СЕГМЕНТАЦИЯ ПОСЕТИТЕЛЕЙ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ ПАРКОВ И ИХ ЗАИНТЕРЕСОВАННОСТЬ В УСЛУГАХ СЕЛЬСКОГО ТУРИЗМА И ПОВТОРНОМ ПОСЕЩЕНИИ

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Целью исследования является изучение потребностей туристов, посещающих окрестности национальных парков Linnansaari, Seitseminen и Repovesi на юге Финляндии, в туристских услугах. Наиболее характерные группы туристов были определены в ходе проведенного исследования согласно их потреблению туристских услуг и их намерению повторно посетить данную местность. Данные были собраны в ходе опроса 736 посетителей национальных парков. В настоящем исследовании посетители национальных парков рассматриваются как особая группа сельских туристов. И в отличие от некоторых предыдущих исследований, в которых критерием сегментации были виды туристской деятельности, здесь сегментация выполняется на основе комбинированной информации относительно текущей и будущей заинтересованности посетителей в услугах сельского туризма. В опросе были представлены 37 туристских услуг, включая экскурсии, прокат оборудования, аренда саун, заселение в различные типы средств размещения, возможности посещения ферм, работа на ферме и в лесу. В ходе анализа были установлены пять типовых вариантов выбора туристских услуг, которым соответствуют пять достаточно типичных групп потребителей: 1) “друзья сельской местности и открытого воздуха”, которые больше всего заинтересованы в рекреационных услугах; 2) “сафари гонщиков”, привлеченные возможностью арендовать снегоходы и пользоваться другими схожими услугами; 3) “посетители экскурсий”, для которых наибольший интерес представляют рекреационные услуги; 4) “постояльцы и арендаторы”, для которых наиболее важным является предоставление услуг аренды и размещения; 5) незаинтересованные в наличии услуг посетители. Наиболее сильное желание повторно посетить национальные парки и окрестности отмечается среди “друзей сельской местности и открытого воздуха” и “сафари гонщиков”, которые проявляют интерес как к самодеятельному туризму, так и к использованию достаточно широкого перечня туристских услуг, связанных с прогулками на свежем воздухе, включая оборудование и снегоходы. Их достаточно высокая склонность к повторному посещению местности связана прежде всего с их социальными связями и возможностью использовать туристские услуги и, в частности, услуги размещения. Исследование также позволило идентифицировать группы потребителей, которые заинтересованы в новых туристских услугах, в том числе в рекреации на открытом воздухе. В то же самое время установлено, что реальные затраты на путешествия у посетителей сельской местности, как правило, значительно ниже, чем у тех туристов, которые посещают другие дестинации. В этой связи наиболее значимым вызовом для компаний, работающих в сфере туристских услуг, является точное формирование и предложение более широкого перечня услуг для более узких сегментов посетителей национальных парков, но при этом важно отслеживать экономическую целесообразность более узкой сегментации. Однако необходимость в новых, более специализированных услугах неоспорима. Например, перспективным является создание в исследованных регионах туристских баз и похожих типов размещения как альтернативы традиционному размещению гостиничного типа. Незаинтересованные в наличии услуг посетители оказались наиболее представительной группой потребителей, поэтому к ним требуется особое внимание. В исследовании частично подтверждается гипотеза о том, что повышение качества туристских услуг может привести к тому, что часть ныне незаинтересованных посетителей все-таки станет ими пользоваться. Однако необходимы дальнейшие исследования относительно того, являются ли национальные парки просто самодостаточной аттракцией без значимой необходимости в наличии туристских услуг для незаинтересованных посетителей, или же ныне незаинтересованные посетители имеют потребности в новых и более специализированных услугах, которые на данный момент не предлагаются. Резуль-
The study aims to understand national park visitors’ interests to use tourism services provided in the vicinity of Linnansaari, Seitseminen and Repovesi national parks in Southern Finland. Separate visitor groups were identified based on their use of tourism services and their intention to revisit the area. Data were generated from a questionnaire survey of 736 visitors to the national parks. The analyses revealed five dimensions of interest in tourism services from which five visitor groups were identified: Countryside and outdoor friends, who were interested in recreation services; safari riders, interested in renting snowmobiles and similar services; guided visitors, who were interested in guided tours; room and rental seekers, whose main interest was accommodation and rental services, and uninterested, who had no interest in services. The strongest intentions to revisit the parks and the regions were recorded among “countryside and outdoor friends” and “safari riders”. The results of this study may help tourism enterprises, municipality decision makers and park managers in rural communities surrounding national parks to understand and recognize visitors’ overall needs of tourism services.

**Keywords:** nature-based tourism, visitor, visitor segmentation, factor analysis, clustering

**Introduction**

In many rural communities, where agriculture and forestry have declined markedly as the principal livelihoods, nature tourism may offer alternative economic opportunities (e.g. Cordell, Bergstrom, & Watson, 1992; Eagles, 2004; Eagles & McCool, 2002; Goodwin & Dilya, 2001; Kauppila, 1999; Saarinen, 2003; Simpson, Pichler, Martin, & Brouwer, 2009). A national park may provide a community with a valuable asset for the development of nature tourism. However, the magnitude of the impact of tourism on the local economy depends on the number of visitors to the national park, their interest in local tourism services and their expenditure on local and regional services and products. In Finland, the estimated economic value of tourism for local economies totals at least 70 million Euros for all 35 national parks combined (Metsä – hallitus, 2009a), which represents an important source of income together with agriculture and forestry in many municipalities. This study focuses on the interest of park visitors to use tourism services in the rural communities around three national parks in Southern Finland where tourism is not a major industry, as it is in the northern part of the country.

A national park as a destination is a package of attractions, such as nature, culture, and tourism services. It is composed of a number of attributes that together determine the attractiveness of the travel destination to a particular tourist (Hong-Bumm, 1998).
National parks are considered as a potential attraction for tourism, which may sustain livelihoods and reinvigorate small economies in many rural and peripheral regions (Haukeland, Grue, & Veisten, 2010; Lundmark, Fredman, & Sandell, 2010; Machlis & Field, 2000; Wall-Reinius & Fredman, 2007). An important question is how tourism service provision in the rural communities around national parks can support an increase in the numbers of visitors to the parks and the region in a sustainable way, in harmony with the national park's image as a nature tourism destination.

It has been recognized that modern tourists are increasingly interested in packages of experiences and less in single products (Opaschowski, 2001). A national park visit as a single experience may not be sufficiently rewarding (Neuvonen, Pouta, Puustinen, & Sievänen, 2010). Consequently, tourism entrepreneurs may need to look for business ideas that are very different from the original idea of the national park, which is to provide opportunities for experiencing pristine nature (More, Stevens, Kuentzel, & Dustin, 2008). The challenge is to balance the quantity and quality of tourism services that are compatible with the multifarious interests of tourists visiting a national park and to do so in a sustainable way. In Finland, national park management policy relies on the principles of sustainable nature tourism that are applied to local conditions in the practical guidelines for each park. In all parks, motorized recreation is forbidden. There are varying rules to prevent conflicts between recreational use and the nature protection objectives, such as confining horseback riding and rock climbing to less sensitive sites. In the park management policy, contracts and co-operation with local firms emphasize acceptable and sustainable practices (Metsähallitus, 2011a).

Studies have shown that previous visitors form an important part of the future visitor flow (Sparks, 2007; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998). Furthermore, loyalty to a tourism destination has been found to be associated with higher visit motivation, particularly travel push motivations such as relaxation, family togetherness, safety and fun and satisfaction (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Other factors explaining revisit intention include place attachment, product characteristics, perceived quality of services, social bonds, subjective norms, and attitudes (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Huang & Hsu, 2009; Lam & Hsu, 2006; Neuvonen, Pouta, & Sievänen, 2010; Vassiliadis, 2008). These factors seemed to directly and indirectly affect the decision-making process when a visitor chooses to revisit a national park. Less attention has been paid to how tourists and visitors may differ in their demand for tourism services at the destination and whether this is related to their intention to revisit. Understanding the comprehensive visit experience from a tourist’s point of view, including both the park attractions and the services available in the surrounding region, may help tourism enterprises and municipal decision makers in rural communities to ensure that their services and products fulfill the needs of park visitors.

In order to develop tourism services that are in balance with the needs of national park visitors, it is important to be aware of the whole range of interests and motivations among this segment of rural tourists. In the literature, tourists and visitors have been segmented based on travel motivations or benefits (Frochot, 2005; Galloway, 2002; Molera & Albaladejo, 2007; Park & Yoon, 2009), satisfaction and consumption-related emotions (Bignon & Andreu, 2004), activity (Mehmetoglu, 2007), and visitation (Beh & Bruyere, 2007). However, a few studies have focused on segmenting tourists based on their interest in using facilities or purchasing goods or services (Burge & Resnick, 2000; Haukeland, Grue, & Veisten, 2010; Mok & Iverson, 2000). The only segmentation that, to the best of our knowledge, has been applied to national park visitors is by Haukeland et al. (2010). Their focus was in international national park visitors and interest in services and facilities both inside and outside the park. This study will provide new information about domestic national park visitors’ experiences of purchasing tourism services and interest to use services in future in the communities outside the national parks.

The aim of the present study is to produce knowledge concerning the service demands of national park visitors. The study determines whether separate visitor groups can be identified based on their actual use of and interest in using various tourism services. Whether these possible visitor segments differ in their intention to revisit the park or the surrounding rural region is also analyzed. The profiles of visitor segments are made with variables concerning socio-demographic background, visitation history, satisfaction with services and attitudes towards the countryside in general. Finally, the study evaluates the potential of these visitor segments to bring income to the park regions.

**Literature Review**

_Tourism Services and the Motivation of Tourists to visit a National Park and the Surrounding Countryside_

Tourism is a system that involves both demand and supply components. Actions on both sides influ-
ence the decision of a potential tourist on where to travel (Gunn, 2002). A national park in a rural community is often the main attraction for visitors to that community. Gunn (2002) emphasized that all actors related to tourism, including national parks as an example of government agencies, should understand travel market preferences and develop the supply of tourism services. This supply concerns both natural and man-made resources related to tourism. National park managers themselves need to have a full understanding of travel market interests and needs (Gunn, 2002). In addition, tourism service providers should have “a full understanding” of the needs and interests among national park visitors to be able to provide services and products that appeal to this segment of tourists.

The basis for service provision is an understanding of the motivations of tourists who visit a national park. The general motives for tourism described, for example, by Crompton (1979) and others (Fodness, 1994; Frochot, 2005; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2009) include relaxation, socialization, cultural experiences, learning, family togetherness, novelty, and excitement, self-esteem and self-actualization. These have also been found to be rather consistent motivations among rural tourists (Park & Yoon, 2009) and park visitors (Galloway, 2002). In general, though, it is probable that visitors have several reasons for visiting national parks (e.g. Manning, 2011). Tourism motivations, particularly for visiting the countryside, include peaceful atmosphere and nostalgia for former ways of life (Kastenholz, Davis, & Paul, 1999), as well as culture, such as experiencing agriculture and the rural lifestyle (Park & Yoon, 2009). Furthermore, reasons for visiting national parks include learning about nature, seeking inspiration, enhancing one’s health, obtaining a sense of belonging and seeking tranquility (Pan & Ryan, 2007). Social, emotional and conditional values are also found among national parks visitors, for example, place attachment and social bonds (Neuvonen, Pouta, & Sievänen, 2010).

The push and pull model is often used to conceptualize tourist motivation (Crompton, 1979). This views the travel decision as a result of two forces: The push factor explains a person’s need to leave home every now and then; and the pull factor explains the attraction of the place “away from home”. The focus of the present study is the pull factors related to a combination of the physical (natural) environment and conditions and the supply of services. The supply of recreational services, such as visitor centers, marked hiking routes, nature trails and campfire sites, is a part of the image of Finnish national parks (Metsähallitus, 2011b). Bansal and Eiselt (2004) suggest that the image of a region is one of the three components that play the main role in travel planning and the intention to visit a destination, together with motivation and travel companions. According to Tapachai and Waryszak (2000), the image of a destination is a function of five characteristics: Functional, social, emotional, epistemic and conditional. The functional value, which is the focus in this study, refers to the perceived utility, e.g. the ability to perform functional, utilitarian or physical acts (shopping, food choices, safety, and the nature of the landscape).

Travel satisfaction has generally been used as an assessment tool for the evaluation of travel experiences (Bramwell, 1998; Ross, & Iso-Ahola, 1991). Travel satisfaction is a positive perception or feeling, or an expressed degree of pleasure that tourists gain from a visit (Beard & Ragheb, 1980). Satisfaction with the services and their quality is a function of the difference between expectations and perceived reality (e.g. Baker & Crompton, 2000; Bigné, Sánchez, & Sánchez, 2001; Cai, Wu, & Bai, 2004; Lee, Graefe, & Burns, 2007; Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2003; Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Previous research has indicated that both a high perceived service quality and high satisfaction make a return to nature tourism destinations more likely (Lee, 2006, 2009; Lee, Graefe, & Burns, 2007). Positive experiences of services, products and other resources provided by tourism destinations (positive destination image) could produce return visits, as well as other positive behaviors such as recommendations to friends and/or relatives (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Bramwell, 1998; Oppermann, 2000; Pouta & Sievänen, 2002).

**Segmentation**

Market segmentation refers to the subdivision of a market into homogeneous subsets of customers, where any subset may conceivably be selected as a market target (Kotler, 1988). There are many different types of typologies and segmentations of tourists and visitors (Chen, Hwang, & Lee, 2006; Frochot, 2005; Haukeland et al., 2010; Kastenholz et al., 1999; Kerstetter, Hou, & Lin, 2004; Li, Cheng, Kim, & Petrick, 2008; Molera & Albcalejo, 2007; Park & Yoon, 2009). Most segmentations are based on push factors employing visitors’ individual and psychological variables such as needs, values, motives, involvement and personality, combined with a description of socio-demographic characteristics, behavior patterns and specializations (e.g. Haukeland et al., 2010).
Few studies have focused on the segmentation of tourists who visit nature-related or rural destinations. Galloway (2002) demonstrated that visitors to national parks differ as a group in their demands for and perceptions of services and their frequency of visits. Visitors belonging to a higher sensation-seeking group (i.e. people interested in physically demanding activities, risk taking, novel experiences and complex sensations) often visited national parks; they also appreciated services and facilities more than groups with more modest sensations. Kerstetter, Hou, and Lin (2004) examined tourists’ motives and intended behavior (management, consumer behavior, and participating behavior), and identified three segments with differing intended behaviors. A benefit-based or psychometric approach was used by Frochot (2005) who identified rural tourist segments according to the benefits gained or motivations expressed when visiting the countryside.

According to Frochot’s study, only one minor segment expressed genuine interest in rural culture. Chen, Hwang, & Lee (2006) classified tourists based on involvement, specialization, lifestyle and demographic variables and found differences in their satisfaction with interpretation services (the interpreter, signs etc.).

Segmentation according to visit motivation was employed in a study of rural tourists by Park and Yoon (2009). They identified four visitor segments, of which one was named “family togetherness”, which was particularly interested in relaxing in nature and visiting recreational forests or historic sites. The other three groups were also interested in agricultural and rural life experiences, but not particularly in nature-related activities.

In activity-based segmentation, tourists are segmented according to their trip activities and the places they visit. Mehmetoglu (2007) categorized tourists visiting nature-based attractions into three groups: Orientation towards culture and pleasure activities, orientation towards nature activities, and having no interest in culture, pleasure or nature-based activities. In the present study, the approach is a “behaviorist segmentation” (Burge & Resnick, 2000), in which groups of tourists are created based on their interest in purchasing goods and services (buying habits) and related preferences, and their satisfaction in previous experiences of using such services.

The literature has paid little attention to the association between the interest in using different types of tourism services and the intention to revisit a park or the surrounding region. The issue has been considered from viewpoints such as interest in different types of activity (Kemperman, Chang-Hyeon, & Timmermans, 2004; Lau & McKercher, 2004; Li, Cheng, Kim, & Petrick, 2008) or destination perceptions or products (McKercher & Wong, 2004; Vassiliadis, 2008). Thus, the present study provides further information on this association, i.e. how national park visitor segments based on interest in using tourism services differ in terms of their intention to revisit the park or the surrounding region.

As a conclusion, the framework for this study benefitted from the following elements found in the previous literature: First, diversity motives that prompt tourists to visit national park and the surrounding countryside were recognized. Secondly, previous studies has confirmed that the feeling of satisfaction after a visit is essential in the visitors’ willingness to return to the park, and thus an important factor in studies of customer-oriented provision of tourism services. Third, segmentation is a useful approach to analyze characteristics and interests of visitors. The above-mentioned “activity-based segmentation” (Mehmetoglu, 2007) and “behaviorist segmentation” (Burge & Resnick, 2000) helped to build the methodology for the study.

Data and Methods
Case: Three National Parks in Southern Finland

In Finland, half of the national parks (37 in total in 2011) are located in the southern part of the country, where the majority of the Finnish population lives. These parks are relatively small and are situated in the most rural landscapes of their regions. Most are fairly young, established during the past two decades. There was often strong local objection to the national parks at the time of their establishment (Pollari, 1998; Salo, 1996). However, these national parks are increasingly being seen as a source of business opportunities for tourism rather than as obstacles for primary production based on agriculture and forestry (Selby & Petäjistö, 2008).

According to Metsähallitus (2010), which is the government agency managing national parks in Finland, there were about 1.96 million visits to the Finnish national parks in 2010. National parks are an important nature tourism destination: Around one in five Finns visits national parks or other state-owned recreation areas at least once a year (Pouta & Sievanen, 2001). A high educational level and employment status, as well as participation in cross-country skiing, downhill skiing and camping, increases the probability of a person visiting state-owned areas (Pouta, Sievänen, & Neuvonen, 2004). For 60% of all national park visitors, the park is the single destination of
the trip in the region, while for the remaining 40% of
visitors, the park is one destination among others (i.e.
part of a tour) (Metsähallitus, 2009b). Some parks
attract visitors from the whole country and abroad,
such as those located in Lapland. However, for oth-
ers, such as most national parks in southern Finland,
the visitors are mainly Finnish and come from the
surrounding and neighboring regions (Metsähallitus,
2009b).

Three national parks in Southern Finland, Lin-
nansaari, Seitseminen and Repovesi, were selected as
case parks for this study, based on a pilot study cover-
ing all national parks in Finland (Selby et al., 2007).
The selection criteria were their differences in natural
characteristics, time since establishment and location
in rural region. Linnansaari National Park is located
in the middle of a large lake area in Eastern Finland.
The natural landscape in Seitseminen National Park
is forest dominated, whereas the third study area, Re-
povesi National park, is surrounded by several small
lakes and bold cliffs. Linnansaari was established in
Linnansaari and Seitseminen parks provide a moder-
ate standard of park services, e.g. visitor centers, trails
and camping sites with camp-fire sites, while Repove-
si has no visitor center and thus has a lower standard
of services (Selby et al., 2007). In 2008, there were
44,500 visits to Seitseminen National Park, 29,000
to Linnansaari National Park and 75,500 to Repovesi
National Park (Metsähallitus, 2009b).

Visitors to Seitseminen National Park mainly
come from neighboring regions, and the park is
the only destination for 62% of visitors (Pulkkinen
& Valta, 2008). Linnansaari National Park attracts
more national visitors, and it was the only destina-
tion for 45% of visitors (Tunturi, 2008). Most visits
to Repovesi National Park are by people from the
neighboring regions (26%) and from the Helsinki
metropolitan (capital) area (19%) (Hemmilä, 2008).
The majority of the visitors (79%) to Repovesi re-
ported that the national park was the only or main
destination for the trip (Hemmilä, 2008). The pro-
portion of all visitors staying overnight varied
between 32 and 76% in the case parks (Hemmilä,
2008; Pulkkinen & Valta, 2008; Tunturi, 2008). The
most important motives for visiting Seitseminen,
Linnansaari and Repovesi national parks were re-
lated to experiencing and becoming familiar with
the natural environment and the park, personal re-
laxation and mental well-being, getting away from
noise and pollution, and also being with family or
friends (Hemmilä, 2008; Pulkkinen & Valta, 2008;
Tunturi, 2008).

Data Collection

The empirical data were collected from Seit-
seminen and Linnansaari National Parks in 2006
and from Repovesi in 2007. The sampling season
was from mid-May until the beginning of October.
Altogether, 736 respondents returned the question-
naire, and the response rate was 72% in Seitseminen,
63% in Linnansaari and 68% in Repovesi National
Park. The survey was conducted on-site in the parks
by Metsähallitus. The visitor surveys employed the
method developed by Erkkonen and Sievännen (2002),
which aims to randomize the respondents. The data
was collected from the park visitors at several entrance
points and some other locations inside the park seven
days a week and at different times of day. The sessions
data collection on selected sites varied randomly
over the entire season. All Finnish visitors within the
data collection time slot entering the site were asked
to participate and asked to return the questionnaire
using a postage paid envelope. A map was provided
to inform respondents about the boundary of the park
area and the boundary of the surrounding countryside
that was chosen to represent the local community in
the study. The non-respondence of onsite surveys is
difficult to assess, because the total number of visitors
is unknown. In Seitseminen National Park, about
36% of visitors, who were invited to participate, re-
fused to fill the questionnaire (Tunturi, 2008). Data of
all three national parks were merged into one dataset
for the analysis, as the pretesting phase of the analysis
showed that similar segmentation profiles were found
in all three parks.

Variables

The study necessitated measurement of actual
use as well as potential interest in using different tour-
ism services. Thirty-seven services were measured,
including guided excursions, equipment rental, the
rental of a sauna, the renting of different types of ac-
commodation, and possibilities to visit a farm and
to participate in farm activities. All the services and
activity opportunities were provided in each of the
regions in question. The use of services was measured
with a dichotomous variable and coded as 3 (yes) or 0
(no) to give it more weight in the subsequent analysis.
The future intention to use the services was measured
with a three-scale variable and coded as 2 (yes), 1
(possibly) or 0 (no). From these components of ac-
tual use and future intention to use, a sum variable
was constructed to indicate interest in using tourism
services on a scale from 1—5. The highest score (5)
was given to those who had both used the service and
were interested in using it again in the future, and
the lowest score to those who did not use it in the past and were not interested in using it. The intention to revisit the park and the region was measured with a three-point scale. Information on attitudes towards the countryside, the perceived quality of rural tourism services, and social bonds to the area were also collected. Visitors to a national park may have social ties to the region because of family or relatives, or recreational home ownership. Socio-economic background variables, such as gender, age and household income were measured in order to profile the visitor groups.

**Statistical Analyses**

Factor and cluster analysis were employed to construct visitor segments. Factor analysis (maximum likelihood extraction and varimax rotation) was used to identify those services for which actual use and future interest in using them most strongly correlated with each other. To clarify the interpretation of the factor analysis, only those services were accepted whose loadings were .400. This meant that 23 items from the original 37 were used to identify different dimensions of interest. The removed items were commonly loaded on all dimensions, which disturbed the interpretation. The number of factors was based on an Eigenvalue of over 1.00. Cronbach’s alpha was used to estimate the internal consistency and reliability of a set of measures. Cronbach’s alphas (all .7) indicated acceptable consistency of service measures used for factor interpretation. Each factor represented an interest dimension.

Based on the calculated factor scores, two-step cluster analysis was used to produce visitor groups that differed according to the identified interest dimensions. The number of groups was determined by the clarity of the interpretation. To compare the visitor groups in terms of revisit intention, countryside attitudes, socio-demographic variables and some other exploratory variables, analysis of variance and the Chi-squared test were used.

**Results**

Almost half of the visitors to Linnansaari, Seitseminen and Repovesi National Parks reported that visiting the national park was the main reason for their trip. More than half of the visitors reported that their social contact with local people only occurred as a result of using local tourism services. Many visitors to the national parks had some form of regular contact with the region: 41% had relatives or friends living in the region, others had regular access to a recreational home nearby (20%) or some other interest such as a special outdoor or cultural activity to pursue in the park or in the region (7%). On average, visitors used two of the services provided in the surrounding countryside on their visit and were interested in using eight services in the future indicating the existing interest potential. The services that were of most interest were restaurants and cafes, renting sauna, purchases from farm shops, and renting canoes and self-guided canoe trips.

The initial analysis focused on defining possible groups of services that interested individual visitors. As a result of the factor analysis, five dimensions of tourism services of interest were identified: (a) outdoor activities, (b) countryside, (c) safaris, (d) room and rentals, and (e) guided activities (Table 1). The first dimension, outdoor activities, represented interests related to services and opportunities that support special outdoor activities such as canoeing, bicycling, long-distance ice-skating, snowshoe walking and cross-country horseback riding. This dimension also received strong loadings related to the renting of equipment for these activities. The factor explained 11.9% of the rotated factor model. The second dimension (11.5%) expressed interest in countryside activities, such as farm and forest work, and learning about traditional skills and crafts. The third dimension (9.4%) represented interests in renting a snowmobile or in guided safaris either by snowmobile or off-road vehicles. The fourth dimension (9.2%), room and rentals, gathered interest in purchasing mainly accommodation services together with interest in renting equipment for boating and hiking, which are common outdoor activities related to renting a cottage. The last dimension (8.7%), guided activities, expressed visitors’ interests in participating in guided excursions related to hiking, nature studies and mushroom picking.

The national park visitors were divided into groups by cluster analysis based on these five dimensions of interest in using tourism services. The analysis produced five visitor groups that were named according to their service interest: (i) *Country side and outdoor friends* consisted of visitors who were interested in services such as equipment rentals, recreation facilities and opportunities to visit a farm, to participate in forest work etc.

The group accounted for 23% of the visitors; (ii) *Safari riders* were visitors whose interest was in tours with snowmobile or off-road vehicle. This group accounted for 25% of the visitors; (iii) *Guided visitors* (5%) were visitors interested in guided hiking, na-
ture study etc., excursions, and (iv) room and rental seekers (18%) were the visitors interested in boat and cottage rentals, as well as bed and breakfast services; finally, (v) uninterested were visitors who were not interested in any commercial services. This group was the largest and accounted for 29% of the visitors (Table 2).

The intention to revisit the park, as well as that to revisit the region, differed significantly between groups (Table 3). Groups who were interested in safaris, or in countryside and outdoor activities, had a fairly high interest in revisiting the park and the region. Among these groups, 20–24% of visitors were interested in revisiting the region because of access to a recreational home. According to the number of previous visits to the park, the most regular visitors were those who were interested in the countryside and outdoor life, and those who were uninterested in tourism services. These less service-oriented visitors had visited the park in the last five years as often as the group countryside and outdoor friends. The room and rental seekers mainly emphasized the need for rental services and accommodation, but they were not particularly interested in nature or outdoor life-related services. This group expressed the least interest in revisiting either the park or the region. However, there was wide variation within the group, as 21% also had access to a recreational home in the region. In the safari group, almost one in four had access to a recreational home in the region, while in the uninterested group only 8% reported having an opportunity to use a recreational home in the region. The visitors belonging to the guided visitors group came to the park as members of a larger group (e.g. as part of an organized tour), which may explain their interest in guided services. No significant differences were found between the groups according to the length of stay. In all groups, more than half of the visitors stayed overnight in the park or in the surrounding countryside.

When profiling visitor groups, differences were found in visitors’ attitudes towards the countryside. Visitors who expressed the most positive attitude towards the countryside belonged to the guided visitors and countryside and outdoor friends groups (Table 4). All five visitor groups had rather similar views of the quality of tourism services in the countryside surrounding the national park.

The groups differed significantly in terms of their socio-demographic backgrounds (Table 5). Visitors in the uninterested group were, on average, older than the countryside and outdoor friends and safari riders. More than half of the visitors were female in the countryside and outdoor friends group, whereas the safari riders and guided visitors groups were more male-dominated. The safari riders group had the highest and the countryside and outdoor friends group the lowest household income.

The potential of each group to bring income to the region depends on their use of services and expenditure at the destination. The guided visitors were the most service use-oriented based on the absolute number of services they used and intended to use, but those in the countryside and outdoor friends group were also active serviceusers (Table 6). The safari riders group was almost as low in the actual use of services as the uninterested group, but considerably more interested in future use. These figures are somewhat contradictory with the personal travel expenses of the visitors. The trip expenses were highest among room and rental seekers, but the group had fairly low interest in the future use of services. Although the differences between groups in expenses were considerable, they were not statistically significant because of the wide variation within the groups. The total expenses also included purchases outside the study area, and therefore the result was only indicative.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study segmented national park visitors based on their interests in using tourism services in the surrounding rural communities. The visitor segmentation provides an approach for planning the tourism service provision in rural areas, which is essential to the tourism enterprises to keep their business running and to offer more job opportunities. Segmentation based on the interest of tourists in purchasing goods and services has previously been applied to national park visitors only to a limited extent (Burge & Resnick, 2000; Haukeland, Grue, & Veisten, 2010; Mok & Iverson, 2000). The present study considered national park visitors as a special group of rural tourists with a potential interest in purchasing those goods and services that support their motivation for their visit. The national park visitors were segmented by combining information on both the actual use and future interest in using rural tourism services. Compared to activity-based segmentation (e.g. Mehmetoglu, 2007) this approach enlarges the activity interest dimensions by considering a wide range of tourism services and goods. Here, interest dimensions included recreation opportunities that are available free of charge and paid recreation services, as well as other commercial tourism services, such as equipment rental, accommodations, and food services.

The results demonstrated the park visitors’ multifarious interests in different tourism services, and five
Table 1.
National park service groups based on interest among visitors in using tourism services and recreation opportunities in the park vicinity. Factor analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism services and recreation opportunities</th>
<th>Factor 1: Outdoor activities</th>
<th>Factor 2: Country-side</th>
<th>Factor 3: Safaris</th>
<th>Factor 4: Room &amp; rentals</th>
<th>Factor 5: Guided activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing or kayaking trip</td>
<td>0.598</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.231</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycling trip</td>
<td>0.420</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour skating on natural ice</td>
<td>0.567</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking with snowshoes</td>
<td>0.763</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowshoe rental</td>
<td>0.673</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe or kayak rental</td>
<td>0.602</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.347</td>
<td>- 0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm work</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural landscape</td>
<td>0.210</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in forest management work</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicrafts courses</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm animals</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>0.410</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-road driving safaris</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.785</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmobiling safaris</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.960</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmobile rental</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat rental</td>
<td>0.339</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.408</td>
<td>0.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental of hiking equipment</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.437</td>
<td>0.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire of a cottage, cabin, hut</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>-0.042</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.567</td>
<td>0.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm accommodation</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.819</td>
<td>0.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed and breakfast</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.688</td>
<td>0.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided hiking</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided nature excursion</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided mushroom picking trip</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>-0.017</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping fire food services</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue | 2.730 | 2.646 | 2.171 | 2.123 | 1.991 |
% of variance | 11.9 | 11.5 | 9.4  | 9.2  | 8.7  |
### Table 2.

**Visitor groups based on cluster analysis of service factor scores.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>% of visitors</th>
<th>Factor 1: Outdoor activities</th>
<th>Factor 2: Country-side</th>
<th>Factor 3: Safaris</th>
<th>Factor 4: Room &amp; rentals</th>
<th>Factor 5: Guided activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Countryside and outdoor friends</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.681</td>
<td>0.785</td>
<td>-0.685</td>
<td>-0.073</td>
<td>-0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.085)</td>
<td>(0.092)</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
<td>(0.068)</td>
<td>(0.066)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safari riders</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>1.434</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
<td>-0.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.074)</td>
<td>(0.088)</td>
<td>(0.067)</td>
<td>(0.061)</td>
<td>(0.131)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided visitors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>2.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.177)</td>
<td>(0.214)</td>
<td>(0.261)</td>
<td>(0.131)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room and rental seekers</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-0.300</td>
<td>-0.329</td>
<td>-0.438</td>
<td>1.052</td>
<td>-0.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.063)</td>
<td>(0.056)</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>(0.081)</td>
<td>(0.060)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninterested</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>-0.533</td>
<td>-0.430</td>
<td>-0.404</td>
<td>-0.584</td>
<td>-0.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.017)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.047)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-test</td>
<td></td>
<td>53.71</td>
<td>49.26</td>
<td>380.36</td>
<td>84.91</td>
<td>142.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N= 585</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.

**Park visitation: past and present visits and future intention to revisit to the park and the surrounding rural area, access to a recreational home and overnight stays in the region (recreational home or other), COF|Country-side and outdoor friends, SR|Safari riders, GV|Guided visitors, RRS|Room and rental seekers, U|Uninterested.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>COF</th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>GV</th>
<th>RRS</th>
<th>U</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intention to visit in future</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The park, % of visitors</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(70)</td>
<td>(75)</td>
<td>(61)</td>
<td>(58)</td>
<td>(68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The region surrounding the Park, % of visitors</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(73)</td>
<td>(65)</td>
<td>(58)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
<td>(61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past visitation and bonds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to recreational home in region, % of visitors</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of visits to the park (5 years), mean</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristics of the present visit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of the group, mean</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of stay (hours, day visitors), mean</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5.0)</td>
<td>(6.7)</td>
<td>(4.5)</td>
<td>(6.2)</td>
<td>(5.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of stay (days, overnight visitors), mean</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
<td>(2.0)</td>
<td>(2.2)</td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stayed overnight in the region, % of visitors</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(69)</td>
<td>(64)</td>
<td>(59)</td>
<td>(70)</td>
<td>(61)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Chi-squared test (p-value).
(2) F-test (p-value); different symbols A and B indicate that the groups differ from each other statistically significantly based on Tukey’s test.
Variables COF SR GV RRS U

Attitude towards the countryside (sum index), mean 53\textsuperscript{AB} 52\textsuperscript{AB} 56\textsuperscript{A} 51\textsuperscript{B} 52\textsuperscript{AB} 2.436 (0.046)\textsuperscript{2}

Perceived quality of tourism services, landscape, environment and local hospitality, mean 45 43 48 43 42 1.575 (0.180)\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{2} F-test (p-value); different symbols A and B indicate that the groups differ from each other statistically significantly based on Tukey’s test

Table 4.

Sociodemographics of the visitor groups, COF\textsuperscript{f}Country-side and outdoor friends, SR\textsuperscript{r}Safari riders, GV\textsuperscript{v}Guided visitors, RRS\textsuperscript{s}Room and rental seekers, U\textsuperscript{u}Uninterested.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>COF</th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>GV</th>
<th>RRS</th>
<th>U</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (years), mean</td>
<td>41\textsuperscript{A}</td>
<td>36 \textsuperscript{B}</td>
<td>42\textsuperscript{ABC}</td>
<td>43\textsuperscript{AC}</td>
<td>47 \textsuperscript{C}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income group, mean</td>
<td>5.9 \textsuperscript{A}</td>
<td>6.9 \textsuperscript{B}</td>
<td>6.4\textsuperscript{AB}</td>
<td>6.8\textsuperscript{AB}</td>
<td>6.4\textsuperscript{AB}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female, % of visitors</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{1} Chi-squared test (p-value).

\textsuperscript{2} F-test (p-value); different symbols A, B and C indicate that the groups differ from each other statistically significantly based on Tukey’s test

Table 5.

Potential of visitor groups as service users: used services and travel expenses, COF\textsuperscript{f}Country-side and outdoor friends, SR\textsuperscript{r}Safari riders, GV\textsuperscript{v}Guided visitors, RRS\textsuperscript{s}Room and rental seekers, U\textsuperscript{u}Uninterested.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>COF</th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>GV</th>
<th>RRS</th>
<th>U</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of used tourism services, mean</td>
<td>2.0 \textsuperscript{A}</td>
<td>1.5\textsuperscript{AB}</td>
<td>3.9\textsuperscript{C}</td>
<td>1.8\textsuperscript{AB}</td>
<td>1.3 \textsuperscript{B}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of tourism services intending to use, mean</td>
<td>11.5 \textsuperscript{A}</td>
<td>9.4 \textsuperscript{B}</td>
<td>11.0\textsuperscript{AB}</td>
<td>7.1\textsuperscript{C}</td>
<td>2.8 \textsuperscript{D}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal travel costs (total), mean\textsuperscript{(3)}</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{2} F-test (p-value); different symbols A, B, C and D indicate that the groups differ from each other statistically significantly based on Tukey’s test

\textsuperscript{3} including costs of travel; purchases from service stations, restaurants, cafés; accommodation and program service cost. Only available for Seitseminen and Linnansaari National Parks.

Table 6.
different visitor groups were identified: Countryside and outdoor friends, safari riders, guided visitors, room and rental seekers, and uninterested. The study therefore supports the results of Haukeland, Grue and Veisten (2010), who found that visitors to national parks had varied motivations, and also that the visitors had varied expectations according to the facilities needed, as well as wishes for improvements of the existing facilities. Haukeland, Grue and Veisten (2010) identified dimensions of services and facilities that have counterparts in the dimensions of tourism service interests found here: The “track and signposts” dimension is comparable to “outdoor activities” (which reflect demand for recreation opportunities and related facilities); the “food and accommodation” dimension is comparable to “room and rentals”, and “tours and interpretation” is close to “guided activities”. The group of visitors in the present study that was not interested in any particular services dimension seems to have a counterpart in Haukeland, Grue and Veisten’s (2010) segment that has little interest in developed services and facilities. However, there are many differences in these two studies; first, Haukeland, Grue and Veisten (2010) studied foreign tourists, and the present study data consists mainly of domestic tourists. Second, their study was also more focused on national park tourism per se, while this study was more focused on national park tourism in the context of rural tourism. Also, this study related the national park visitor segments to their intention to revisit the region, which improves the understanding of how service satisfaction and service interests affect the visitation in national parks as well as in surrounding communities.

The results offer an approach to better understand the variety of interests among national park visitors, who are potentially customers for rural tourism enterprises. Several studies have shown that there is a variety of interests among rural tourists, including the outdoors (scenic beauty, nature-related activities) and rurality (culture, nostalgia and rural life) (Frochot, 2005; Kastenholz, Davis, and Paul, 1999; Park & Yoon, 2009). However, the reverse may also occur, e.g. in Scotland, where rural tourists have shown only a minor interest in the rural life and culture (Frochot, 2005). Also in the present case, the local actors did not consider national parks as destinations for nature tourism that could provide economic benefits to the local communities (Selby, Sieva’nen, Peta’jisto”, & Neuvonen, 2010). In this study a segment of tourists was identified who shared an interest in the countryside activities and culture as well as in the outdoors in conservation areas. This in line with the observation that Finnish people have a rather strong positive attitude towards the rural areas in general (Aho & Ilola, 2004), which should help in enhancing tourism in communities surrounding national parks.

The study provides a picture of national park visitors by examining the association between visitor groups segmented according to their multifaceted interests in tourism services, and their intention to revisit the park and surrounding region. Past behavior is a strong predictor of visit intentions in general (Huang & Hsu, 2009; So’nmez & Graefe, 1998; Sparks, 2007), but the overall attachment to a place has also appeared to be an effective predictor of revisit intention (Hailu, Boxall, & McFarlane, 2005; Neuvonen, Pouta, & Sieva’nen, 2010). Two of the visitor groups showed a stronger revisit intention than the other groups. They were countryside and outdoor friends and safari riders, who were interested in both self-service recreation opportunities as well as renting equipment for outdoor activities, particularly for motorized safaris. Members of these groups are potentially frequent visitors to the region based on their social bonds and opportunity to use a recreation home. The results suggest that the potential market segment of recreation home visitors is not fully exploited yet in national park communities. A previous study of Finnish recreation home users also identified a potential group of visitors that are interested in purchasing tourism services (Sieva’nen, Pouta, & Neuvonen, 2007).

The results suggest that there are business opportunities for tourism service enterprises in the vicinity of the park, but there is obviously a need to develop the service provision in order to be appealing to different types of visitors. Naturally, the total number of visitors has influence on how many potential clients are expected to use different types of services. The study results support the view that the provision of services targeted to specific customer segments may act as a positive promoter of visitor flow, particularly when combined with a better service provision inside the national park that is also found to be related to larger numbers of visitors (Neuvonen, Pouta, Puustinen, & Sieva’nen, 2010).

When seeking increased local income from tourism, the results provide a multifaceted picture. Currently, the main income sources of rural tourism are accommodation and restaurant services (Harju-Autti, 2010). The study also identified client groups that are interested in new types of services, e.g. those supporting outdoor recreation. However, the actual travel expenses of visitors with countryside and outdoor life interests are at a lower level than of visitors whose
style of travelling includes visiting many destinations, the national parks among others. A future challenge for tourism service enterprises is to offer a wide range of services to more varied types of national park visitors. The need for variety of services is also reflected in this study: Beside the traditional hotel accommodation, the national parks visitors would be interested in spending overnight in bed and breakfast places. At the moment, this type of accommodation provision is lacking in the study regions (Selby & Peta’jisto”, 2008). A challenge for future research is to help the tourism industry to more precisely identify the different tourist segments and their interests in services.

It is also important for park managers to consider different visitor groups according to their multifaceted interests to visit a park and the surrounding region, and to contribute to the tourist flow visiting rural communities. A national park can have a particular role in the process of local community development (Courtney, Hill, & Roberts, 2006; Fortin & Gagnon, 1999). Segment-oriented visitor information may better reach visitors and may also offer a tool for visitor management purposes. A segment-oriented approach may also help park managers to provide recreation opportunities that support tourism service production, and accordingly, to enhance cooperation with local tourism entrepreneurs. It is also important to recognize those groups of visitors who are interested in activities, such as motorized safaris, that are not permitted inside a park, but that can be provided outside the park. This group consists of regular visitors to the region, and it obviously seeks greater opportunities to use services to support their outdoor activity interests. An important question concerns the expectations of those visitors who are not interested in any of the suggested services. The uninterested were the largest group, to which a special attention should be paid. The results suggest that increasing the quality of services may be the key to increase their use of services. Still it remains the question of future research to reveal whether uninterested are satisfied with having the national park as an attraction without any services, or whether they demand something new beyond the service selection that is provided now.

More research is needed to identify the multifaceted interests of people visiting national parks and park communities, and the role of tourism service provision in that context. Furthermore, more research is needed to understand how different motivations and interests are related to national park visitation.

References


