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## SUSTAINABILITY OF NATURE: THE POWER OF THE TYPE OF VISITORS

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### 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<sup>®</sup> 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

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### 1. Introduction

Nature tourism has a strong potential in Spain, the region of Castilla-La Mancha and the province of Cuenca. The most popular types of tourism in Castilla-La Mancha in 2010 were nature tourism and heritage tourism, with 54.3% each; while in the province of Cuenca, the most popular type of tourism was nature tourism (59.5% of visitors) and in second place was heritage tourism (55.7%) (Table 1). In 2010 nature tourism increased with respect to 2009,

getting the second place of tourism typex, only behind heritage tourism. On the other hand, with regard to Spaniards' activities when they go to Castilla-La Mancha (Table 2), in the years 2006-2010, the activity of walking in the country and enjoying nature was the second most important after visiting family and/or friends, although in 2011 it was in third place, after visiting family and/or friends and shopping. However, in the period 2006 to 2011 there has been an overall reduction in the activity of walking in the country and enjoying nature.

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**Table 1.** Type of tourism in Castilla-La Mancha 2010 (%)  
(Tourism Institute of Castilla-La Mancha, 2012)

<i>TIPE OF TOURISM</i>	<i>CUENCA</i>	<i>CASTILLA-LA MANCHA</i>
Active tourism and ecotourism	26.0	30.4
Health and wellness	23.4	43.5
Nature	59.5	54.3
Wine tourism	11.6	14.9
Conferences and meeting tourism	7.2	16.1
Culinary tourism	38.6	41.9
Heritage	55.7	54.3
Film tourism	0.0	0.9
Route of Don Quijote	8.4	8.4

**Table 2.** Activities of Spanish people on their trips to Castilla-La Mancha (%) (Institute for Tourism Studies, 2012)

<i>ACTIVITIES</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
Shopping	46.1	53.1	55.8	61.4	52.3	58.3
Walking in the country and enjoying nature	68.2	67.5	69.0	71.5	53.5	57.9
Visiting family and/or friends	65.9	72.2	73.3	78.5	74.8	76.7
Gastronomic activities	19.4	27.7	37.3	46.7	44.0	44.8
Cultural visits	28.2	27.0	34.5	35.7	34.3	31.7
Enjoyment and use of the beach	0.0	1.9	0.0	1.5	2.1	1.0
Go drinking and clubbing	30.8	35.8	30.0	35.0	28.1	28.1
Cultural shows	9.2	9.1	11.0	17.2	14.9	13.0
Sports	12.8	13.4	12.4	13.6	16.1	17.3
Religious events	11.1	5.9	10.5	10.7	11.5	14.8

The area of *Serranía Alta*, located in the province of Cuenca, is characterized to have high natural value, wealth of fauna and scenery, great historical and cultural heritage, making it an important tourist attraction.

The tourist activity developed favours economic development of certain areas while helping their social development, through the recovery and revitalisation of their heritage. However, for natural spaces, the problem of destinations' capacity for reception must be taken into account in order to avoid the attraction of mass tourism which damages the heritage and causes its deterioration, so undermining its future continuity.

For this purpose of sustainable development, given the difficulties of controlling the reception capacity because these natural spaces have uncontrolled access, it is important to attract visitors who identify with the destination, its resources and what it can offer them, so that their behaviour in the destination contributes towards achieving sustainability. In this context, environmental concern is becoming an element of great importance guiding the activity of businesses in general and tourist activity in particular, and is also bringing about changes in behaviour in society, allowing reconciliation of economic and political interests with environmental ones.

However, it is necessary to find out a particular destination's visitor profile, identify its most suitable visitor profile and find out whether the population with that profile is large enough for it to be taken as an exclusive target and for new tourism products adapted to the needs of those consumers to be designed.

The purpose of this study is to identify the groups of interest which because of their behaviour and interest in natural spaces are particularly suitable for consideration as a target public and, therefore, towards which marketing actions should be aimed to encourage them to visit the destination. This specific study carries out segmentation of visitors to the different natural spaces in the province of Cuenca using the variable motivation as the segmentation criterion. With regard to the segmentation technique used, this study uses latent class segmentation because of its advantages over other techniques.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses

### 2.1. Changes in consumer behaviour

Changes have been observed in the behaviour of tourism consumers in terms of their needs with regard to the trips they make, changes which have shown up increased interest and concern over environmental aspects and care for the environment (Herrero, 2000; Mediano, 2002); while on the other hand it can also be seen that the trip decision is the result of the combination of multiple motivations (Mediano, 2002).

Unlimited progress and technological development have traditionally kept the environment out of economic analysis (Mondéjar et al., 2011); however, awareness of the direct and indirect impact on the environment of people's behaviour encourages consideration of the environment in different activities. Concern for the environment thus becomes a very important element in management of the tourism business and especially tourism in natural

spaces, the continuity of which depends on present protection of resources.

This environmental awareness is observed in today's consumers who, as well as demanding quality and functionality, are also concerned about environmental matters (Esteban et al., 2009). For this reason, in-depth knowledge of tourism and its consumers and concern for its sustainability necessitate scientific research into the activity of tourism and the environment. The new needs of consumers may suggest the development of new tourist products, as well as the appearance of new possibilities for tourism in rural areas.

## 2.2. Segmentation

Segmentation is an important element for tourism managers' marketing strategy (Nicolau, 2002), as it allows the closest segments to the destination in terms of profitability, access to the segment, and the product potential for that segment to be identified (Kang et al., 2003; Van Raaij, 1986).

So the confidence placed in this technique, which allows successful development of a tourist destination, is based on three reasons:

1. its ability to cope with the conditions of heavy competition on the market;
2. its ability to adapt to the heterogeneous nature of demand, allowing the most suitable segment for the destination to be concentrated on;
3. the selection and attraction of people with the closest behaviour to what the destination requires, and who can be satisfied by what the destination has to offer.

The strategy of segmentation provides a large amount of information which can help in the identification of the most attractive segments for a destination, which can be satisfied by what the destination offers, and whose behaviour is the closest towards the destination requires, with the prime purpose of guaranteeing the destination's sustainability over time.

In the literature, to carry out segmentation, a large number of variables and segmentation criteria have been used, including both extrinsic factors (age, marital status, employment situation, income, etc.) and intrinsic ones (psychological and material needs, aspirations, desires etc.) (Freire, 2011). An extensive review of literature examining the segmentation variables used in tourist markets (Cordente, 2011) indicates that among the great variety of variables used, motivations and benefits sought stand out, followed by the activities carried out during the visit (Table 3).

The suitability of one variable or another for carrying out segmentation will depend on:

- the specific segmentation case;
- the aims of the segmentation;
- who is carrying out the segmentation (Watkins, 1976).

Also, the broad use made of the motivation variable for segmentation is considered in this study

because it is seen as the most effective variable (Crompton, 1979; Loker-Murphy, 1996; May et al., 2001) able to understand and describe visitors in terms of:

- being the main component of tourist behavior (Castaño et al., 2003; Ferrari et al., 2010);
- providing the ability to predict behavior (Haley, 1971);
- being the key variable in the decision process (Crompton, 1979; Lundberg, 1971).

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Description of the sample and data collection

To achieve the proposed objectives, information about tourist and visitors to natural spaces in the province of Cuenca was used; for this purpose, during the months of July to September, 2010, a survey was made of visitors to different places of interest in *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*. This information used comes from a research project carried out for the *Entidad para el Desarrollo Sostenible de la Serranía Conquense* (Organisation for Sustainable Development of the Mountains of Cuenca), within the *Plan de Dinamización de Productos Turísticos "Serranía Alta de Cuenca"* (Tourism Product Promotion Plan).

The questionnaire designed collected information about different aspects such as the characteristics of the journey, sales channels, information resources, spending level or degree of satisfaction with the visit, divided into four blocks:

- the first block contained questions related with the visit to the *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*;
- the second section covered rating of the different aspects of the destinations;
- the third block contained the questions for classification of the socio-demographic profile of the visitors;
- the last section contained questions related with spending breakdown.

The final number of questionnaires considered valid after unfinished ones were discarded was 428, the error committed being  $\pm 4.82\%$ , as shown in the study's results (Table 4).

### 3.2. Latent class segmentation

To carry out segmentation in this study, a posteriori segmentation technique, latent class segmentation, was used which allows the optimum number of segments to which individuals are assigned according to the highest probability of belonging are identified.

Compared with other traditional segmentation techniques, latent class segmentation has a series of advantages (Picón et al., 2006; Sánchez, 2001):

- a rigorous statistical procedure and the use of statistical indicators to check the model's fit (BIC,  $R^2$ , classification error, number of parameters etc.).

**Table 3.** Use of motivation, benefits and activities as segmentation variables (Adapted from Barrero, 2002; Kang et al. 2003; Karvonen, 2011; Manthiou et al. 2011; Saegert et al. 2008)

<i>VARIABLE</i>	<i>AUTHOR</i>
<b>Motivations</b>	Taylor (1986); Shoemaker (1989); Spotts and Mahoney (1993); Cha et al., (1995); Esteban (1996); Lang and O'Leary (1997); Formical and Uysal (1998); González (1998); Arimond and Elfessi (2001); Lee and Lee (2001); Leisen (2001); May et al. (2001); Bieger and Laesser (2002); Carmichael (2002); Galloway (2002); Johns and Gyimothy (2002); MacKay et al. (2002); Orth and Turekova (2002); Dolnicar and Leisch (2003); Pennington-Gray (2003); Sirakaya et al. (2003); Kerstetter et al. (2004); Lee et al. (2004); Andreu et al. (2005); Frochot (2005); Prebensen (2005); San Martín (2005); Chang (2006); Lee et al. (2006); Beh and Bruyere (2007); Hsu et al. (2007); Severt et al. (2007); Saegert et al. (2008); Boksberger and Laesser (2009); Boo and Jones (2009); Li et al. 2009); Park and Yoon (2009); Devesa et al. (2010); Marques et al. (2010); Personen and Komppula (2010); Karvonen (2011)
<b>Benefits</b>	Burkart and Medlik (1974); de la Beaumelle (1977); Calantone et al. (1980); Goodrich (1980); Kaynak and Yavas (1981); Calantone and Johar (1984); Mazanec (1984); Woodside and Jacobs (1985); Taylor (1986); Snepenger (1987); Gitelson and Kerstetter (1990); Moisey and McCool (1990); Muller (1991); Javalgi et al. (1992); Loker and Perdue (1992); Mo et al. (1994); Shoemaker (1994); Palacio and McCool (1997); Frochot and Morrison (2000); Moscardo et al. (2000); Yannopoulos and Rotenberg (2000); Arimond and Elfessi (2001); Chen (2001); Wong and Chi-Yung (2001); Hudson and Ritchie (2002); Jang et al. (2002); Hsu and Lee (2002); Weaver and Lawton (2002); Brown (2003); Moskowitz and Krieger (2003); Olsen (2003); Yuksel (2003); Carmichael and Smith (2004); Dolnicar (2004); Chung et al. (2004); Frochot (2005); Sarigöllu and Huang (2005); Molera and Albaladejo (2007); Vaske et al. (2007); Marques et al. (2010)
<b>• Cultural benefits</b>	McKercher and Du Cros (2003)
<b>Activities</b>	Bryant and Morrison (1980); Goodall (1991); Prentice (1992); Morrison et al. (1994); Choi and Ling (2000); Sung et al. (2000); Moscardo et al. (2001); Ammann et al. (2002); McKercher et al. (2002); Boksberger and Bartenwerffer (2003); Dolnicar and Leisch (2003); Jang et al. (2004); Spencer and Holecek (2007)

**Table 4.** Technical record or the study

<i>Universe</i>	Visitors of <i>Serranía Alta de Cuenca</i> (Cuenca, Spain)
<i>Sample unit</i>	People visiting different natural areas in the province of Cuenca
<i>Geographic scope</i>	Places of interest in the <i>Serranía Alta de Cuenca</i>
<i>Methodology</i>	Face-to-face interview with a structured questionnaire
<i>Sample size</i>	428 valid interviews
<i>Sampling error</i>	± 4.82%
<i>Significance level</i>	95% (p=q=0.5)
<i>Field work date</i>	July, August and September, 2010

- use of latent or non-observable variables as segmentation criteria, as is the case with motivation;
- use of exogenous variables to describe segments in greater detail.

In this study the variable that has been used to carry out segmentation of visitors is the motivation they had when they visited *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*. This variable, motivation, is a latent construct measured from seven motivations: (i) enjoy nature, (ii) discover the local cuisine, (iii) visit typical villages and markets, (iv) playing sport and/or activities of active tourism, (v) visit historic/cultural heritage, (vi) relax and do nothing, (vii) enjoy a day with family/friends.

A series of co-variables has been included in the segmentation in order to profile the identified segments and describe them in more detail; the variables used as covariates are: (i) experience in the destination (*Serranía Alta de Cuenca* and the province of Cuenca), (ii) means of transport, (iii) sources of information, (iv) type of tourism, (v) length of stay, (vi) type of accommodation, (vii) channel of hiring the tourist services, (viii) global assessment of destination (*Serranía Alta de Cuenca*),

- (ix) socio-demographic variables (age, gender and educational level), (x) daily expenditure in accommodation, restaurant and transport, (xi) possibility to repeat the visit.

On the other hand, the statistical software used to make the segmentation were the programme Lateng Gold®4.5.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Segmentation process

The results of the segmentation performed give us information for ten estimated models (Table 5), for which a series of indicators are provided which must be interpreted for selection of the most suitable model and so determine the optimum number of segments to divide the sample of visitors into. The main criterion to identify the most appropriated model is the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC); this criterion determines that the model best fitting the data is the one where the value of the parameter BIC is lowest (Vermunt and Magidson, 2002). So, applying this criterion, the

model with the best fit is the one which identifies two segments in the simple (Table 5). To evaluate the fit, attention is also paid to a series of indicators which allow the quality of the fit to be confirmed (Table 5):

- the p-value is a model hypothesis test fit to the data; obtaining a coefficient less than 0.05, as in this case, shows that the model fits the data well;
- the error made in the estimation (Clas. Err.) is low, 7.66%;
- the number of parameters (Npar) is not very high, 31;
- the indicators  $E_s$  and  $R^2$  take values close to 1, also their value for the second estimation is the lowest of the ten estimated models; so according to this parameter quality of classification into segments is not high.

The next step in validation of the segmentation carried out is analysis of the value taken by the p-value associated with the Wald statistic (Table 6); if it has values below 0.05 it confirms that the statistics chosen discriminate significantly between the latent classes identified (Vermunt and Magidson, 2005). This condition is met for six of the seven motivations making up the latent construct motivation, the only motivation not

discriminating well being enjoying a day with family and/or friends. With regard to the variables used to characterise statements (Table 7), the chi-squared statistic is significant for 2 of the 16 variables used: length of stay and type of accommodation chosen; i.e., these 2 variables discriminate well between the individuals in the sample, so that the values taken for each segment are different, whereas in the other variables there are no significant differences between the segments identified.

#### 4.2. Identified segments

As a result of the segmentation carried out, two segments have been identified according to the motivation they have for the visit to different natural spaces in *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*. The two segments identified are the nature and "multiple-motive" segments. The characteristics of the two latent classes identified will now be described.

##### **Segment 1: Nature**

This is the larger segment, containing 56.75% of the people who visit *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*. These are visitors with a single motive to visit the destination, which is to enjoy nature and its tourist resources provided.

**Table 5.** Estimation of latent class model

Number of clusters	LL	BIC (LL)	Npar	$L^2$	p-value	Class.Err	$E_s$	$R^2$
1 cluster	-1503.1432	3048.7002	7	3006.2864	9.5e-385	0.0000	1.0000	1.0000
2 cluster	-1376.5936	2941.0201	31	2753.1872	9.7e-348	0.0766	0.7233	0.7718
3 cluster	-1314.1729	2961.5976	55	2628.3458	1.2e-334	0.0939	0.7633	0.7804
4 cluster	-1277.2425	3033.1558	79	2554.4851	4.1e-331	0.1065	0.7766	0.7715
5 cluster	-1247.5404	3119.1706	103	2495.0809	1.9e-330	0.1326	0.7661	0.7425
6 cluster	-1197.8850	3165.2786	127	2395.7700	2.4e-322	0.0516	0.9112	0.9001
7 cluster	-1186.9859	3288.8993	151	2373.9717	3.3e-329	0.1226	0.8196	0.7860
8 cluster	-1160.0789	3380.5043	175	2320.1577	3.2e-330	0.1014	0.8554	0.8221
9 cluster	-1116.4646	3438.6947	199	2232.9292	5.3e-325	0.0490	0.9304	0.9115
10 cluster	-1098.4301	3548.0446	223	2196.8601	4.6e-330	0.0547	0.9242	0.9035

LL=log-likelihood; BIC=Bayesian Information Criterion; Npar=number of parameters;  $L^2$ =likelihood ratio; p-value=model significance; Class.Err.=error of classification;  $E_s$ =entropy R-squared;  $R^2$ =R Standard R-squared

**Table 6.** Visitor profiles obtained by motivation indicators

		Nature Segment 1	Multiple-motive Segment 2	Wald	p-value
Size (%)		56.75	43.25		
<b>Indicators</b>					
Nature	Not important	0.1439	0.0002	4.0567	0.044*
	Important	<b>0.8561</b>	<b>0.9998</b>		
Gastronomy	Not important	<b>0.9646</b>	0.2091	29.0117	7.2e-8*
	Important	0.0354	<b>0.7909</b>		
Villages	Not important	<b>0.8186</b>	0.2061	66.3369	3.8e-16*
	Important	0.1814	<b>0.7939</b>		
Sport	Not important	<b>0.9346</b>	<b>0.8697</b>	3.9381	0.047*
	Important	0.0654	0.1303		
Heritage	Not important	<b>0.7850</b>	0.3530	45.3937	1.6e-11*
	Important	0.2150	<b>0.6470</b>		
Relax	Not important	<b>0.9453</b>	<b>0.8773</b>	4.4567	0.035*
	Important	0.0547	0.1227		
Family/friends	Not important	<b>0.6763</b>	<b>0.7225</b>	0.7754	0.38
	Important	0.3237	0.2775		

Table 7. Visitor profiles characterised using target variables

		<i>Nature Segment 1</i>	<i>Multiple-motive Segment 2</i>	$\lambda^2$	<i>Sig.</i>
<b>Size (%)</b>		56.75	43.25		
<b>Co-variables</b>					
<b>Gender</b>	Male	0.4931	<b>0.5069</b>	0.0036	0.95
	Female	<b>0.5879</b>	0.4121		
<b>Age</b>	< 25	<b>0.6720</b>	0.3280	3.1220	0.79
	25-34	0.4382	<b>0.5618</b>		
	35-44	0.4874	<b>0.5126</b>		
	45-54	0.4918	<b>0.5082</b>		
	55-64	0.4976	<b>0.5024</b>		
	> 65	<b>0.7056</b>	0.2944		
<b>Educational level</b>	Less than primary school	<b>0.7958</b>	0.2042	1.1945	0.95
	Primary school	<b>0.5090</b>	0.4910		
	Secondary school	<b>0.5861</b>	0.4139		
	Vocational/technical training	<b>0.5482</b>	0.4518		
	University	0.4319	<b>0.5681</b>		
<b>Length of stay</b>	One day (not spending a night)	<b>0.6543</b>	0.3457	13.6812	0.018*
	Two days	0.4745	<b>0.5255</b>		
	Three days	<b>0.5863</b>	0.4137		
	Four days	0.3621	<b>0.6379</b>		
	Five days or more	0.4115	<b>0.5885</b>		
<b>Type of accommodation</b>	Hotel	0.3163	<b>0.6837</b>	14.4956	0.025*
	Hostel	0.4196	<b>0.5804</b>		
	Friends/relatives	<b>0.5722</b>	0.4278		
	Country house	<b>0.6164</b>	0.3836		
	Campsite/youth hostel	0.3252	<b>0.6748</b>		
	Others	<b>0.6093</b>	0.3907		
<b>Sources of information</b>	Travel guides	0.2286	<b>0.7714</b>	8.8023	0.72
	Internet	0.4368	<b>0.5632</b>		
	Website of <i>Serranía Alta de Cuenca</i>	<b>0.5362</b>	0.4638		
	Advertising campaigns on radio or television	<b>0.5116</b>	0.4884		
	Brochures	0.2871	<b>0.6129</b>		
	Travel magazines	0.2922	<b>0.7078</b>		
	Press	<b>0.5805</b>	0.4195		
	Tourism fairs	0.4985	<b>0.5015</b>		
	Tour operators	<b>0.9980</b>	0.0020		
	Travel agencies	<b>0.9997</b>	0.0003		
	Relatives/friends/co-workers	<b>0.5217</b>	0.4783		
	Personal experience	<b>0.7150</b>	0.2850		
	Others	0.2067	<b>0.7933</b>		
	<b>Previous experience in Cuenca</b>	First visit	0.4488		
Between 2 and 4 times		0.4221	<b>0.5779</b>		
More than four times		<b>0.5998</b>	0.4002		
<b>Previous experience in Serranía</b>	First visit	0.4313	<b>0.5687</b>	1.1551	0.56
	Between 2 and 4 times	0.4995	<b>0.5005</b>		
	More than four times	<b>0.6351</b>	0.3649		
<b>Channel of hiring</b>	Institutional websites	<b>0.5694</b>	0.4306	2.4434	0.65
	Travel agencies	0.3629	<b>0.6371</b>		
	Direct contact with establishments	0.3852	<b>0.6148</b>		
	Others	0.4901	<b>0.5099</b>		
<b>Means of transport</b>	Own vehicle	0.4913	<b>0.5087</b>	2.1863	0.53
	Bus	<b>0.8626</b>	0.1374		
	Others	0.3446	<b>0.6554</b>		
<b>Type of tourism</b>	Leisure/cultural visit	0.4605	<b>0.5395</b>	9.8105	0.081
	On their way to other destination	0.3402	<b>0.6598</b>		
	Business/professional visit	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000		
	Visit friends/relatives	<b>0.7519</b>	0.2481		
	Excursion (package tour)	<b>0.9996</b>	0.0004		
	Others	<b>0.6779</b>	0.3221		
<b>Daily expenditure in accommodation</b>	< 30 €	<b>0.5383</b>	0.4617	4.0647	0.25
	30-60 €	0.4098	<b>0.5902</b>		
	61-90 €	<b>0.5746</b>	0.4254		

	> 90 €	0.3522	<b>0.6478</b>		
<b>Daily expenditure in restaurant</b>	< 30 €	<b>0.5587</b>	0.4413	2.0671	0.56
	30-60 €	0.4021	<b>0.5979</b>		
	61-90 €	<b>0.5739</b>	0.4261		
	> 90 €	<b>0.5402</b>	0.4598		
<b>Daily expenditure in transport</b>	< 30 €	<b>0.5132</b>	0.4868	1.1996	0.75
	30-60 €	0.4732	<b>0.5268</b>		
	61-90 €	0.4890	<b>0.5110</b>		
	> 90 €	<b>0.5871</b>	0.4129		
<b>Overall assessment</b>	Very bad	0.0000	0.0000	6.0912	0.41
	1	0.0000	0.0000		
	2	0.0000	0.0000		
	3	0.0000	0.0000		
	4	0.0000	0.0000		
	5	0.2499	<b>0.7501</b>		
	6	0.4503	<b>0.5497</b>		
	7	0.4005	<b>0.5995</b>		
	8	0.5275	<b>0.5725</b>		
	9	0.4549	<b>0.5451</b>		
	Excellent	<b>0.5685</b>	0.4315		
<b>Posibility of repeat visit</b>	Yes	<b>0.5003</b>	0.4997	0.5389	0.76
	No	0.3339	<b>0.6661</b>		

\* $p < 0.05$ 

These are people with a lot of experience of the province of Cuenca and also of the *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*, so it is the segment which more often rates the destination as excellent, and who are consequently more disposed to repeat the visit.

They make the journey to visit family and/or friends or on organized tours, so the information sources used include travel agencies, tour operators, personal experience or the website of *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*.

Their visits are characterised by a short to medium duration (1-3 days), with lodgings in a country house or with friends and/or family. To reserve tourist services, they use institutional websites, and they travel by bus.

Their socio-demographic profile includes a majority of women, whose age is high or low (elderly or young), and with secondary education.

Daily spending is high on food and medium to high on accommodation and transport.

#### **Segment 2: Multiple-motive**

This is the smaller segment, containing 43.25% of the people who visit *Serranía Alta de Cuenca*. These are visitors with strong motivation to visit the destination, consisting of a combination of motives, such as to enjoy nature and its tourist resources provided, to discover the local gastronomy, to visit the towns and villages in the area, and to get to know its cultural and historic heritage. These are people with little experience of the province of Cuenca and also of the *Serranía*, but it is also the segment less inclined to repeat the visit.

With regard to the evaluation of the destination, they give ratings lower than the nature segment. They make the journey as a leisure and/or cultural visit or on their way to other destinations, attracted by the information obtained from media such as travel guides and magazines, brochures, tourism fairs and Internet.

Their visits are characterised by a long duration (4 to 5 days), with lodgings in a hotel, hostel, campsite or youth hostel. For reservation of tourist services, they use travel agencies or direct contact with establishments. Their socio-demographic profile includes a majority of men, of middle age and having further education. Daily spending is high on lodgings, low on food and medium on transport.

## **5. Conclusions**

A destination's reception capacity and heavy competition in the tourist market oblige managers to aim at those segments which are going to be best satisfied by their visit to the destination and whose visits will have the least impact on the destination because of the behaviour of the public attracted. These characteristics highlight the importance of segmentation in the management strategy.

The objective pursued by this study leads the motivation variable to be selected as the best one for performance of segmentation, the objective being to study consumers' behaviour and select the one most suitable for the destination. This makes it necessary to use latent class segmentation, as a construct which is not directly observable, as well as because of its advantages over other segmentation techniques.

As a result of the segmentation carried out in this study, two segments of visitors to the natural areas of *Serranía Alta de Cuenca* have been identified, these being the nature and multiple-motive segments, differentiated according to the motivations they had when they decided to make the visit.

The nature segment has a single motivation for the visit, to enjoy nature and the resources the natural spaces have, while the multiple-motive segment makes the visit as the result of a combination of motives, which are to enjoy nature

and its tourist resources provided, to discover the local gastronomy, to visit the towns and villages in the area and to get to know its cultural and historic heritage.

The existence of the two segments highlights two trends observed with regard to changes in consumer behaviour; on the one hand, increased interest in nature and, on the other, the presence of multiple motivations in the decision to visit a destination.

From the point of view of spending capacity, the nature segment spends more than the multiple-motive segment on the items food and transport, but less on accommodation, because it looks for cheaper lodgings or even stays with family and/or friends. So both are of interest for attracting to the destination, one for its higher spending capacity, and the other for the form of accommodation chosen which contributes towards the economic development of the tourist sector in the area.

With regard to the length of stay, this is longer in the multiple-motive segment, again justifying interest in this segment, as it lengthens average stay at the destination.

With regard to the intention to revisit, the nature segment is seen as the more interesting because it would be prepared to return; in addition its more positive rating of the destination could lead to its recommendation to immediate acquaintances, so attracting new visitors.

In short, there are reasons justifying the choice of both the nature and multiple-motive segment as target markets, with regard to economic characteristics (spending, length of stay, revisits). However, the nature segment's single motivation highlights the fact that this is a segment more suited to the destination, because it can be considered to have greater environmental awareness and sensitivity and from which more respectful behaviour at the destination can be expected.

These results give information for tourism managers about their target public. The decision to concentrate on either or both will be highly influenced by the economic situation, which may cause tourism managers to push environmental concerns into the background, as has traditionally occurred, in order to get better returns from their activity. The main limitation of this study is its static nature. For it, as future research lines are identified: To study the evolution in recent years to better interpretation of the characteristics of visitors and destination and to study new variables such as environmental sensitive and behaviour in the destination.

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