Wine in the World 2006: Markets, tourism and globalization, Florence, Italy** Jane Ali-Knight and Prof. Jack Carlsen *Wine Festivals and Regional Transformation.* **(Refereed)**

**June 21 – 22 2006 4th AEME Event Management Educators Forum, Bournemouth University, UK**

Robertson, M & Ali-Knight, J *Access – a research agenda for festival evaluation and academic development*

**January 10 – 11 2007 Event Tourism: Enhancing Destinations and the Visitor Economy', Bournemouth University.**

Robertson, M, Ali-Knight, J & Anastasiadou, C *The Capital of Scotland, Edinburgh: out with the old, in with the new? Testing brand narrative of festivals in the festival city* ‘

**July 11 – 12 2007 4<sup>th</sup> International Event Research Conference’, University of Technology, Sydney and Victoria University**  
Carlsen, J, Ali-Knight, J & Robertson, M *‘Access – developing a research agenda for festival and events’ (Refereed)*

**July 8 – 10 2008 LSA Conference Community Capital and Cultures: Leisure and Regeneration as Cultural Practice**  
Frew, E. and Ali-Knight, J. *Fringe Festivals: An Examination of Two Non-Juried Performing Arts Festivals.*

**February 10 - 13 2009 CAUTHE ‘See CHANGE: Tourism and Hospitality in a Dynamic World’, Perth, Australia.**  
Frew, E and Ali-Knight, J. *Performance Innovation: The Gap Between Traditional and Fringe Festivals (Refereed).*

Carlsen, J. Andersson, T. Ali-Knight, J. Taylor, R. and Jaeger, K. *Festival Futures (Refereed).*

**April 4 – 7 2009 Traditions and Transformations: Tourism, Heritage and Cultural Change in the Middle East and North Africa Region, Amman, Jordan.**

Ali-Knight, J. and Stephenson, M. *Sustainable Tourism in Dubai: Dilemmas and Challenges.*

## Appendix 2: Summary of Publications by theme, methods, contribution and focus

Paper Number/ Title	Theme	%	Research Methods	Focus of paper
1. Ali-Knight, J. and Charters, S. (1999) Education in a West Australian wine tourism context <i>International Journal of Wine Marketing</i> , <b>11</b> (1) pp. 7-18.	Wine Tourism	70	Key informant interviews	Identification of current awareness levels amongst Australian winery owners into the value and importance of education to the wine tourist. Demand by wine tourists for educational provision within the winery setting also examined. Qualitative approach
2. Ali-Knight, J. and Charters, S. (2000) Wine Tourism: A Thirst for Knowledge <i>International Journal of Wine Marketing</i> . <b>12</b> (3) pp.70-80.	Wine Tourism	60	Consumer Surveys (Western Australia)	Evaluation of the demand for an educational element in the winery tourism provision at the cellar door from an examination of wine tourists travelling within Western Australia. Quantitative approach.
3. Ali-Knight, J and Charters, S (2001) The Winery as Educator: Do wineries provide what the wine tourist needs? <i>Australian and New Zealand Wine Industry Journal, Marketing Special Edition</i> <b>16</b> (6) November/December pp. 79-86.	Wine Tourism	60	Key informant interviews Consumer and Winery Surveys (Western Australia)	Comparison of the demand for an educational element in the overall wine tourism process, with the attitudes of winery owners and managers to the provision of educational resources at the cellar door. Qualitative/Quantitative approach.
4. Charters, S and Ali-Knight, J (2002) Who is the Wine Tourist? <i>Tourism Management</i> <b>23</b> (3) pp. 311-319.	Wine Tourism	50	Consumer Surveys (Western Australia)	Presentation of a model possessing three dimensions; purpose of visit, general tourist motivation and relationship to other tourist activities to locate specific tourist activities, and thereby have a better understanding of what constitutes 'wine tourism.' Quantitative approach
5. Shanka, T., Ali-Knight, J. and Pope, J. (2002) Intrastate Experiences of International Students and their Perceptions of Western Australia (WA) as a Tourist Destination <i>Tourism &amp; Hospitality Research</i> <b>3</b> (3) pp. 245-256.	Student Tourism	40	Surveys (Western Australia)	Examination of intrastate experiences of International Students. Survey of international students at an Australian university to deliver insights into their perceptions of Western Australia as a tourist destination. Quantitative approach.



6. Ensor, J, Robertson, M, & Ali-Knight, J. (2007) The dynamics of successful events – the experts perspective. <i>Managing Leisure – an international journal</i> , <b>12</b> (3) pp. 223-235.	Festival and Event Tourism	30	In depth Interviews Repertory Grids	Exploratory research to elicit and identify the key factors that festival leaders perceive as the characteristics of creative and innovative festivals. The sample study was composed of three key festival experts. Qualitative approach.
7. Carlsen, J, Ali-Knight, J & Robertson, M. (2007) Access – a research agenda for festival and events. <i>Event Management – an international journal</i> . <b>11</b> (1) pp. 3-11.	Festival and Event Tourism	50	In depth Interviews	Development of a comprehensive research agenda for Edinburgh Festivals based on the published articles, existing strategies and documentation, interviews with key stakeholders and the authors own experiences in the festivals and events area. Qualitative approach.
8. Frew, E. and Ali-Knight. J. (2009) Independent Theatres and the Creation of a Fringe Atmosphere. <i>International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research</i> , <b>3</b> (3) pp. 211-227.	Festival and Event Tourism	40	Content Analysis Desk Research	Consideration of the role of commercial theatres in helping to create the embedded culture and atmosphere of arts festivals. Content analysis of commercial theatres promotional material used to reflect on the associated creation of culture and atmosphere at arts festivals. Qualitative approach
9. Carlsen, J. Andersson, T. Ali-Knight, J. Taylor, R. and Jaeger, K. (2009) Festival Futures. <b>In</b> CAUTHE 2009 ‘See CHANGE: Tourism and Hospitality in a Dynamic World’ 10 – 13 <sup>th</sup> February, Perth, Australia.	Festival Futures and Evaluation	20	Desk Research Surveys	Examination of the changes and challenges confronting festival managers in four geographic locations – Sweden, Norway, the UK and Australia with a view to identifying future prospects and scenarios for festivals- one based on increased innovation the other on festival failure. Key findings illustrate critical issues for festival managers to address if they are to become innovative and avoid failure. Quantitative approach.
10. Ali-Knight, J. (2000) In Search of the Grape: Towards Building a motivational framework for International Wine Tourists to Australia. <b>In</b> Robinson, M. Long, P. Sharpley, R. and Swarbrooke, J. (2000) <i>Reflections on</i>	Wine Tourism	100	Desk Research	Design of a motivational model to be applied and tested in wine regions n Australia that have a significant number of international tourists. Qualitative approach.

<p><i>International Tourism: Motivations, Behaviour and Tourist Types</i>, Business Education Publishers, Sunderland pp. 1-14.</p>				
<p>11. Ali-Knight, J. (2009) Yoga Tourism. <b>In</b> Bushell, R. and Sheldon, P. <i>Wellness Tourism: Mind, Body, Spirit, Place</i> Cognizant Communications pp. 84-95</p>	<p>Niche/Wellness Tourism</p>	<p>100</p>	<p>In depth interviews Case Study Desk Research</p>	<p>Case Study examining yoga tourism, and discussing its essential attributes. The rise in popularity of yoga within primary tourism generating countries is explored, in particular its relationship with lifestyle and societal pressures, and the development of yoga-based holidays and specific tour packages to destinations. Qualitative approach.</p>
<p>12. Ali-Knight, J. and Carlsen, J. (2003) 'Wine Festivals and Regional Transformation.' <b>In</b> International Festival and Event Association, 12<sup>th</sup> Annual European Conference, 6-9 March 2003, Vienna, Austria: <i>Proceedings of Journeys of Expression II: Cultural Festivals/Events and Tourism</i></p>	<p>Wine Tourism/Wine Festivals</p>	<p>70</p>	<p>Desk Research Case Studies</p>	<p>The benefits of wine festivals and wine tourism are case studied in the context of the economic and social transformation of rural areas in old and new world wine regions. Ways in which festivals play a significant role in rural transformation are also examined. Qualitative approach.</p>
<p>13. Ali-Knight, J. and Robertson, M. (2003) 'Festivals and the City: An examination on the influence of Festivals on the Cultural Image and Representation of Edinburgh.' <b>In</b> International Festival and Event Association, 12<sup>th</sup> Annual European Conference, 6-9 March 2003, Vienna, Austria: <i>Proceedings of Journeys of Expression II: Cultural Festivals/Events and Tourism</i></p>	<p>Festival Marketing/Tourism</p>	<p>50</p>	<p>Desk Research</p>	<p>Exploration of how the image of Edinburgh is defined and enhanced by its reputation and representation as a Festival City. The role of Festivals as a vital part of city life creating a brand image for Edinburgh and how this effects the city's cultural economy are also examined. Qualitative approach.</p>

### Appendix 3: Key Authors in the Field of Niche Tourism



\* The list highlights the key journal articles and books by authors in the field but is by no means exhaustive.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Publications for PhD**

#### **Paper 1**

Ali-Knight, J. and Charters, S., (1999). Education in a West Australian wine tourism context. *International Journal of Wine Marketing*, **11**(1), pp. 7-18.

#### **Paper 2**

Ali-Knight, J. and Charters, S., (2000). Wine Tourism: A Thirst for Knowledge. *International Journal of Wine Marketing*, **12**(3), pp.70-80.

#### **Paper 3**

Ali-Knight, J and Charters, S., (2001). The Winery as Educator: Do wineries provide what the wine tourist needs? *Australian and New Zealand Wine Industry Journal, Marketing Special Edition*, **16**(6), November/December pp. 79-86.

#### **Paper 4**

Charters, S and Ali-Knight, J., (2002). Who is the Wine Tourist? *Tourism Management*, **23**(3), pp. 311-319.

#### **Paper 5**

Shanka, T., Ali-Knight, J. and Pope, J., (2002). Intrastate Experiences of International Students and their Perceptions of Western Australia (WA) as a Tourist Destination. *Tourism & Hospitality Research*, **3**(3), pp. 245-256.

#### **Paper 6**

Ensor, J, Robertson, M, & Ali-Knight, J., (2007). The dynamics of successful events – the experts perspective. *Managing Leisure – an international journal*, **12**(3), pp. 223-235.

#### **Paper 7**

Carlsen, J, Ali-Knight, J & Robertson, M., (2007). Access – a research agenda for festival and events. *Event Management – an international journal*, **11**(1), pp. 3-11.

### **Paper 8**

Frew, E. and Ali-Knight, J., (2009). Independent Theatres and the Creation of a Fringe Atmosphere, *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3(3), pp. 211-227.

### **Paper 9**

Carlsen, J. Andersson, T. Ali-Knight, J. Taylor, R. and Jaeger, K., (2009). Festival Futures. **In** J. Carlsen, M. Hughes, K. Holmes and R. Jones (Eds) *See Change: tourism and hospitality in a dynamic world. Proceedings of the 18th CAUTHE Conference*, Curtin University: Australia.

### **Paper 10**

Ali-Knight, J., (2000). In Search of the Grape: Towards Building a motivational framework for International Wine Tourists to Australia. **In** Robinson, M. Long, P. Sharpley, R. and Swarbrooke, J. (2000) *Reflections on International Tourism: Motivations, Behaviour and Tourist Types*, Business Education Publishers, Sunderland pp. 1-14.

### **Paper 11**

Ali-Knight, J., (2009). Yoga Tourism. **In** Bushell, R. and Sheldon, P. *Wellness Tourism: Mind, Body, Spirit, Place* Cognizant Communications pp. 84-95.

### **Paper 12**

Ali-Knight, J. and Carlsen, J., (2003). 'Wine Festivals and Regional Transformation.' **In** International Festival and Event Association, 12<sup>th</sup> Annual European Conference, 6-9 March 2003, Vienna, Austria: *Proceedings of Journeys of Expression II: Cultural Festivals/Events and Tourism*.

### **Paper 13**

Ali-Knight, J. and Robertson, M., (2003). 'Festivals and the City: An examination on the influence of Festivals on the Cultural Image and Representation of Edinburgh.' **In** International Festival and Event Association, 12<sup>th</sup> Annual European Conference, 6-9 March 2003, Vienna, Austria: *Proceedings of Journeys of Expression II: Cultural Festivals/Events and Tourism*.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Contribution Statements for Joint Papers**