

Metropolitan Parks in Melbourne: A Critical Analysis of Factors Affecting Visitation by Regional Victorians

Thesis submitted by

Sharyn McDonald

Bachelor of Applied Science (Conservation and Resource Management),

(University of South Australia)

Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Secondary),

(Manchester Metropolitan University)

A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Business

School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management

Faculty of Law and Management

La Trobe University

Bundoora, Victoria 3086

Australia

March, 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
APPENDICES	vi
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
ABBREVIATIONS	ix
THESIS SUMMARY	x
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP	xi
DEDICATION	xii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xiii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the Research	3
1.2.1 Literature Search	7
1.3 Key Terms used in this Thesis	8
1.4 Justification for the Research	10
1.5 Research Problem	12
1.5.1 Research Questions	12
1.6 Summary of Research Design	12
1.7 Outline of the Thesis	13
1.8 Summary	13
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.1.1 Travel Motivation	14
2.1.2 Destination Choice Models	16

2.1.3	Images of Destinations	17
2.1.4	Market Segmentation	20
2.2	Constraints and Facilitators to Activity Participation	23
2.2.1	Intrapersonal	24
2.2.2	Interpersonal	25
2.2.3	Structural	26
2.3	Constraints and Facilitators	27
2.3.1	Age and Life Stage	27
2.3.2	The Influence of Family and Friends	36
2.3.3	Awareness	40
2.3.4	Available Time	43
2.3.5	Distance	46
2.3.6	Alternative Leisure Activities	49
2.3.7	Gender Differences	54
2.3.8	Transport	56
2.3.9	Socio-economic Considerations	58
2.3.10	Pricing of leisure	65
2.3.11	Seasonality and Climate	66
2.3.12	Physical Accessibility / Disability	71
2.3.13	Race and Ethnicity	72
2.4	Summary	73
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY		76
3.1	Introduction	76
3.2	Research Design	76
3.3	The Sampling Frame and Selection of Participants	79
3.3.1	Sampling Locations - Regional Focus Groups	80
3.3.2	Structure and Selection of Regional Focus Groups	82
3.3.3	Structure and Selection of Metropolitan Focus groups	83
3.3.4	Structure and Selection of In-depth Interviews	85
3.4	Instrumentation	86

3.5	Data Collection Procedures	88
3.5.1	Regional Participants	88
3.5.2	Metropolitan Participants	89
3.5.3	In-depth Interviews	89
3.6	Data Analysis	90
3.6.1	Analysis Strategy	90
3.7	Summary	92
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION		93
4.1	Introduction	93
4.1.1	Regional Focus Group Participants	93
4.1.2	Metropolitan Focus Group Participants	95
4.1.3	In-depth Interviews	97
4.2	Responses to Themes	97
4.2.1	Time and Distance	98
4.2.2	Alternative Leisure Activities (Attractions Mix)	104
4.2.3	Awareness	111
4.2.4	Transport	119
4.2.5	Other constraints identified	123
4.2.6	Special Issues	125
4.3	Desk Research: Parks Victoria Operations	126
4.4	Summary	128
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS		129
5.1	Research Question One: What is the attractiveness of Melbourne as a short break destination for regional Victorians?	129
5.1.1	Consumer Behaviour	129
5.2	Research Question Two: What are the perceived constraints to metropolitan park visitation by regional and metropolitan visitors?	132
5.2.1	Intrapersonal Influences on Park Visitation	133
5.2.2	Utilising the Influence of Interpersonal Facilitators	133

5.2.3	Structural Influences on Park Visitation	137
5.3	Research Question Three: What awareness do people have of Melbourne's parks?	142
5.3.1	Awareness	142
5.3.2	Awareness Summary	146
5.4	Research Question Four: How can Parks Victoria attract more visitors to their metropolitan parks?	146
5.4.1	Marketing	147
5.4.2	Promotion through Printed Media	147
5.4.3	Partnerships	149
5.4.4	Local Government	150
5.4.5	Health Campaigns	151
5.4.6	Marketing Summary	152
5.5	Conclusion about the Research Problem	153
5.6	Limitations	154
5.7	Further Research	156
5.8	Concluding Statement	157
	 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 159

APPENDICES	185
Appendix 1	185
Parks Victoria Parks in Melbourne	
Parks Victoria Metropolitan Parks in Melbourne	185
Appendix 2	186
Main Reason for Not Visiting a World Heritage Area or Park in Australia – 2001	
Appendix 3	187
Distribution of Equivalised Disposable Household Income 2000-01	
Appendix 4	187
Percentage Participation in Activities for Australia Women and Men NRPS 1991	
Appendix 5	188
Reasons for Not Using Public Transport – March 2003	
Appendix 6	188
Rainfall Deficiency- 2002-03	
Appendix 7	189
Moderators Regional Guide	
Appendix 8	191
Recruitment Advertisement: Regional Areas	
Appendix 9	192
Moderators Metropolitan Guide	
Appendix 10	195
Codes used for Analysis of Data	
Appendix 11	196
Relationship between Travel Time and Frequency of Visits to Melbourne over a 12 Month Period	
Appendix 12	197
Relationship between Distance and Frequency of Visits to Melbourne over a 12 Month Period	

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Visitation to Melbourne by Regional and Metropolitan Victorians	5
Table 1.2	Top Five Constraints to Park Visitation by Victorians	6
Table 1.3	Visitation of Regional Tourists to Their Own States Capitals	7
Table 3.1	Regional Victorian Visitation to Melbourne 2002	81
Table 3.2	Travelling Times and Distance of Regional Locations to Melbourne	82
Table 4.1	Age representation of Focus Group Participants.	93
Table 4.2	Short Break Visits to Melbourne in the last 12 Months	94
Table 4.3	Short Break Accommodation Whilst in Melbourne	95
Table 4.4	Metropolitan Focus Groups: Age of participants	96
Table 4.5	Origin of Metropolitan Participants	97
Table 4.6	Average Short break Visits to Melbourne in the last 12 months	100
Table 4.7	Ideal Destination for a Short Break	105
Table 4.8	Master List of Attractions in Melbourne and Suburbs	108
Table 4.9	Marketing and Promotional Activity Conducted by Parks Victoria	127
Table 5.1	Marketing Recommendations for Park Managers	152

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Melbourne's Metropolitan Parks	2
Figure 1.2	Percentage of 'don't know' responses involving rating Parks Victoria as a manager of Melbourne's metropolitan parks	4
Figure 2.1	Constraints and Facilitators Influencing Participation	24
Figure 2.2	Visits to World Heritage Areas, National and State Parks in Australia	28
Figure 2.3	Melbourne Water Storage Levels, 1997-2003	70
Figure 3.1	Summary of Sampling Frame	80
Figure 3.2	Sample of Advertisement Calling for Metropolitan Participants	85
Figure 3.3	Extract from Interview Transcript	91
Figure 4.1	Park Locations Identified by In-depth Interview Participants	103
Figure 4.2	Variety found at Hays Paddock, Kew	113
Figure 5.1	Westerfolds Park Entrance Sign/ Logo	144
Figure 5.2	Yarra Flats Entrance Sign/ Logo	144

ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AFL	Australian Football League
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
CBD	Central Business District
CPM	Community Perception Monitor
CRC	Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre
DCFL	Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands
MMBW	Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works
NRPS	National Recreation Participation Survey
NVS	National Visitor Statistics
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives

THESIS SUMMARY

The principal aim of this thesis was to investigate visitation to Melbourne by regional Victorians with particular emphasis on finding ways to improve visitation to metropolitan parks. This thesis incorporated two theories of leisure participation, from which a conceptual framework was developed. Crawford, Jackson and Godbey's (1991) constraints model and Raymore's (2002) facilitator's framework were used to investigate the decision making process of regional visitors to Melbourne's parks.

Earlier quantitative research by Parks Victoria indicated a decline in visitation of both regional Victorians and Melburnians to Melbourne's metropolitan parks between the years 2000 and 2003 (Community Perception Monitor (CPM), 2000 - 2003). This finding produced an opportunity to conduct research into the constraints on metropolitan park use, particularly by regional Victorians. The research was conducted using individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gather the requisite data from both regional Victoria and Melbourne. This information was used to establish recommendations in order to raise interest in visiting Melbourne's metropolitan parks.

It was found that, as the majority of regional visitors to Melbourne planning a short-break collect their information prior to departure, park information needs to be available before they embark. Whilst visiting Melbourne, regional visitors agreed that they would utilise local knowledge produced by their host to fill any of their limited spare time.

Consequently, Melburnians should be seen as a potential prime source of information for visitors. However, this thesis found that Melburnians themselves were often unaware of local park attractions, so part of the strategy to raise interest in visiting Melbourne's parks must be targeted at Melburnians as local tourists.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

Sharyn McDonald

March 2006

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my son **Max McDonald**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing this thesis would not have been possible without the support of a number of people. My husband John and son Max have shown more patience than could or should be thought possible. They have provided advice, allowed time and provided a tremendous amount of encouragement in what seemed a never ending sea of paper. Thank you!

My thanks extend to my Masters supervisory team within the School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management. My supervisors, Dr Garry Price and Professor Peter Murphy who allowed me to commence this journey and have provided help and guidance ever since.

I would also like to thank friends and colleagues in the School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management at La Trobe University who assisted by means of transcription, administration or good humour. Thank you to Dr Russell Hoyer as Post Graduate co-ordinator and Associate Professor Aaron Smith for their advice, constructive criticism and time.

Without the financial assistance of La Trobe University School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management and The Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, this research would not have been possible. Support from staff of the following organisations is also acknowledged: Parks Victoria, Tourism Victoria, City of Melbourne and Destination Melbourne. Finally, I would like to thank the volunteers who participated in the focus groups and interviews. Without their contribution, this thesis would not have been possible.