



"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iasi, Romania



SUSTAINABILITY OF NATURE: THE POWER OF THE TYPE OF VISITORS

**María Cordente-Rodríguez*, Juan-Antonio Mondéjar-Jiménez,
Juan-José Villanueva-Álvaro**

University of Castilla-La Mancha, Department of Business, 44 Avda. de los Alfares, Cuenca, Spain

Abstract

Nature tourism has a strong potential, and as a result of this tourism activity, the environmental concern is considered an important element which guides business and tourism activity. This element also generates the change in the society's behaviour, in order to conciliate economic and political interest with the environmental ones, with the final aim to guarantee the existence of these resources in the future and the tourism competitiveness of these natural areas. To get this purpose of sustainable development, in the case of natural areas where it is difficult to control the carrying capacity because the access is uncontrolled in them, it is important to attract visitors which are identify with the destination, its resources and what it has to offer. In this way the visitors have a behavior at the destination that will help to achieve its sustainability.

In this sense, the segmentation has an important role in the development, management and success of a natural area in a competitive tourism environment. Because the segmentation allows knowing visitors, their preference, wishes and needs, and it makes easy the adjustment of supply. At the same time, this activity allows to lead the communication actions of a tourism destination or area toward the visitors who are identified with the destination offers. This guarantees the sustainability of destination over time.

The purpose of this paper it is to identify visitors who have a behavior and interest in protected natural areas, and who will be consider as appropriate target to direct the promotion to encourage their visit. This paper includes the analysis of the type of visitors in the area of *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*, in Spain, according to their features, the type of travel and their opinion about the destination. This study provides relevant information to guide the management of tourism activity in this area. Latent Gold 4.5[®] is the statistical software used to make the segmentation. This technique is different from other by its strict statistical formulation which puts the visitors into group by the probability of belonging to each segment.

Key words: environmental concern, latent class segmentation, natural resource, rural and nature tourism and visitor profile

Received: May, 2014; Revised final: October, 2014; Accepted: October, 2014

* Author to whom all correspondence should be addressed: e-mail: maria.cordente@uclm.es; Phone: (+34) 914566300