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**Abstract of thesis entitled 'Image Analysis of the Pearl River Delta Sub-regional Travel Destinations' submitted by Wang Suosheng (Samson) for the degree of Master of Philosophy at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University in October, 1997.**

As the importance of the tourism industry grows in Asia, more and more governments are looking to tourism as an area for cooperation with one's neighbors. One example of subregional tourism cooperation is the arrangement entered by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, aimed at jointly promoting the Pearl River Delta (PRD) sub-region as a new tourist product. Given the importance of destination image analysis in tourism marketing (Schiffman and Kanuk 1994), image analysis and image identification becomes a major task for the tourism marketers of the PRD sub-regional travel destinations.

The study emphasized the importance of creating accurate and integrated images of the respective destinations in the sub-region and of the sub-region as a whole, and the need to identify each destination's distinctive image. The main purpose of this study was, therefore, to analyze the image differences of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau in the context of the PRD area. A questionnaire survey was conducted with 303 tourists who had visited the PRD sub-region. Tourists were asked to rate their perceived images of each destination as well as the perceived importance of motivational attributes for visiting the sub-region. Canonical correlation analysis was used to assess the nature of the relationship between the selected sets of destination and motivational attributes.

The findings revealed that: Eight destination image dimensions emerged from a factor analysis of 31 attributes, namely, 'assurance', 'restaurant/hotel', 'accessibility', 'amenity services', 'mixed culture', 'entertainment', 'Chinese culture', and 'local attitudes'; The PRD area as a whole was perceived favorably by tourists; The destination images of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau were perceived differently by tourists where Guangdong was perceived to hold some advantages over Hong Kong and Macau in terms of 'Chinese culture'. Hong Kong was perceived to be a safe and convenient travel destination and its image was perceived to be dominant in the PRD area. Macau's image could hardly be differentiated from the bright lights of Hong Kong; Tourists visiting this sub-region had a set of unique determinant destination dimensions leading to their satisfaction with each destination; Four motivational dimensions (i.e. 'culture/history seeking', 'benefit/safety seeking', 'prestige/social interaction' and 'novelty seeking') were identified with tourists visiting the PRD area expecting mostly to visit this area's unique cultural and historical attractions, and finally, It was found that there was a positive relationship between the destination and motivational dimensions.

The results of this study implies that image analysis with an approach of using two sets of variables (destination and motivational attributes) could help to assess destination images more accurately and completely. While respondents' perceptions on destination attributes helped to identify the key image attributes, the tourists' motives in choosing a certain travel destination has provided tourism marketers clues for developing a destination image. For example, such an understanding can assist management in 'fine tuning' its abilities to help an

organization define its image to be projected in promotional campaign (Crotts and Rekom 1994).

**Key words:** Image Analysis, the Pearl River Delta Sub-region, Destination Attributes, Motivational Attributes

**IMAGE ANALYSIS OF THE PEARL RIVER DELTA  
SUB-REGIONAL TRAVEL DESTINATIONS**

**Submitted By**

**WANG SUOSHENG, SAMSON**

**For the Degree of**

**Master of Philosophy**

**The Hong Kong Polytechnic University**

**1997**



## DEDICATION

**This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Yang Hong.**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sincere appreciation to my chief supervisor, Dr. John Ap, for his patience, guidance and encouragement throughout the research.

Thanks to my co-supervisor, Dr. Ray Pine, for his advice throughout the development of my thesis.

Thanks to Dr. Connie Mok, Dr. Hailin Qu, Ms. Hanqin Qiu and Mr. Andrew Chan, for their comments and support in many different ways.

Thanks to the staff and my fellow colleagues in the Department of Hotel and Tourism Management, for their suggestions and friendship. Among them, I would especially mention Nelson, Raymond, Peter, Alan, Steve, Ming, Gordon and Edith.

Last, but not least, I am deeply indebted to my wife, for her love, understanding, and encouragement.

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## CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The importance of image analysis in tourism marketing has been indicated by many researchers (Lew 1987, Embacher and Buttle 1989, Reilly 1990, Schiffman and Kanuk 1994). It is suggested that image is the most important aspect of a tourist attraction from a marketing point of view, an accurate assessment of product image is a prerequisite to designing an effective marketing strategy, and measuring and managing this image is a major priority for marketing staff. In order to remain competitive, marketers must be able to understand how tourists perceive destination products and services. An understanding of the destination image perceived by tourists provides useful information for developing effective marketing strategies and indications on how to invest resources that will best satisfy tourists' needs.

Different travel destinations may have different images specifically made to fulfill the various kinds of needs of international tourists. Stabler (1988), Gregory (1989) and Shaw and Williams (1994) have suggested that places may project distinctive images as a reflection of the uniqueness of their specific local environment, culture and economy, destinations need to project their distinctive images in order to enhance tourism appeal.

Dann (1977) and Crompton (1979a) observed that people travel because they are pushed into making travel decisions by internal forces and pulled by external forces of the destination attributes. They suggested that an understanding of both push and pull factors will be useful to the destination image analysis, and the image creation of a specific travel destination should rely not only on the destination attributes, but also on tourists' motivational attributes which push them to visit this place. In a search of the literature, it seems that almost all destination image studies had been dependent on the supply side - destination attributes, none of them had considered the demand side - tourists' motivational attributes. There have been a number of tourism destination image analysis studies conducted. However, all have focused on single destination analysis (Reilly 1990, Chon 1991, Fakeye and Crompton 1991), or multi-destinations (Embacher and Buttle 1989, Gartner 1989, Yau and Chan 1990); but there are few studies in the context of a sub-regional travel destination, which might be considered to be a special phenomenon between a single destination and multi-destinations.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

To increase awareness of the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region of Southern China and improve its competitiveness are the two main purposes for the PRD tourism marketing cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. As a new tourist product in the form of a sub-regional travel destination, the PRD area lacks an established image for this new product, and the three cooperative partners of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau



may face the problem of distinguishing one's destination from the other two. A wrongly created image will not only be a waste of a destination's resources, but may also cause confusion among tourists and lead to visitor dissatisfaction. Therefore, image analysis and image identification becomes a major task for PRD tourism researchers. It is increasingly necessary for the PRD tourism marketers to effectively identify their distinctive images prior to any actual promotional activities being undertaken.

### **1.2.1 Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) To identify tourists' perceived destination attributes of Guangdong, Hong Kong, Macau and the Pearl River Delta area as a travel destination;
- 2) To identify and determine the image differences between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau;
- 3) To assess the relative impact of underlying dimensions of the Pearl River Delta area's destination attributes upon tourists' overall satisfaction level;
- 4) To identify tourists' perceived motivational attributes when choosing the Pearl River Delta area as a travel destination;
- 5) To examine the relationship between the Pearl River Delta area's destination attributes and tourists' motivational attributes.

### 1.2.2 Hypotheses

The second objective of this study was to empirically test whether there are any image differences between the sub-regional travel destinations. According to Gregory (1989), places may project distinctive images as a reflection of the uniqueness of their local environment, culture, and economy. Although the three travel destinations of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau share many common tourist attractions in terms of their geographic location and common demographic/cultural background, each destination may exert its own distinctive image due to other reasons (such as different politics, economy, and history). In order to empirically test this, Hypothesis 1 was developed as follows:

#### **Hypothesis 1**

The three PRD travel destinations of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau are perceived by international tourists to have different destination images.

The third objective of this study was to assess the relative impact of underlying dimensions of the PRD area's destination attributes upon tourists' overall satisfaction level. Yau and Chan (1990) pointed out tourists who are visiting a particular vacation destination are looking for unique destination choice dimensions which satisfy them most. It was postulated that tourists to a particular travel destination in the PRD sub-region have a unique set of determinant dimensions leading to their satisfaction with the destination (i.e. Guangdong,

Hong Kong and Macau, respectively). To empirically test this, a second hypothesis (Hypothesis 2) was developed as follows:

### **Hypothesis 2**

Tourists to a particular travel destination in the PRD sub-region have a unique set of determinant dimensions leading to their satisfaction with the destination.

The fifth objective of this study was to examine the relationship between the Pearl River Delta area's destination attributes and tourists' motivational attributes. Oh, Uysal and Weaver (1995) and Baloglu and Uysal (1996) suggested that push factors (social-psychological motivational attributes) and pull factors (destination attributes) may react with each other in a reciprocal relationship. A good understanding of the relationship between them is useful to destination image analysis. Based on tourists' perceptions of destination attributes and the perceived importance of motivational attributes, tourism researchers can develop and identify a more accurate and integrated destination image. Thus, a third hypothesis (Hypothesis 3) developed to examine the relationship between destination attributes and motivational attributes was proposed as follows:

### **Hypothesis 3**

There is a positive relationship between the destination image dimensions and the

motivation dimensions - i.e. personal fulfillment/social, sightseeing, new experience, prestige and novelty seeking.

### **1.3 DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL/SUB-REGIONAL TOURISM COOPERATION IN ASIA**

As Asia matures as a travel destination, the trend has been towards an even more interdependent and cooperative environment. Although there have been cooperative ventures among the private sector in the past, the volume and magnitude of cooperation on a national level have not been as significant as they are today (Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) 1996). In the past, Asian countries have largely engaged in destination promotions on an individual basis through their national tourist organizations. Though this still very much exists, there has been a move towards pooling resources and combining the attractions of two countries or a sub-region, thereby forming a complementary package and enhancing the experience of the visitor. As the importance of the tourism industry grows, more and more governments are looking to tourism as an area cooperation with one's neighbors.

According to PATA (1996), in Southeast Asia, the successful Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) model was extended to the tourism industry in the formation of the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA), where cooperation among Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand in the tourism arena was formalized and institutionalized. In South Asia, countries have also bonded together to

work towards regional tourism development through the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The newest sub-regional destination in Asia is the Mekong sub-region. Defined by the course of the Mekong River, the sub-region groups the former states of Indochina - Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos - with Thailand, Myanmar and China's southern-most province of Yunnan. A prime example would be the Indonesian-Singaporean joint venture in developing tourism at Bintan Island, an Indonesian island very close to Singapore shores. With government and private involvement from both countries, the primary aim is to develop Bintan Island into an attractive resort, luring the over seven million visitors coming to Singapore to extend their stay to taste the attractions on the adjacent island.

On the other hand, the trend within a geographically large country has been to promote different regions individually. Usually reliant on the national tourism organizations, many states now have their own tourism bodies, aggressively promoting the attractions of their particular states. However, it is not a sign of weakening internal cooperation, but a demonstration of the growing need to create awareness of the diverse attractions of a country. China, for instance, seems to have realized the importance of participating in regional/sub-regional cooperative arrangements in the tourism industry. Apart from the 'Mekong Marketing Seminar' supported by PATA, there are two other important regional/sub-regional cooperative projects which are linked with China. One is the 'Silk Road Forum' sponsored by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the International Labor Organization (ILO). The attending countries are those along the ancient Silk Road,

including five mid-Asia countries - Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, China, India, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. China's northwestern provinces including Shaanxi, Gansu and Xinjiang are grouped in the project (Xu 1995). Another project is the cooperation between Hong Kong, Macau and China's southern province - Guangdong. In 1993, Guangdong Provincial Tourism Bureau (GPTB), Hong Kong Tourist Association (HKTA) and Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO), formed a working group, namely "the Pearl River Delta Tourism Marketing Organization", and unanimously agreed to jointly promote the PRD area (HKTA 1993).

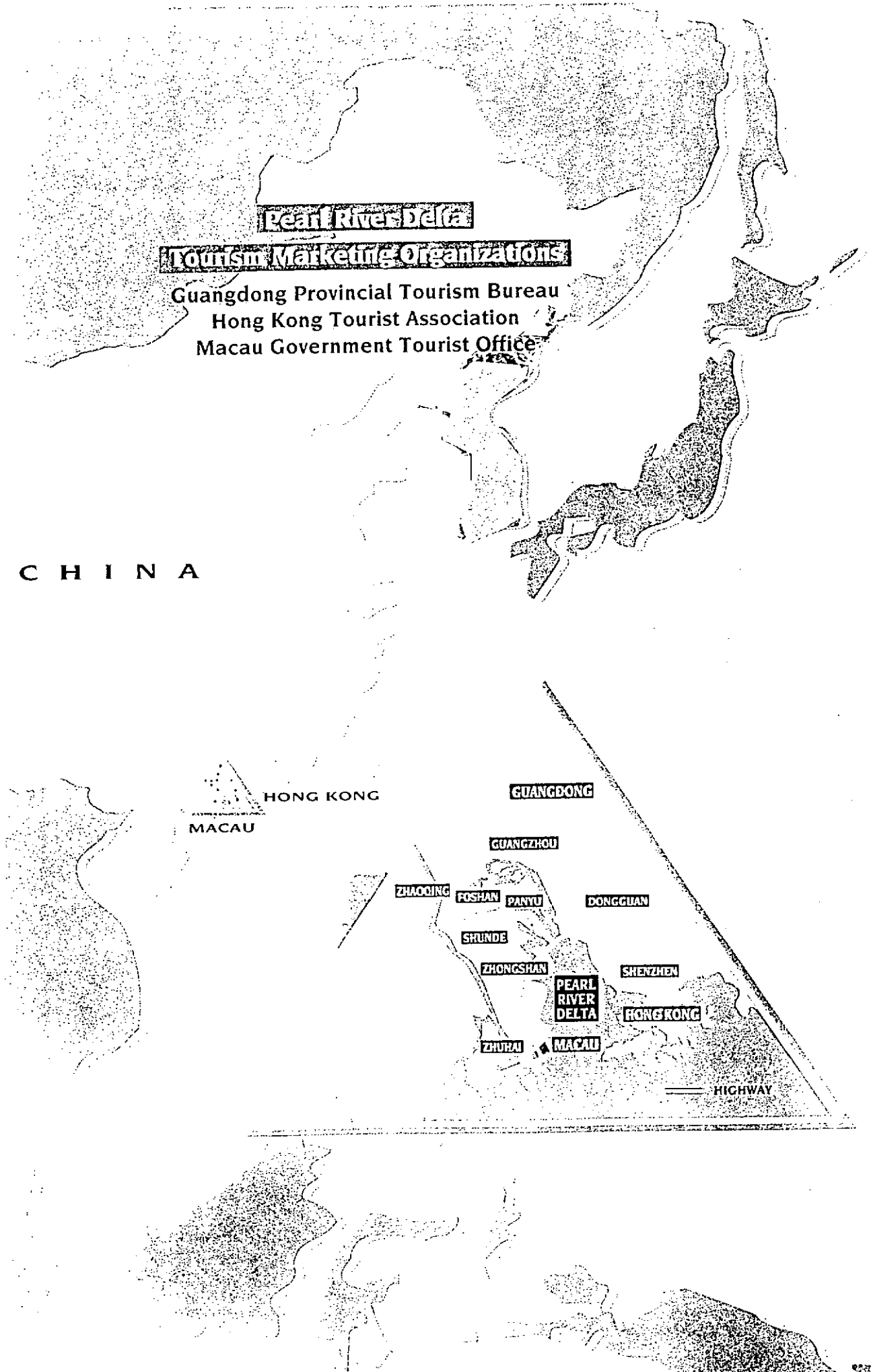
In this study, a destination image analysis of regional/ sub-regional travel destinations in the Pearl River Delta area will be explored.

## **1.4 THE PEARL RIVER DELTA AS A SUB-REGIONAL TRAVEL DESTINATION**

### **1.4.1 The Pearl River Delta Area**

The PRD is located in the delta area of the Pearl River in South China. This sub-region includes Hong Kong, Macau and parts of China's Guangdong Province (see Figure 1), with an area of 47,800 square kilometers and a population of nearly 30 million (Huang 1992). Guangdong, comprises the well-known cities of Guangzhou - Capital of Guangdong, Shenzhen - one of the four earliest special economic zones neighboring with Hong Kong,

Figure 1 Map of the Pearl River Delta Sub-region



Zhuhai - another Special Economic Zone bordering Macau, and other newly-born prosperous cities such as Panyu, Dongguan, Foshan, Shunde, Zhaoqing and Zhongshan.

#### 1.4.2 The Pearl River Delta Area With Great Prospects

China's booming economy during the last fifteen years has drawn attention from all over the world. The most successful place is the Pearl River Delta area of South China's Guangdong Province. From 1979-1993, the average annual increase of Guangdong Province's gross domestic product (GDP) was 13.9%, much higher than the national average level of 9.3%, and also the highest in China. Not surprisingly, the average annual increase of Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai's GDP has risen to 29.1%. According to Guangdong Statistics Bureau (*Shenzhen Business Daily*, 1996), in 1995, this area of Guangdong produced over RMB 300 billion (approximately US \$36 billion) gross domestic product.

Encouraged by the economic boom, and considering the change of sovereignty of Hong Kong and Macau to China in 1997 and 1999, respectively, some scholars have designed a bright future blueprint for the PRD area with the inclusion of Hong Kong and Macau (*Ming Pao* 1995; Huang 1992; Zheng 1990; Zhu 1986). It is predicted that the PRD area would be developed into a 'Greater Hong Kong' or a Megalopolis or 'City Agglomeration' centered on Hong Kong and Guangzhou in 10-15 years. There seems to surely exist some positive conditions for the establishment of a 'Greater Hong Kong', given the advanced transport



and convenient traffic through air, rail, road, and ferry among the PRD cities (Lau 1996); the possibility of establishing a single currency circulation policy in the PRD area (Huang 1992); and possible future visa facilitation and well-established existing business facilities. These conditions provide the impetus for the PRD's economic development and provide the PRD with great prospects. Tourism may be considered as one of the industries which will benefit most from these favorable conditions.

### **1.4.3 Significance of the Tourism Industry in the Pearl River Delta Sub-region**

Travel and tourism is currently the world's largest industry and largest generator of jobs and foreign currency, producing economic growth, investment and foreign trade. In 1995, travel and tourism is expected to contribute 10.9% directly and indirectly to World Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and grow 54.6% over the next decade (WTTC 1995). Most forecasts show that travel and tourism in the Asia-Pacific region will grow faster than any other region in the world - as much as twice as fast as Europe and North America. Travel also represents almost 8 percent of all business activity in the Asia-Pacific region (APEC 1995).

China has developed into a major travel destination. In 1995, it ranked fifth in the world as a tourist destination, and for the first time, it entered the world top 10 destinations in terms of tourist revenue, earning US \$8.25 billion. In 1996, China received more than 51 million tourist arrivals and its international tourism receipts reached US \$10.2 billion, the first time

China has topped the ten billion mark. The important position of the PRD in China is based on the fact that more than 83% of China's tourists come from Hong Kong and Macau. Because of the ethnic affinity, Hong Kong and Macau tourists have been drawn largely over the years to the adjacent areas of Guangdong. In Guangzhou alone, there were 679,843 residents who had relatives in Hong Kong and Macau (*Guangzhou Economic Yearbook* 1984: 67). In 1996, Guangdong received 6.9 million tourists and earned US \$2.6 billion foreign exchange income which represented 25.9% of China's total tourist income. The number of tourist arrivals entering China from the ports of Guangdong covers about 70% of the total arrivals to China. Besides, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai are among China's top six cities in terms of the number of overnight tourists received (CNTA 1996).

In 1996, Hong Kong's tourism industry broke all records. Total visitor arrivals reached 11.7 million, tourism receipts reached HK \$85 billion to highlight its role as Hong Kong's largest earner of foreign exchange. Among the main tourist generating markets, Japan contributed the biggest growth, followed by China, both of which supplied more than 2.3 million arrivals each (HKTA 1997). As a well established destination, Hong Kong is the most prominent travel destination in the PRD, and also has the biggest tourist-generating market within this sub-region area. According to Macau and Guangdong's tourism statistical reports, 63.86% of Macau's total tourist arrivals and about 70% of Guangdong's are from Hong Kong.

Macau received 8.15 million tourists in 1996, with an increase of 5.14% over the previous year. The receipts from tourism and related service industries were about US \$1.4 billion, representing about 40% of its total economic output.

Currently, tourism in these three places have become more and more interdependent. In 1992, a total of 2.4 million visitors went to China and Hong Kong on the same trip. In 1993, the figure jumped to 2.7 million and in 1994, 2.8 million. The figures in 1995 showed marked improvements in cross-border tourism, 2.1 million visitors from Hong Kong crossed in China while 1.9 million people entered Hong Kong from mainland China mainly through Guangdong. The number of mainland tourists totaled to almost a third of all Hong Kong visitor arrivals. On the other hand, another 10% of Hong Kong's 10 million visitors went to Macau. (Lai 1996)

#### **1.4.4 Opportunities and Challenges Faced by the "Pearl River Delta**

##### **Tourism Marketing Organization"**

The 'PRD Marketing Organization' was established in 1993. Mr. Eugene Sullivan, the then Executive Director of the Hong Kong Tourist Association, remarked that while each destination continues its own marketing activities, the PRD is being offered as a new tourism product to the benefit of all three destinations. It should give tourists a unique opportunity to experience three contrasting historical, social and geographical environments

in a single trip. The group agreed that the main promotional targets initially would be the longhaul markets of Europe and North America, followed by the Asia-Pacific (HKTA 1993). Since then, a series of discussions and meetings involving the three destinations have been held to explore the ways of initiating cooperative activities. Joint marketing efforts have been made which include designing packages, devising different tours, producing promotional brochures and attending key international travel trade fairs.

In May and June, 1995, the PRD Tourism Seminar and a PRD Travel Industry Get-together were held in Macau and Shenzhen, respectively. It was noted at the meetings that within the next three years there would be: 1) four new international standard airports in the sub-region; 2) a super highway linking Macau to Guangzhou; and, 3) a bridge connecting Zhuhai and Hong Kong. The new airports are namely the Chep Lap Kok international airport, Macau international airport, Zhuhai airport and Shenzhen airport's second passenger terminal. It was believed that the air transport services would be complementary to each other. While the Shenzhen and Zhuhai airport cater for domestic flights, the Macau and Hong Kong airports are for international ones. To a certain extent, Hong Kong's new airport at Chep Lap Kok, which is anticipated to open in 1998, will ease the pressure of the capacity restraints faced by Kai Tak international airport and make Hong Kong more accessible. The diversification in the airport network will bring in new sources of tourists and make traveling to and within the PRD region more attractive to the leisure and business travelers alike. The annual passenger flow in the whole PRD region is expected to grow to 56 million (GPTB 1995).

As the tourism development of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau grows more interdependently, the three partners have agreed on the direction of tourism growth of the whole PRD - "Strengthening cooperation and avoiding unnecessary competition" and "joint promotion while maintaining the unique characteristics of each destination". To achieve the goal of enhancing the tourism development in the PRD, it was agreed that a variety of problems should be tackled:

- 1) Tourism facilities - such as hotel room supply and room rates;
- 2) Planning and management of scenic sites;
- 3) Linkage of transport network - such as increasing the frequency of ferry and improving road conditions;
- 4) Simplification of immigration and customs procedures - such as setting up a direct transit passage to airports, providing simple visa application procedures and enhancing customs efficiency;
- 5) Coordination in promotion plans; and
- 6) Establishment of an efficient and high quality tourism management system.

As a result, each of the three tourism authorities has set up a coordinating office or designated special staff in charge of the PRD tourist product. Some joint promotional efforts have been made. Tourism brochures specifically introducing and promoting the PRD area were jointly published and distributed by the three partners of the PRD area. The PRD

area as a new tourist product and independent travel destination have been jointly promoted at various international travel fairs or tourism workshops.

### 1.5 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study seeks to gain insight into the perceived destination attributes as well as the importance of motivational attributes, and how these two sets of attributes contribute to the destination image analysis of the PRD sub-region. The contributions of this study are two fold: academic and practical.

1) A sub-regional travel destination might be considered to be a special phenomenon between a single destination and multi-destinations, but destination image studies in the context of a sub-regional travel destination are quite few. The image analysis of the Pearl River Delta area helps to provide some foundation for further research on the same phenomenon of tourism cooperation within a sub-regional travel destination.

2) The investigation of the relationship between perceptions of destination attributes and importance of motivational attributes enhances further research studies about these two sets of attributes to explore the relationship between the destination factor and the psychological factor in the theory of image analysis.

- 3) The identification of destination image in a context of sub-regional destinations allows marketers to better understand their comparative marketing position and to develop and promote their products more cost-effectively and efficiently.
  
- 4) The exploration of differences in perceptions of destination attributes among the sub-regional travel destinations provides valuable information of the different images of destinations to marketers so that they can better understand each other's unique marketing position and conduct cooperative marketing strategies.
  
- 5) The application of two sets of variables, i.e. destination and motivational attributes to image analysis indicates that marketers can create a more practical and competitive destination image based on tourists' perception of destination attributes and importance of motivational attributes.

## CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 RATIONALE

#### 2.1.1 Importance of Destination Image Analysis

Creating and managing an appropriate destination image are critical to effective positioning and marketing strategy (Echtner & Ritchie 1993). Understanding images held by target markets is essential to avoid moving the image into a position held by an able and strong competitor (Gartner 1996). It is generally recognized that one of the most important components of a marketing strategy is product positioning. Basically, positioning involves creating the appropriate image of the product in the minds of the consumers in the targeted markets. Because of their importance, destination marketing organizations often devote considerable time to creating images and to channeling these through various media to targeted consumers who, it is hoped, will decode the messages and respond appropriately (Goodall 1990). The recognized importance of image has led to it emerging as one of the most pervasive topics in the tourism literature (Crompton 1979b, Pearce 1982, Phelps 1986, Gartner and Hunt 1987, Richardson and Crompton 1988, Gartner 1989 and Reilly 1990).



### 2.1.2 Definition of Destination Image

A dictionary definition of image is 'mental conception, perception or idea'. A comprehensive survey of the definition provided in the major destination image measurement studies was conducted and presented by Echtner and Ritchie (1991). Table 2 presents a summary of the various definitions used. It was observed that although many researchers in the tourism field make frequent usage of the term 'destination image', a precise definition of it is often avoided.

Crompton (1979b) defined image as the sum of beliefs, impressions, ideas, and perceptions that people hold of objects, behavior, and events. Assael (1984) defined destination image as the total perception of the destination that is formed by processing information from various sources over time. Kinnear and Taylor (1987) defined image as an average of many separate attitudes toward a company, brand, or concept. Through a literature search, it was found that other related conceptual descriptions of image such as those by Gartner (1989) and Reilly (1990) closely follow the above definitions. As a conclusion, the above definitions about destination image may be summed up like this: it is a sum of perceptions, beliefs or impressions that people hold of a destination before or after the visit.

**Table 1 Definitions Used by Destination Image Researchers**

Reference	Objective	Definition of Image
Hunt (1975)	To measure the images of four states: Utah, Montana, Colorado, Wyoming	"Perceptions held by potential visitors about an area"
Crompton (1977)	To measure the image of Mexico	"Organized representations of a destination in a cognitive system"
Goodrich (1977a)	To measure the image of none destinations: Florida, Hawaii, Mexico, California and five Caribbean islands	Not defined
Crompton (1979b)	To measure the image of Mexico in different States of the United States	"Sum of beliefs, impressions, ideas, and perceptions that people hold of objects, behavior, and events"
Pearce (1982)	To measure and compare the pre-travel and post-travel images of seven countries	Not defined
Haahti & Yavas (1983)	To measure the image of Finland (twelve countries included in the survey)	Not defined
Crompton & Duray (1985)	To measure the image of Texas (while testing alternative approaches to importance-performance analysis)	Not defined
Kale & Weir (1986)	To measure the image of India	Not discussed
Phelps (1986)	To measure pre-travel and post-travel images of Menorca	"Perceptions or impressions of a place"
<i>Tourism Canada</i> (1987)	To measure the image of Canada in various major tourism generating markets	"How a country is perceived relative to others"
Gartner & Hunt (1987)	To measure the change in Utah's image over a 12 year period	"Impressions that a person ...holds about a state in which they do not reside"
Richardson & Crompton (1988)	To explore differences in images held of USA and Canada between French and English Canadians	"Perceptions of vacation attributes"
Gartner(1989)	To measure the images of four states: Utah, Montana, Colorado, Wyoming (utilizing multidimensional scaling techniques)	"A complex combination of various products and associated attributes"
Calantone, et. al. (1989)	To measure the images of eight Pacific Rim countries held by tourists from various countries of origin	"Perceptions of potential tourist destinations"
Reilly (1990)	To measure the image of Montana	"Not individual traits ...but the total impression an entity makes" (ref.: Ditcher)

Source: Echtner and Ritchie (1991: 8)

### 2.1.3 Components and formation of Destination Image

Echtner and Ritchie (1993) suggested that to completely measure destination image, several components must be captured. These include attribute-based images, holistic impressions, and functional, psychological, unique and common characteristics. Images of the tourism product and the destination are composed of the perceptions of individual attributes (such as climate, accommodation facilities, friendliness of the people) as well as more holistic impressions (mental pictures of imagery) of the place. The characteristics of destination image can be classified as functional (e.g. climate, prices, roads, nightlife, mental picture of physical characteristics) and psychological (e.g. friendly people, generally safe, general feeling and impression of the atmosphere of the place); and images of destinations range from those based on “common” functional and psychological traits to those based on more distinctive or “unique” features or feelings.

According to Gartner (1996), “destination image(s) are made up of three distinctly different but hierarchical interrelated components: cognitive, affective, and conative. The interrelationship of these components ultimately determines predisposition for visitation” (p457). The cognitive component is derived from fact and may be viewed as the sum of beliefs and attitudes of the object leading to some internally accepted picture of its attributes. The affective component of image is related to motives in the sense that it is how a person values the object under consideration. Motives determine what we wish to obtain from the object, which then affects the object’s valuation. The affective component becomes

important when a decision to travel is actually being considered. After processing external and internal stimuli about a destination, a decision is made whether or not to travel to the area. This act is the conative component. The conative component of image is analogous to behavior because it is the action component. Together, the three components of image form the travel decision process.

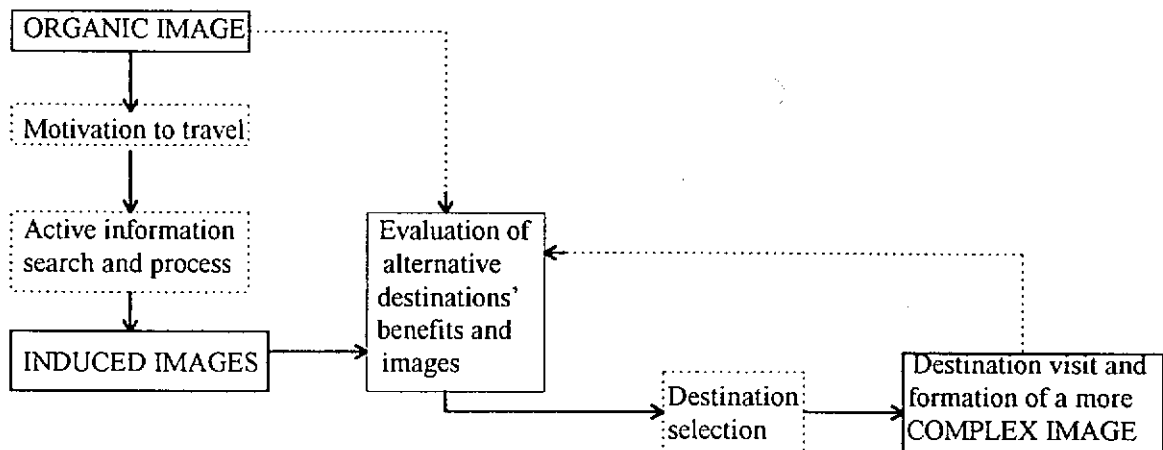
Gunn (1972) referred to images as being formed either on an induced or organic level. He argued that organic images are formed as a result of exposure to newspaper reports, magazine articles, TV reports, and other non-tourism specific information sources, while induced image formation is a function of the marketing and promotion efforts of a destination area. While little can be done to influence organic image, marketers can induce an image by investment in promotion (Gunn 1988). Phelps (1986) contended that images are formed on two levels, primary and secondary. Secondary image formation results from any information received from another source. Primary image formation results from actual visitation. In a sense, Phelps grouped both Gunn's induced and most of organic image formation agents into one type, and separates actual visitation into a distinctly different form of image formation.

Fakeye and Crompton (1991) further pointed out that destination image is conceptualized as evolving from an organic image, through an induced image, to a complex image (see Figure 2). A potential visitor develops organic images of a comparatively large awareness set of potential destinations. Once the desire to take a vacation emerges, the prospect

engages in an active information search guided by whatever motives are driving the desire to travel. As a result, the potential traveler develops more refined induced images of alternative destinations. Upon visiting a selected travel destination, a tourist will develop a more complex image resulting from actual experience in the destination, and experience will feed back and influence the selection process of alternative destination in the next occasion. The more complex image allows people to respond more in terms of a differentiated view and less in terms of simple stereotyping (Crompton 1979b). Stabler (1988) argued that -

“... there is some controversy among researchers, whether the choice of tourist trip is person-determined or destination-determined. This uncertainty reflects lack of empirical evidence on the role information plays in the creation of image. Is it via personal experiences or that of others or via the supply side communication network? Undoubtedly the image built up is influenced by all three sources of information (see Figure 3)”(p134-135).

**Figure 2 A Model of a Tourist's Image Formation Process**



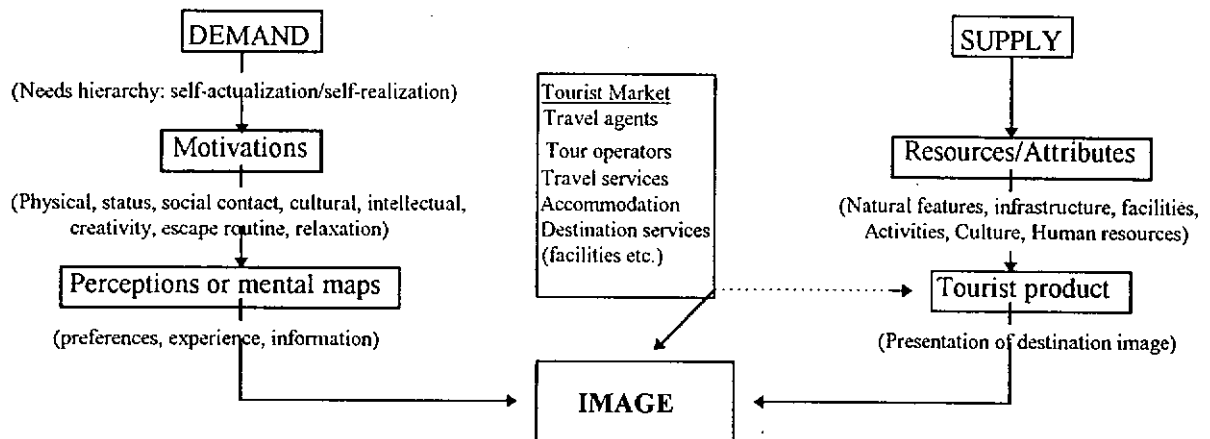
Source: Fakeye and Crompton (1991: 11)

As shown in Figure 3, Stabler further pointed out that -

“...the linkage of destination attributes, image and demand theory has been broadly indicated. The impact of image on demand is not sequential, stemming from signals from the supply side only, as implied in the diagram, but subject to a two-way process with feedback from and to suppliers and to and from consumers. Transition

of information from supply through the marketing of tourism and the media, previous experience and opinions of the other consumers, combined with motivations and socio-economic characteristics form perceptions, the images of tourism and tourist destinations” (p140).

**Figure 3 Tourist Demand and Supply and the Creation of Image**



Source: Stabler (1988: 135)

Based on the above arguments, it can be concluded that image can be formed either from any available source of information or from actual visit. Compared with either an organic image or an induced image, a complex image is a better reflection of people’s perception of the destination which allows people to have more different and influential views. It is also worth mentioning that image may not be formed only by the destination attributes, but also by the affective component of people’s motivations and socio-economic characteristics.

#### 2.1.4 Destination Image Characteristics

It was concluded by Gartner (1996) that destination image may have the following characteristics:

a) Touristic images change slowly; the larger the entity the more slowly the image changes. The reason is that a tourism image is made up of many different parts, including the natural resource base in which activities take place, the socio-cultural system that governs the provision and type of touristic services, and the man-made structures that serve the needs of tourists and may also provide some of the attractions.

b) Induced image formation attempts must be focused and long-term. As a result of the time it takes to change an image, any induced image formation programs must be long-term.

c) The smaller the entity in relation to the whole, the less of a chance to develop an independent image. i.e. the image of a smaller entity is subject to the image(s) held by a larger entity. There are exceptions where a smaller entity has such a strong image that it overpowers the larger area.

d) To be effective, image change depends on an assessment of present images. Changing an image depends on knowing what images prospective travelers now hold and initiating efforts to reinforce existing images or move images in a new direction.

These characteristics indicate that within a certain region, a small place may find itself hard to develop an independent image in comparison to a larger area/region. The situation may be even worse when the larger neighbor's image is overwhelmingly prominent. To create a

new destination image is not an easy job, it requires that the tourism marketers launch a long-term marketing strategy, based at least initially on the assessment of its present images.

According to Gregory (1989), places may project distinctive images as a reflection of the uniqueness of their specific local environment, culture, and economy. Each locality is varied and complex, with each place having its own landscape, history and traditions, cultural patterns, community values and power relations, and these come together in a unique way within the locality. In order to enhance tourism appeal, Shaw and Williams (1994) suggested that destinations need to project their distinctive images. Stabler (1988) suggested that individuals have different images of tourism. This makes it possible to segment markets by appealing to specific nationalities or groups of tourists of differing socio-economic status, ages or interests. It is also possible to differentiate the image according to seasons and activities and facilities offered.

By applying the above principles to the PRD area, it seems interesting to discuss whether and how Guangdong, Hong Kong or Macau can hold any distinctive or independent images independently and also in the form of the PRD sub-regional travel destination.

### **2.1.5 Image Assessment**

There are many studies assessing tourists' images of destinations. Essentially, each method evaluates individuals' perceptions of attributes present in varying degrees within a



destination. Some methods compare attributes across destinations, thereby identifying comparative advantages and disadvantages. Gartner (1996) pointed out that almost every method assumes some knowledge of the key attributes of the destinations as a starting point, although when comparing different destinations it may be more important to test for brand strength than the presence of any particular attributes. Since image measurement is not necessarily a measure of reality, some attributes of a destination not present to any great degree may still be perceived as abundant.

Driscoll, Lawson and Niven (1994) pointed out that, typically, destination image studies have employed semantic differential scales, Likert-type scales, or graphic positioning scales, but the formats for presenting these scales have differed. The most common of these formats, referred to here as a scaled questionnaire, requires respondents to separately rate each destination on the basis of a set of benefit generating attributes. Kinnear and Taylor (1987) noted that image assessment requires the respondents to express their position on many attitudes using a multi-scale questionnaire. However, Gartner (1989) indicated that, one of the biggest drawbacks with attribute models, is that identified attributes (especially those identified by the researcher) may not actually be the most important attributes in the consumer decision process. To solve this problem, a more complex model which introduces the consumer's motivation into image study, is suggested and examined in this research.

### 2.1.6 Attributes Derived in Previous Destination Image Research

Hu and Ritchie (1993) pointed out that, “the attractiveness of a travel destination reflects the feelings, beliefs, and opinions that an individual has about a destination’s perceived ability to provide satisfaction in relation to his or her special vacation needs.”(p25). To compare the concept of attractiveness with destination image definitions as discussed in Chapter 2.1.1, it was noted that destination image and attractiveness have something in common and are closely related. Destination attributes are the criteria by which touristic attractiveness and destination image are measured. The literature review indicates that destination attributes derived in image research are quite similar to those used in previous attractiveness studies.

Earlier examples of comprehensive attraction listings include those developed by Gearing, Swart and Var (1974) and Ritchie and Zins (1978). In an attractiveness study for the Turkish Government, Gearing et. al. (1974) developed a comprehensive approach to measuring attractiveness. They grouped destination attributes into the following five major categories: (1) natural factors, (2) social factors, (3) historical factors, (4) recreational and shopping facilities, and (5) infrastructure, food, and shelter. Destination attributes were not clearly defined until Gearing et. al. established a measure of attractiveness. Criteria setting for attractiveness measurement was also modified into “Day-use Recreational Attractiveness” by Nuttall and Var (1978) in a study on day-use attraction of public park in Canada. Based on the work of Gearing et. al. (1974), Ritchie and Zins (1978) derived a

conceptual framework to measure culture as a determinant of the attractiveness of Quebec, Canada. Their framework contained four dimensions: general factors contributing to the attractiveness of a tourism region; forms of cultural elements; the importance of socio-cultural elements among residents and non-residents of a particular region and evaluation of performance and priorities. In a study of Texas' vacation destinations which examined the within-state travel market, Brayley (1990) further developed a conceptual model of the vacation destination choice process. The model outlined the relationship between the destination elements in the vacation traveler's cognitive domain and those destination attributes that are significant to the potential travelers in the destination choice process. This model proposed that attractiveness was relevant to destination choice behavior.

Echtner and Ritchie (1991) summarized the attributes of destination image used in the studies employing structured methodologies (see Table 2). The list was derived by grouping the attributes used by the various researchers into categories. It was found that the more frequently used attributes are: scenery/natural attractions, friendliness/receptiveness, costs/price levels, climate, tourist sites/activities, nightlife and entertainment.

Two basic approaches are used in product image measurement: structured and unstructured (Echtner and Ritchie 1991). Destination image researchers have a strong preference for structured methodologies. Almost all have used either semantic differential or Likert type scales in the measurement of destination image. The majority of destination image measurement studies have focused on the common, attribute-based component of

**Table 2 Attributes Used by Researchers to Measure Destination Image**

FUNCTIONAL (physical, measurable)	Number of Studies Measuring the Attribute **
Scenery/Natural Attractions	13
Costs/Price Levels	9
Climate	8
Tourist Sites/Activities	8
Nightlife and Entertainment	8
Sports Facilities/activities	8
National Parks/Wilderness Activities	7
Local Infrastructure/Transportation	7
Architecture/Buildings	7
Historic Sites/Museums	6
Beaches	6
Shopping Facilities	5
Accommodation Facilities	5
Cities	4
Fairs, Exhibits, Festivals	2
Facilities for Information and Tours	1
Crowdedness	4
Cleanliness	4
Personal Safety	4
Economic development/Affluence	3
Accessibility	2
Degree of Urbanization	1
Extent of commercialization	1
Political Stability	1
Hospitality/Friendliness/Receptiveness	11
Different Customs/Culture	7
Different Cuisine/Food and Drink	7
Restful/Relaxing	5
Atmosphere (Familiar versus Exotic)	4
Opportunity for Adventure	3
Opportunity to Increase Knowledge	2
Family or Adult Oriented	1
Quality of Service	1
Fame/Reputation	1
PSYCHOLOGICAL (abstract)	

\*\* Total number of studies referenced is 14

destination image such as climate, price, scenery, nightlife, etc., and have not addressed the more holistic and unique components (e.g. general feeling, symbols, mental pictures, must-see sights) as suggested by Pearce (1982), Phelps (1986), and Gartner (1989). Echtner and Ritchie(1991) further pointed out that attribute lists may be incomplete by failing to incorporate all of the relevant functional and psychological characteristics of the destination image. To combat this problem, Echtner and Ritchie suggested that fairly extensive research should be conducted in the primary stage of scale construction.

## **2.2 INTRODUCING MOTIVATION RESEARCH INTO IMAGE STUDY**

### **2.2.1 Importance of Motivational Research**

To market tourism services and destinations well, marketers must understand the motivating factors that lead to travel decisions and consumption behavior (Gee, Choy and Makens 1984). Tourism marketers could use further insights into tourist motivation for the purposes of product development, service quality evaluation and image development (Fodness 1994). According to Schiffman and Kanuk (1994), motivational research continues to be a useful tool for many marketers who want to know the actual reasons underlying consumer behavior, suggest new ways for marketers to present their products to the public, and for developing new ideas and new copy appeals.

Vacation travel service suppliers and providers need to have accurate and reliable information about their customers in order to successfully market their products. In relation to this, Crofts and Rekom (1994) pointed out that -

“... it is the primary purpose (to have accurate and reliable visitor information) for visitor profile studies, however, seldom do studies of this nature reveal the underlying reasons for the trip and tourists’ motives for visiting a particular attraction instead of the competing alternatives. ... Such an understanding can assist management in ‘fine-tuning’ its abilities to help visitors reach their goals, it can also help an organization define its image to be projected in promotional campaigns. ... The real key to understanding image lies in the understanding of the linkages between attributes, consequences, and values that define the perceptual looking-glass through which people view the world and subsequently develop preferences for certain types of experiences”(p99-105).

Stabler (1988) further noted that, “though motivations and preferences, in which images are embodied, are acknowledged as being important, they tend to be ignored by ‘main stream’ economists, because they are either assumed to be relatively stable and therefore do not influence the model, or are considered too complex to cope with” (p137).

### **2.2.2 Relationship Between Destination Image and Tourists’ Motives**

A review of the literature on tourist motivation indicates people travel because they are pushed into making travel decisions by internal forces and pulled by external forces of the destination attributes (Dann 1977; Crompton 1979a). Push factors are considered to be social-psychological constructs of the tourists. Most of the push factors are intrinsic motivators such as the desire for escape, rest and relaxation, prestige, health and fitness,

adventure and social interaction. Pull factors are those that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as it is perceived by those with the propensity to travel and include both tangible resources such as beaches, recreation facilities, and cultural attractions, as well as travelers' perceptions and expectations, such as novelty, benefit expectation and marketing image (Smith 1983). These destination attributes may respond to, stimulate, and reinforce the inherent push factor motivations. Pyo, Mihalik and Uysal (1989) demonstrated the nature of the relationship between two sets of factors - motives and destination attributes, by utilizing canonical correlation analysis. They found that it would be possible to combine attraction attributes with motives on the basis of their interrelationship.

Uysal and Jurowski (1994) examined the nature and extent of the reciprocal relationship between push and pull factors of tourist motivations for pleasure travel. The study found that a reciprocal relationship exists between push and pull factors, that is, the attractiveness of destination attributes (pull factors) changes with variations in motivations and that push factors change with modifications in pull components. More recently, Oh, Uysal and Weaver (1995) and Baloglu and Uysal (1996) also examined the relationship between push and pull factors. They suggested that push and pull factors may react with each other in a reciprocal relationship where destination attributes depend upon motivations for attractiveness while at the same time they contribute to motivating tourist activity.

It is obvious that destination image, which is the most important aspect of a tourist attraction from a marketing point of view, is a pull factor. Social-psychological travel motivators such as the desire for escape, rest and relaxation, prestige, health and fitness, adventure and social interaction, are push factors. Novelty has a closer relationship with the destination than social-psychological motives. Crompton (1979a) expressed novelty as a cultural category of travel motivation. Based on the above discussions, destination images should be related to travel motivators. However, it seems that tourism researchers have not introduced motivation research into destination image analysis. It is assumed that adding motivational research into destination image studies will help to create a better understanding of destination image and to market destination effectively. If several destinations have the same destination image attributes, tourist's preference is likely to be given to a destination which is perceived as most likely to match push motivations with pull destination attributes (Oh et. al. 1995).

### **2.2.3 Motive Attributes**

Dann's (1977) study of visitors' attitudes toward Barbados identified two basic tourist motivations: anomie and ego-enhancement. Both of these proposed tourist motivations were seen by the author as push factors. Crompton (1979a), using a qualitative approach, identified nine motives of pleasure vacationers. Seven motives were classified as social-psychological. They were escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships and



facilitation of social interaction. The two remaining motives, novelty and education, formed an “alternate cultural” category, which has a closer relationship with the destination itself. According to Fodness (1994), in practice, the lists of theoretical reasons for travel have occasionally been operationalized and used to measure the benefits that the individual seeks from the leisure travel experience. In a Florida study, for example, respondents were asked the reason for their visit and to evaluate the importance of some benefits of a Florida vacation such as to enjoy the night life, to shop, and to visit attractions etc. However, while the reasons given for travel and the benefits sought from the travel experience may represent strategies for meeting individual goals and personal needs, it is unlikely that they represent basic travel motivations (Dann 1977; Pearce and Caltabiano 1983).

### **2.3 Overview of Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong in Terms of Their Travel Destination Images**

In reviewing the literature on the destination images of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macau, it was found that there is more literature about Hong Kong’s destination image than that of Macau and Guangdong. Compared with Hong Kong and Macau, there is very little literature about Guangdong’s tourism image. A brief overview for each destination is presented next.

Hong Kong:

Comparatively, the HKTA has a more systematic research system and there is more literature about the Hong Kong tourism industry than that of Macau and Guangdong. For instance, Yau and Chan (1990) looked into tourists' image of Hong Kong by studying its market position among different cities in South East Asia such as Singapore, Bangkok, Taipei, Tokyo, Manila and Kuala Lumpur. Hong Kong was found to have an advantage over other cities in terms of a number of vacation selection criteria, such as 'shopping', 'hotel and restaurant services' and 'entertainment and attractions'. From a political view point, Hobson (1995a) worried about Hong Kong's future tourism prospects. He observed that the issues of airport capacity restraints, shortage of medium-priced hotels, possible visa problems beyond 1997 and political odds between the mainland China and Taiwan may hinder its future development. Shaw (1995) pointed out that, since much of the increase in tourist arrivals to Hong Kong has come as a result of the growth of inter-regional tourism, Hong Kong's longhaul markets of North America and Western Europe have continued to perform sluggishly, causing tour operators to worry whether Hong Kong is in danger of losing a balanced market mix. Moreover, taking a critical look at the length of stay of longhaul tourists (see Table 1), it may be found that the length of stay of the longhaul markets - North America, West Europe and Australia/New Zealand are disappointingly shortened, even though the HKTA promoted the "Stay An Extra Day in Hong Kong" campaign for quite a few years before launching the new "Wonders Never Cease" worldwide image positioning campaign in 1995. Considering the constraints faced by Hong Kong, it was suggested that the cluster effect of having other types of attractions in the vicinity would provide Hong Kong with a new market position, which will help the territory

to continue to attract new markets and encourage tourists to extend their stay (Hobson and Ko 1994). In the long term, Hong Kong will have to develop its tourism planning and strategy from a regional perspective (Hobson 1995a). The HKTA has attempted to create a key image statement for the longhaul markets as follows: " Hong Kong is one of the wonders of the world -- a uniquely vibrant destination blending Asian mystique and Chinese lifestyles, festivals and culture, with the excitement and dynamism of a modern, cosmopolitan destination." One of the HKTA's marketing strategies is to promote Hong Kong as an essential part of the China visit, by working closely with the fellow members of the PRD tourism marketing organization and cooperating with CNTA and its "Visit China Year - 1997" campaign, to position Hong Kong as a complementary destination for tourists to China (HKTA 1995).

**Table 3 Length of Stay (nights) in Hong Kong by Major Longhaul Market Areas (1993 -1996), Compared with Recommended Length of Stay by HKTA**

		Length of stay	Recommended length of stay
All Countries:	'93	3.8	5.6
	'94	3.9	5.6
	'95	3.9	5.5
	'96	3.7	5.3
USA/Canada:	'93	3.8	6.1
	'94	3.5	5.9
	'95	3.5	6.1
	'96	3.7	6.1
West Europe:	'93	4.0	6.1
	'94	3.8	6.1
	'95	3.8	6.0
	'96	4.1	6.3
Australia/N.Z.:	'93	4.5	7.1
	'94	4.4	6.9
	'95	4.0	6.7
	'96	4.0	6.7

Source: Hong Kong Tourist Association: A Statistical Review of Tourism (1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997).

According to Boxall (1996), a healthy rivalry between members of the PRD triumvirate is pushing each destination within the region to develop its own unique aspects. Hong Kong, in particular, is all set to take full advantage of this association with renewed enthusiasm. The best known project is, of course, Chek Lap Kok (CLK) international airport, its first runway is scheduled to be completed by April, 1998. Associated with the new airport are 10 core programs comprising road and rails links, massive reclamation works and a third harbor crossing to the west.

#### Macau:

In the past, Macau has tried to differentiate itself from the bright lights and fast pace of Hong Kong. One of its slogans has been 'A Touch of Europe in the Heart of Asia'. However, as Shaw (1995) noted, despite Macau's myriad of attractions, particularly its cheaper and extremely competitive hotel rooms, it seems that tourists from Europe, America and Australia are not interested in Macau. Boey (1994) noted, 'Macau still suffers from an image problem. It has difficulty shaking off its seedy image - a by-product of gambling (and associated activities such as prostitutes and crime) which is still the main draw. Furthermore, tourists for the major part are still day-trippers'. Hobson (1995b) also pointed out that Macau's tourism industry has been linked with its legalized gambling industry which may have problems in the future given the uncertainties facing the future of Macau. Thus, it was recommended that the MGTO, 'on the one hand, needs to integrate

itself into the development of the region and obtain a sufficient share of the mainstream growth of tourism in the PRD. On the other hand, it needs to carve out a niche for itself and retain a uniqueness of its own' (Hobson 1995b). So, for Macau, the primary task is to find a unique market position.

With the opening of the new international airport, recent initiatives have been taken by both private and public sectors to boost visitor arrivals to Macau and establish the territory as an "independent" destination from Hong Kong. According to Logarta (1996), The Macau Government Tourist Office, the prime architect of Macau's brand-new image as a historical entrepot port and no longer a gambler's Mecca, is focusing on the airport's long-term benefits and has been working hard convincing the trade to share its vision. Positioning itself in the dual role as 'a slice of Europe in the heart of Asia' and a gateway to China in the PRD initiative with its partners Hong Kong and Guangdong Province, Macau is planning a number of projects intended to retain the destination's old world charm with modern-day facilities and landscaping. These include a new museum of architecture and history, theater, outdoor stage, gardens, terraces and continental-style cafes, all in the shadow of the ruins of St. Paul. While the Macau government's efforts to highlight the colony's rich cultural past is winning praise, some quarters still believe the introduction of large-scale leisure projects could be the missing piece in the tourism puzzle needed to transform the casino capital of Asia into a full-fledged tourist destination with longer-stay appeal. Taking the lead, the Ocean World of Macau on Taipa Island is to be built. Phase one is to be completed in two years' time and phase two the following year. The 24-hour

theme center will combine the attractions of Hong Kong's Ocean Park and Singapore's Sentosa Island, but marked by a strong Portuguese flavor. It is believed that the blend of historical sites and 'edu-tainment' parks will help strengthen Macau's appeal by day, hopefully convincing people to spend longer holidays in the territory.

#### Guangdong:

Compared with Hong Kong and Macau, there is little literature about Guangdong's tourism image. By looking at China's tourism image, however, it was found out that China used to have unsatisfactory and negative images rather than a positive one. For instance, as Schrock, Adams and Lung (1989) observed, China faced the problem of finding qualified hospitality workers -

'The country was closed so long that its standards of living are different from those of other societies. Consequently, service workers are surprised that tourists demand more from them when the tourists are already enjoying the best the country has to offer. Even after ten years of being open to international tourists, such basics as confirmed reservations, property maintenance, quality control, sanitation, and staff training are large hurdles to overcome.'(p.69).

Li (1987), who was then the Director of the Promotion Department of China National Tourism administration, also pointed out that, 'in the wake of fast growth, a number of problems cropped up due to lack of experience. Most pressing are the insufficient haulage capacity on PR China's domestic airlines and an acute shortage of accommodation in ...

major cities. More qualified executives are needed and there is much room for improvement in services' (p.90).

As a province of China, Guangdong would most probably bear the same image as the rest of China. Even in recent years, Guangdong still seems to hold more negative impacts than positive ones. "Although Guangzhou is a famous city in China, its historical sites are not as attractive as those in Beijing, Xi'an and Kaifeng; and its scenic spots and facilities are not as good as those of Hangzhou and Suzhou"; "the city of Shenzhen itself is not attractive for visitors" (*Travel Business Analyst* 1993). These statements may put Guangdong in a passive position in this triangular cooperation. After a visit to Guangdong, Mr. Harold Wu, Chairman of the Hong Kong Travel Industry Council, pointed out -

'China is a huge country, it is hard for her to select only one promotional theme with one national tourism image for its whole country. Each province including Guangdong should promote tourism based on its own characteristics. Guangdong should establish its own image and improve its competitiveness by attending big travel trade fairs and by strengthening connections with Hong Kong's travel industry.' (*Travel Industry Monthly* 1996)

According to Lai (1996), however, Guangdong is becoming a worthy PRD partner. The facilities and services are much better than two years ago. Guangdong has worked hard to upgrade its hotel and the services of their guides are now very good.

## 2.4 DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Due to its important role in tourism marketing research, the term “destination image” is frequently used by researchers, however, a precise definition is lacking. To conclude the definitions used by researchers may be regarded as the sum of perceptions, beliefs or impressions that people hold of a destination before or after the visit. It is generally argued that the formation of destination image should not only be affected by the supply side (destination attributes), but also by the demand side (tourists’ motivational attributes).

Destination image analysis is critical to developing an effective marketing strategy. From a marketing point of view, it is essential for destinations to project their distinctive images instead of common ones in order to improve their awareness and competitiveness. Each destination may hold a distinctive image no matter how close it is to its neighboring destinations and how tiny it is in comparison with the others. However, a small destination may not find it easy to develop an independent image.

Compared with either an organic image or an induced image, a complex image is a better reflection of people’s perception of the destination which allows people to have more different and influential views. A built-up image is influenced not only by the destination attributes, but also consumers’ motivations and socio-economic characteristics. It is certain that image is related to motives and is partly determined by motives. From a marketing point of view, destination images can be regarded as pull factors, and some travel



motivators are push factors. It is assumed that adding motivational research into destination image studies will help to create a better understanding of destination image.

In a search of the literature, it was found that all the destination image studies have focused either on single destination analysis or on multi-destinations. To date, none of the destination image studies have examined image in the context of a sub-region.

## **CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND FRAMEWORK**

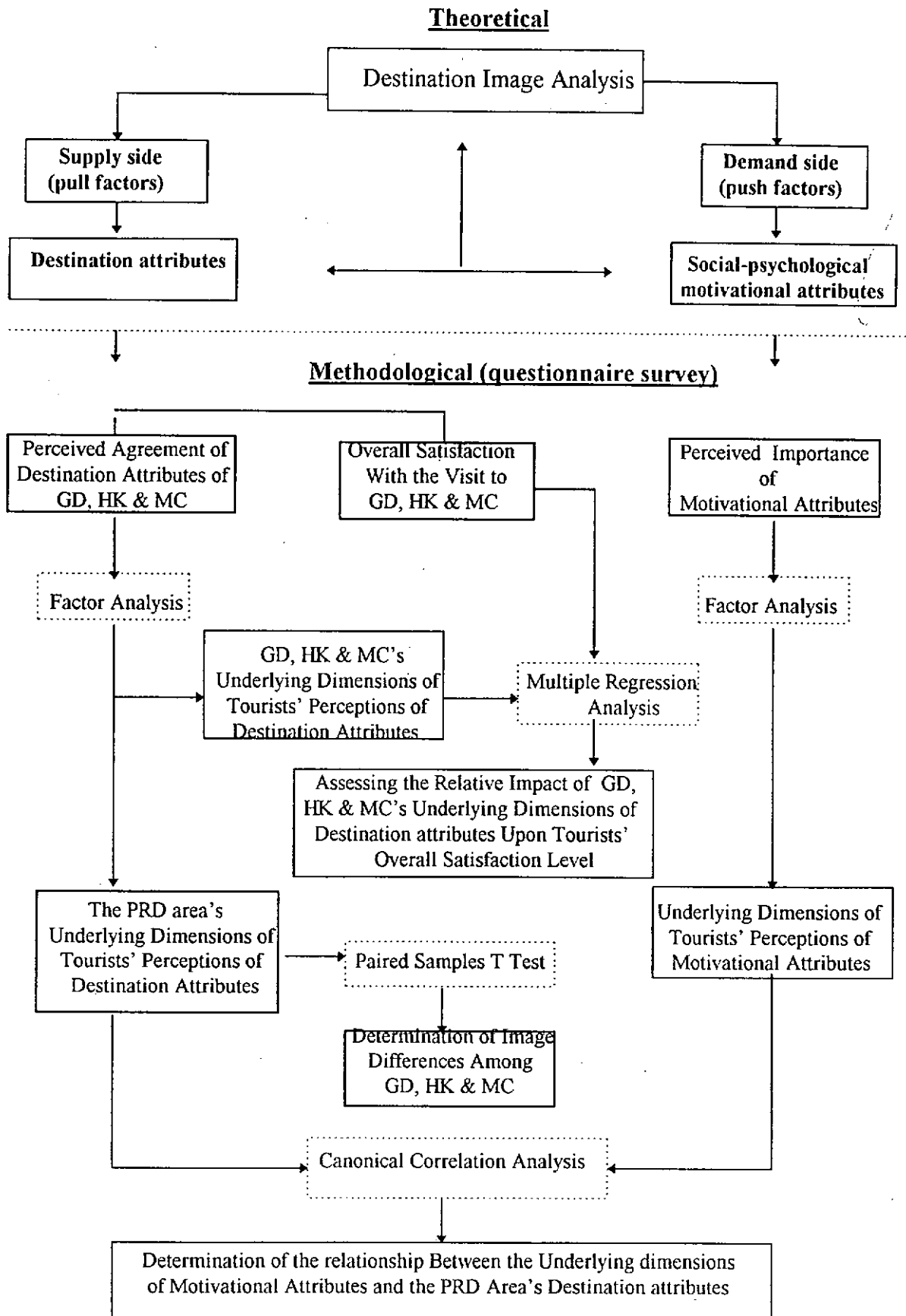
#### **3.1.1 The Research Design**

This is a descriptive cross-sectional research study which aims at describing the images of the PRD sub-regional travel destinations by international pleasure tourists. The lack of empirical research with regard to whether distinctive images exist among the three Pearl River Delta sub-regional travel destinations, and whether there is a relationship between destination attributes and motivational attributes form the basis for this study. To achieve the stated objectives, a questionnaire survey was employed to measure: 1) tourists' perceived images of the PRD travel destinations, and 2) tourists' perceived importance of motivational attributes.

#### **3.1.2 The Research Analysis Framework**

A research analysis framework was developed to ensure that all the analyses set for this research could be implemented (see Figure 4). Stabler's (1988) linkage of destination attributes, image and demand theory (see Chapter 2.1.3 and Figure 3), i.e. "transition of information from supply through the marketing of tourism and the media, previous experience and opinions of the other consumers, combined with motivations and socio-

Figure 4 - The Research Analysis Framework



economic characteristics form perception, the images of tourism and tourist destinations”(p140), form the theoretical basis for this study. Based on this theory, a questionnaire was designed by including both destination (supply side) attributes and motivational (demand side) attributes. To conduct the research work, various methods were employed.

Mean score ratings of tourists' perceived destination attributes and importance of motivational attributes in choosing the PRD area were computed so as to yield the relative weightings of each of the 31 destination attributes in terms of tourists' perceptions and each of the 22 motivational attributes in terms of tourists' perceived importance. Factor analysis was used to identify the underlying dimensions used by tourists in evaluating the destination attractions as well as rating the motivational importance in visiting the Pearl River Delta travel destinations.

Following identification of the underlying image and motivation dimensions derived from factor analysis, paired samples t-test analysis was used to identify whether significant differences of destination image existed among the three places. Multiple regression analysis was then employed to identify the important destination dimensions in affecting tourists' overall satisfaction level. In order to justify whether tourists' perceived images of a destination were affected not only by the destination (supply side) attributes, but also by tourists' socio-psychological motives (demand side), canonical correlation analysis was used

to determine the relationship between the underlying dimensions of destination attributes and motivation attributes.

### 3.2 THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

A self-administered questionnaire instrument was developed and it consisted of four sections (see Appendix B).

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to identify the individual images of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau in terms of destination-based image attributes. Respondents were asked to rate the attractiveness of the three destinations on a five-point Likert scale varying from “strongly disagree - (1)” to “strongly agree - (5)”.

To create a list of destination attributes for the questionnaire, previous destination image studies were reviewed, most of the frequently used attributes in image studies (Echtner and Ritchie 1991) were included. Related articles and promotional brochures on Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau were also examined to identify any other additional attributes. Personal interviews with the three tourism authorities of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, respectively were also conducted to assess their image differences. Based on the above, a list of destination attributes relating to the three PRD travel destinations was compiled. The list was sent to the three NTOs again for double-checking, to see whether there were any other important attributes that had not been included. Some amendments

were made based on their comments. As a result, a total of thirty-two destination attributes were selected. Since only Macau had legal casinos, the item of “exciting casinos” was specifically included for Macau. Thus, Guangdong and Hong Kong had thirty-one attributes listed. These destination attributes are composed of a series of items dealing with the respondents’ perceptions of the PRD travel destinations (see Table 4) in the following categories:

- . historical and cultural attractions;
- . natural/rural/urban scenic spots;
- . festivals/interesting activities;
- . accommodation/food/shopping;
- . local peoples’ attitudes;
- . other travel related conditions (e.g. safety/transport/customs)

A measure of overall attractiveness - “In general, how would you rate the overall attractiveness of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau ?” - was also asked. Respondents were asked to rate their response on a seven-point Likert scale varying from “very unattractive - (1)” to “very attractive - (7)”. Another question measured the extent to which respondents’ expectations were met and they rated their response on a seven-point Likert scale varying from “much worse than expected - (1)”, “worse than expected - (2)”, “somewhat worse than expected - (3)”, “neutral - (4)”, “somewhat better than expected - (5)”, “better than expected - (6)”, to “much better than expected - (7)”. To examine the overall satisfaction level, respondents were asked “Overall, how satisfied were you with the visit to the Pearl River Delta region - Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau ?” A seven-point Likert scale varying from “very dissatisfied - (1)” to “very satisfied - (7)” was used.

The second section of the questionnaire measured the respondents' perceived importance of motivational attributes when making a decision to select the PRD area as the pleasure travel destination. Respondents were asked to rate the motivational attributes on a five-point Likert scale varying from "not at all important - (1)" to "extremely important - (5)". The motivational attributes were primarily based on and gleaned from the literature reviewed (Crompton 1979a, Dann 1977). The motives identified by Crompton (1979a) were referenced as a basis of the motivation attributes. Relaxation and kinship motivation were not included as the PRD area is not a resort-orientated travel destination compared with Thailand or Bali. This study mainly focused on international tourists, and the three respective tourism authorities did not identify relaxation and kinship as important motivators when developing their marketing strategies for international tourists. All the selected attributes were assumed to be relevant to the destination image of the PRD. A total of twenty-two motivation attributes were selected representing the various major dimensions of personal fulfillment/social, sightseeing, new experiences, prestige, novelty seeking and benefit seeking (see Table 5).

The third section of the questionnaire was designed to examine travel behavior such as tourists' purpose of visit and the number of times that they have visited the PRD area. The final section of the questionnaire obtained information concerning the demographic characteristics of respondents including gender, age, place of residence.

**Table 4 Destination Attributes \***

<p><b>Historical &amp; Cultural Attractions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typical Southern Chinese traditions</li> <li>• Typical Southern Chinese life style</li> <li>• Interesting sites of China's modern history</li> <li>• Mixture of Chinese and western culture</li> <li>• A feeling of European culture</li> </ul> <p><b>Natural/Rural/Urban Scenic Spots</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attractive rural and natural scenery</li> <li>• Amusement and theme parks</li> <li>• Attractive urban and city sights</li> <li>• A flavor of cosmopolitan life</li> <li>• Interesting museums</li> <li>• Interesting open street market</li> </ul> <p><b>Festivals/Interesting Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interesting festivals/events</li> <li>• Variety of entertainment activities</li> <li>• Interesting night life</li> <li>• Exciting casinos (for Macau only)</li> </ul> <p><b>Local People's Attitudes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local people are helpful</li> <li>• Local people are friendly and courteous</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accommodation/Food/Shopping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfortable hotel rooms</li> <li>• Satisfactory service in hotels/restaurants</li> <li>• Reasonable hotel rates</li> <li>• A variety of food in restaurants</li> <li>• High-quality food/cuisine in restaurants</li> <li>• Reasonable prices in restaurants</li> <li>• Great variety of shopping</li> <li>• Satisfactory service when shopping</li> <li>• Reasonable prices in stores</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Travel Related Conditions</b> (safety/transport/customs, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A safe place to travel</li> <li>• Convenient transport within the city</li> <li>• Clean facilities and amenities</li> <li>• Readily available tourist information</li> <li>• An easily accessible destination</li> <li>• Convenient immigration &amp; customs procedures</li> </ul>
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\* as used in the study questionnaire

**Table 5 Motivational attributes \***

<p><b>Personal Fulfillment/Social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting new people</li> <li>• Maintaining ties with my cultural roots</li> <li>• Enhancing social interaction</li> </ul> <p><b>Sightseeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viewing beautiful natural or rural scenery</li> <li>• Visiting cultural/historical attractions</li> <li>• Visiting mainly famous places and attractions</li> </ul> <p><b>Novelty Seeking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not to plan a vacation in detail so as to have something unexpected or surprising</li> <li>• Seeking adventure</li> <li>• Participating in activities that offer thrills</li> <li>• Experiencing new and different things</li> <li>• Escaping from the daily routine which bores me.</li> </ul>	<p><b>New Experiences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning about a new culture or area</li> <li>• Having fun or being entertained</li> <li>• Experiencing a different life style</li> </ul> <p><b>Prestige</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Going to places where my friends or most people have not been</li> <li>• Visiting a vacation destination which most people value and /or appreciate</li> <li>• Fulfilling a dream of visiting a vacation destination I have always wanted to.</li> <li>• Going to a safe place</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefit Seeking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking advantage of discounted fares/tour package price</li> <li>• Enjoying Chinese food</li> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Enjoying variety of night life</li> </ul>
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\* as used in the study questionnaire



The questions were carefully designed to ensure that there was no ambiguity and that it was clear to the respondents. The questionnaire was developed in English and translated into Japanese, Korean and Chinese. The English version and subsequently the Chinese version were amended several times after receiving comments from several English speaking and Chinese speaking lecturers of the Department of Hotel & Tourism Management, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The Japanese and Korean translation work was undertaken by the marketing staff of the China National Tourism Administration.

### **3.3 PILOT TESTING OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **3.3.1 Content Validity**

A pilot test was implemented to assess the content validity of the questionnaire before the survey was undertaken. Content validity refers to the extent to which an instrument covers the range of meanings included in the concept (Babbie 1992). The pilot test was conducted in November and December, 1996. Thirty one respondents who attended PRD tours organized by the China Travel Service - Hong Kong were sampled and asked to fill in the proposed questionnaire. In addition to filling in the questionnaire, they were asked about the clarity and understanding of the questionnaire. Consequently, some minor adjustments were made regarding some questionnaire wording. Of the 31 respondents in the pilot test, 13 were male and 18 were female; All of them were on vacation travel; 29 were first time visitors to all the three PRD travel destinations and 2 were repeat visitors who had at least

visited one of the destinations twice. For the country of residence, 12 were from Japan, 7 from South Korea, 4 from Taiwan, 3 from Southeast Asia, 2 from North America, 2 from West Europe, and 1 from Australia/New Zealand.

### **3.3.2 Reliability**

A reliability test was conducted to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement of perceptions of the 31 destination and 22 motive items, respectively. To assess the reliability of the measures, the coefficient alpha was used with coefficients greater than or equal to 0.70 considered acceptable and a good indication of construct reliability (Nunnally 1978). The reliability (Cronbach's alpha) coefficients of the 31 image attributes for Guangdong, Hong Kong and the 32 items for Macau were 0.93, 0.91, 0.90, respectively. The overall reliability coefficient for all the 22 motive attributes was 0.84. These coefficients are above the minimum acceptable levels and it can be concluded that the respective scale items were reliable.

### **3.4 SAMPLING DESIGN**

A sample design consists of three elements: 1). the sampling frame, 2). the sample selection process and 3). the size of the sample (Churchill 1995). The sampling frame is the list of population elements from which the sample will be drawn i.e. the sampling frame

determines which groups are to be covered by this research (Churchill 1995). In this study, the target population included international tourists on a tour itinerary covering Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. Tourists from mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau were excluded. A tourist is defined as any individual who is a temporary visitor, possessing a fixed place of abode, traveling in the expectation of business or pleasure, who stays overnight at a place other than his or her own and involves an exchange of money (Ananth, DeMicco, Moreo and Howey 1992). Since this study focused on tourists traveling for pleasure purposes, business travelers were excluded.

Since the China Travel Service (CTS) - Hong Kong is the only tour operator which organizes the PRD package tours, the survey was conducted through the CTS - Hong Kong. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents by CTS Hong Kong's tour escorts. Together with the questionnaires, a memorandum i.e. 'Conducting the PRD Tourist Survey' (see Appendix A) was sent to the tour leaders and escorts. The memorandum covered the background of the survey and provided instructions for tour escorts / leaders distributing the questionnaire to ensure that the escorts were fully informed of the questionnaire and respondents would not be misled when filling in the questionnaires.

As a sub-regional travel destination, the PRD is a new product and is still quite unfamiliar for many potential tourists. Thus, the actual number of visitors choosing the PRD area for traveling is still small and largely unknown. Thus, to sample and collect data from such a small and unknown population proved to be difficult. Due to the nature of the population,

the sample was non-randomly selected. A quota sample was used with males and females equally selected for inclusion in the study. The survey started from January 1997 and lasted for three months until the end of March 1997. A total sample size of 303 respondents was obtained.

### 3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Over previous years, the recognized importance of image has led to it emerging as one of the most pervasive topics in the tourism literature, and various analysis techniques had been employed in the image studies. A summary of the analysis conducted was presented previously in Figure 4. This section will provide more details concerning data analysis including its justification. Techniques used in image analysis include Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) (Yau and Chan 1990, Goodrich 1977a), Semantic Differential Scaling (SDS) (Driscoll et. al. 1994), benefit bundles ( Goodrich 1977b, Haahti 1986), multiple discriminant analysis (Scott, Schewe and Frederick 1978), repertory grid analysis (Embacher and Buttle 1989), free elicitation (Reilly 1990), and cognitive distance analysis (Ankomah, Crompton and Baker 1996). However, the most commonly used technique for image analysis is factor analysis. Nevertheless, factor analysis is mostly used to provide a foundation for other assessment techniques. Gartner (1996) pointed out that, when using factor analysis, the number of attributes measured is dependent on acceptable survey length, as the procedure allows for data reduction of many variables into a few manageable image factors. This is one of the major advantages of utilizing factor analysis for image research.

As stated in Chapter One, five objectives and three hypotheses were generated in this study. In order to achieve the stated objectives and to test the hypotheses, both descriptive (frequencies) and inferential statistics analyses (factor analysis, paired samples t-test, multiple regression analysis and canonical correlation analysis) were employed. Data was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Windows Version 6.0 (SPSS) program and analyzed accordingly. The data was analyzed as follows:

### **3.5.1 Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics were used to consolidate the data. A frequency analysis was conducted for all the questions in the questionnaire to examine the distribution of the responses. Mean ratings were computed for the perceived destination attributes and the motivational attributes.

### **3.5.2 Factor Analysis**

Factor analysis is an interdependence multivariate analysis method that takes a large number of variables and attempts to find a small number of factors in common which account for their interrelation. The primary assumption of factor analysis is that there are underlying patterns of a few relationships among a large set of variables. Its primary purpose is to

gather this large set of variables into more or less homogeneous composites of all the important variables in the larger set, so that each composite variable becomes the surrogate for a number of other variables. The operating principle is that a number of variables really mean the same thing to a respondent along one underlying dimension (Lewis 1984).

In this study, factor analysis was implemented to: 1) find out the underlying dimensions of tourists' perceived destination attributes of the Pearl River Delta as a whole (Objective 1). Since there were no perceived scores for the whole PRD area destination attributes, a composite index/measure of PRD attributes was obtained from the measures obtained for each of the three areas of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, and 2) find out the underlying dimensions of tourists' perceived motivational attributes when choosing the Pearl River Delta area as a travel destination (Objective 4).

The principal-component method and varimax rotation were used. The appropriateness of factor analysis was assessed by correlation, measures of sampling adequacy (MSA), partial correlation among variables, and Cronbach's reliability alpha. The criteria for the number of factors to be extracted were based on eigenvalue, percentage of variance, significance of factor loading, and assessment of the structure. Only factors with eigenvalue greater than 1 were considered significant. The solution that accounted for more than 50% of the total variance was considered to be satisfactory. A variable was considered of practical significance and included in a factor when its factor loading was equal to or greater than 0.4.

### 3.5.3 Paired Samples T Test

The main purpose of using paired samples t-test is to measure the same variable on two different occasions for the same subject. Paired samples t-test was applied to determine whether significant image differences existed among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau (Objective 2) and to test Hypothesis 1 - "The three PRD travel destinations of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau are perceived by international tourists to have different destination images."

It might be noted that paired samples t-tests were conducted for analysis rather than using One-way ANOVA because the sample variable of interests are paired and violate the ANOVA assumption of independent groups. In this study, the variables were the summated mean scores for each destination dimension - Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. The scores were based on the factor analysis groupings of the pooled sample of the PRD area. To determine the significance of the difference in the summated mean scores between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, the t-value, degree of freedom, and 2-tail significance were examined. If the value for 2-tail significance was less than 0.05, then the difference between the scores was considered to be statistically significant.

### 3.5.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the relative impact of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau's destination dimensions upon tourists' overall satisfaction level (Objective 3) and to test Hypothesis 2 - "Tourists to a particular travel destination in the PRD sub-region have a unique set of determinant dimensions leading to their satisfaction with the destination".

Regression analysis is a statistical technique by which we can analyze the relationship between a dependent variable and a set of independent variables. Unlike correlation analysis, regression analysis also describes the nature of the relationship. Regression analysis provides measurements of the accuracy of the predictions, based on the explained variance, and measures the importance of the predictor variables (independent variables) in explaining the variance in the criterion variable (dependent variable). The multiple R represents the multiple correlation coefficient, which is the correlation between the criterion variable and the weighted sum of the predictor variables.  $R^2$  states the explained variance. The overall test for "goodness of fit" of the regression equation is the F-ratio, which expresses the significance of multiple R and the entire equation. Beta weights are themselves partial regression coefficients. The absolute value of the Beta weights indicates the rank order of importance of the predictor variables. The squares of the Beta weights ( $Beta^2$ ) tell us the relative importance of the predictor variables (Lewis 1985). Three values were used to assess variable collinearity: (1) the tolerance value, (2) its inverse - the variance inflation



factor (VIF), and (3) condition index. These measures indicate the degree to which each independent variable is explained by the other independent variables. Tolerance is the amount of variability of the selected independent variable not explained by the other independent variables. Thus very small tolerance values (and large VIF values) denote high collinearity. A common cutoff threshold is a tolerance value of .10, which corresponds to VIF values above 10; and a condition index greater than 30 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black 1995, Belsley 1991).

To employ the multiple regression analysis in this study, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau were analyzed separately. The method of entry used for the model was the backward elimination. Tourists' overall satisfaction with each destination visit was separately used as the dependent variable. Standardized factor scores of the underlying dimensions were used as the independent variable measures. The significant factors that remained in the equation were shown in order of importance based on the beta coefficients. The higher the coefficient, the more the factor explained the contribution of the destination attributes to the tourists' satisfaction.

### **3.5.5 Canonical Correlation Analysis**

Canonical correlation analysis was employed to examine the relationship between the destination attributes and motivational attributes (Objective 5) and to test Hypothesis 3 - "There is a positive relationship between the destination image dimensions and the

motivation dimensions - i.e. personal fulfillment/social, sightseeing, new experience, prestige and novelty seeking.

Canonical analysis is a method that deals with a composite association between sets of multiple criterion and predictor variables. This technique makes it possible to develop a number of independent canonical functions that maximize the correlation between the linear composites of sets of criterion and predictor variables. Each canonical function is actually based on the correlation between two canonical variates, one variate for the dependent variables and one for the independent variables. The unique feature of canonical correlation is that the variates are derived to maximize their correlation (Hair et. al. 1995).

The first step of canonical correlation analysis is to derive one or more canonical functions. Each function consists of a pair of variates, one representing the independent variables and the other representing the dependent variables. The result of canonical correlation analysis is that the first pair of canonical variates is derived so as to have the highest intercorrelation possible between the two sets of variables. The next pair of canonical variates is then derived so that it exhibits the maximum relationship between the two sets of variables (variates) not accounted for by the previous pair of variates, and so forth. The strength of the relationship between the pairs of variates is reflected by the canonical correlation. When squared, the canonical correlation represents the amounts of variance in one canonical variate accounted for by the other canonical variate. Squared canonical correlations are called canonical roots or eigenvalues.

To decide which canonical functions to be interpreted, three criteria were used: 1) level of statistical significance of the function, 2) magnitude of the canonical correlation, and 3) redundancy measure for the percentage of variance accounted for from the two sets. Tested by the F statistic, the level of significance of a canonical correlation considered to be acceptable for interpretation is the 0.05 level. Only variate pairs with a redundancy index greater than 1.5% for both the predictor variates and criterion variates were considered in the final analysis, because low redundancy indicates that little variation in one variate can be accounted for by the other variate.

## CHAPTER FOUR - RESULTS

### 4.1 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

600 questionnaires were distributed to the tourists through appointed tour guides on the Pearl River Delta tour organized by the China Travel Service - Hong Kong. The survey period started in January 1997 and was completed by the end of March. A total of 350 questionnaires were completed by the respondents, indicating a response rate of 58%. Among the completed questionnaires, 303 were usable. The reason for the relatively low response rate is that the survey was conducted with the help of tour guides at the end of the Pearl River Delta tour, and was beyond the researcher's control. Some tour guides noticed that some respondents were unwilling to complete the questionnaire which was considered to be too long to fill in while traveling on their return trip to Hong Kong.

The demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table 6. The majority of them were female (54.1%) and the rest were male (45.9%). The main age groups were between 41 and 50 years (28.4%), 51-60 years (25.1%), and 31-40 years (21.5%). Only 2.3% were aged under 21 and 7.3% over 60. Regarding the country of residence, tourists from South Korea and Japan dominated the total sample (33.3% and 29%, respectively), followed by Taiwan (17.2%), West Europe (7.9%), Southeast Asia (5.9%), North America (4.6%), and Australia/New Zealand (2.0%). In respect to the actual number of tourists received by the

China Travel Service - Hong Kong, this distribution was proportional to the existing profile of their customers during the survey period.

#### **4.2 TRAVELING CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

The number of visits to the PRD and trip purpose was also obtained and results are shown in Table 7. The majority of respondents were first time visitors. The percentage of first time visitors to Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau were 91.7%, 68.6% and 86.8%, respectively. Most of the respondents considered themselves as pleasure tourists, coming to the Pearl River Delta area for vacation. The percentage of tourists visiting Guangdong for pleasure was 94.1%, 85.5% for Hong Kong and 93.4% for Macau.

#### **4.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THE DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES**

The mean scores of the destination attributes of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau are presented in Table 8. The overall attribute mean scores of the Pearl River Delta as a destination are also shown in the table. They were derived by summing up the scores of the three places and then dividing by 3.

With regard to the perceptions of the PRD area as a whole, it was found that all the attributes' mean scores were above 3.0 on a 5 point scale with responses ranging from 1

**Table 6 Demographic Profiles of Respondents (n=303)**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Place of Residence</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	139	45.9	North America	14	4.6
Female	164	54.1	West Europe	24	7.9
			Australia/New Zealand	6	2.0
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	Taiwan	52	17.2
20 or below	7	2.3	Southeast Asia	18	5.9
21 - 30	47	15.5	Japan	88	29.0
31 - 40	65	21.5	South Korea	101	33.3
41 - 50	86	28.4			
51 - 60	76	25.1			
61 or above	22	7.3			

**Table 7 Traveling Profiles of the Respondents (n=303)**

<b>No. of Visits</b>	<b>Guangdong</b>		<b>Hong Kong</b>		<b>Macau</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
1	278	91.7	208	68.6	263	76.5
2	14	4.6	40	13.2	23	7.6
3	4	1.3	23	7.6	6	2.0
4 or above	7	2.3	32	10.6	11	3.6
<b>Purpose of Visit</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Vacation	285	94.1	259	85.5	283	93.4
Business	14	4.6	23	7.6	17	5.6
Visiting friends or relatives	1	.3	21	6.9	0	0
En route	3	1.0	0	0	3	1.0

Table 8 Respondents' Perceptions of the Destination Attributes of the Pearl River Delta Region (n=303)

Destination Attributes	PRD Sub-region		Guangdong		Hong Kong		Macau	
	Mean*	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std Dev
<b>Historical &amp; cultural attractions:</b>								
Mixture of Chinese and western culture	3.55	.70	2.84	.96	4.02	.84	3.80	.82
A feeling of European culture	3.53	.63	2.60	.85	3.94	.89	4.04	.79
Typical Southern Chinese traditions	3.46	.66	3.85	.88	3.28	.71	3.24	.72
Interesting sites of China's modern history	3.42	.74	3.81	1.02	3.30	.88	3.15	.83
Typical Southern Chinese life style	3.34	.66	3.65	.86	3.24	.86	3.12	.81
<b>Natural/rural/urban scenic spots:</b>								
Attractive urban and city sights	3.47	.75	3.15	.93	3.94	.94	3.32	.91
Amusement and theme parks	3.42	.65	3.59	.93	3.67	.80	2.99	.74
Interesting museums	3.32	.83	3.38	1.06	3.41	.95	3.16	.84
Interesting open street market	3.31	.66	3.40	.92	3.62	.84	2.90	.68
Attractive rural and natural scenery	3.25	.76	3.67	1.01	3.39	.94	2.68	.92
A flavor of cosmopolitan life	3.19	.67	2.98	.88	3.80	.99	2.78	.75
<b>Festival/interesting activities:</b>								
Interesting festivals/events	3.49	.68	3.57	.82	3.69	.85	3.22	.69
Interesting night life	3.41	.68	2.86	.75	3.77	.92	3.61	.82
Variety of entertainment activities	3.40	.69	3.13	.86	3.77	.91	3.30	.81
Exciting casinos (for Macau only)							3.65	.85

\* Based on a scale from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree

(continued)

Table 8 (continued) - Respondents' Perceptions of the Destination Attributes of the Pearl River Delta Region (n=303)

Destination Attributes	PRD Sub-region		Guangdong		Hong Kong		Macau	
	Mean*	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std Dev
<b>Accommodation/food/shopping:</b>								
Comfortable hotel rooms	3.70	.71	3.63	.86	3.90	.92	3.58	.79
A variety of food in restaurants	3.66	.68	3.55	.88	4.06	.82	3.37	.84
High-quality food/cuisine in restaurants	3.62	.79	3.45	.90	3.96	.96	3.44	.90
Reasonable hotel rates	3.44	.65	3.56	.82	2.95	.92	3.82	.80
Satisfactory service in hotels/restaurants	3.41	.76	3.28	.93	3.68	.95	3.26	.84
Great variety of shopping	3.41	.66	2.90	.95	4.28	.86	3.03	.83
Reasonable prices in restaurants	3.38	.69	3.32	.75	3.48	.83	3.36	.74
Reasonable prices in stores	3.21	.81	3.19	.90	3.41	1.01	3.03	.95
Satisfactory service when shopping	3.20	.79	2.95	.87	3.59	1.05	3.07	.85
<b>Local people's attitudes:</b>								
Local people are friendly and courteous	3.45	.72	3.40	.82	3.59	.84	3.35	.78
Local people are helpful	3.27	.74	3.24	.91	3.42	.94	3.09	.76
<b>Other travel related conditions:</b>								
Readily available tourist information	3.64	.68	3.32	.94	4.02	.72	3.58	.79
A safe place to travel	3.60	.72	3.54	.94	3.99	.83	3.28	.76
Convenient immigration & customs procedures	3.55	.80	3.39	.95	3.73	.95	3.52	.87
Convenient transport within the city	3.53	.80	3.22	.83	3.91	.95	3.45	.91
An easily accessible destination	3.51	.75	3.28	.91	3.82	.89	3.44	.82
Clean facilities and amenities	3.33	.72	3.06	.88	3.68	.93	3.27	.82

\* Based on a scale from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree



(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). It was found that 'comfortable hotel rooms'(3.7) was the top attribute, followed by 'a variety of food in restaurants'(3.6), 'readily available tourist information'(3.6), 'high-quality food/cuisine restaurants'(3.6), and 'a safe place to travel'(3.6).

Guangdong had four attributes whose mean scores were higher than those of Hong Kong and Macau. They were 'typical Southern Chinese traditions', 'interesting sites of China's modern history', 'attractive rural and natural scenery', and 'typical Southern Chinese life style'. It was found that these attributes were closely associated with Chinese features. The attributes with mean scores less than 3.0 were 'a feeling of European culture', 'mixture of Chinese and western culture', 'interesting night life', 'great variety of shopping', 'satisfactory service when shopping', and 'a flavor of cosmopolitan life'.

Most of Hong Kong' attributes obtained the highest mean scores among the PRD destinations. Its top attributes with mean scores over 4.0 were 'great variety of shopping', 'a variety of food in restaurants', 'mixture of Chinese and western culture' and 'readily available tourist information'. Only one attribute i.e. 'reasonable hotel rates' had a mean score less than 3.0.

Macau had two attributes whose mean scores were higher than those of Guangdong and Hong Kong. The two attributes were 'a feeling of European culture' and 'reasonable hotel rates'. The attribute of 'exciting casinos' received a mean score of 3.65.

The mean scores for the overall perceptions of the Pearl River Delta area are presented in Table 9. It was found that all these three general attributes (i.e. destination's overall attractiveness, tourists' expectations and satisfaction) of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau got scores above the neutral '4'. Hong Kong's mean scores on these three attributes were the highest, followed by Guangdong and Macau.

**Table 9 Respondents' Overall Perceptions of the Pearl River Delta Region (n=303)**

Destination Attributes	Mean	Std Dev
-In general, how would you rate the overall <u>attractiveness</u> of the Pearl River Delta region:	4.74 <sup>1</sup>	1.04
-How did your <u>expectations</u> of each area match your visit experience:	5.01 <sup>2</sup>	1.07
-Overall, how <u>satisfied</u> were you with the visit to the Pearl River Delta region:	5.03 <sup>3</sup>	1.14

1): Based on a 7 point scale ranging from 1 - very unattractive to 7 - very attractive

2): Based on a 7 point scale ranging from 1 - much worse than expected to 7 - much better than expected

3): Based on a 7 point scale ranging from 1 - very dissatisfied to 7 - very satisfied

#### 4.4 UNDERLYING DIMENSIONS OF THE DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES

Objective 1 of the study was to identify tourists' perceived destination attributes of the PRD area as a sub-regional travel destination. In order to achieve this, factor analysis was employed to reduce the number of destination attributes into a smaller set of new composite

dimensions with a minimum loss of information. The principal components method with varimax rotation were used in the factor analysis. The factor analysis in this study were used for two purposes: 1) to obtain a relatively small number of variables that explain most of the variations among the destination attributes, and 2) to create correlate variable composites from the original attribute ratings for subsequent analysis such as regression analysis, paired samples t-test and canonical correlation analysis.

#### **4.4.1 Destination Dimensions Derived from Factor Analysis**

Eight dimensions, or factors emerged from the analysis (see Table 10). The eight factors were as follows:

The '**amenity services**' factor contained 6 items and explained 32.5% of the variance in the data with an eigenvalue of 9.4. The 6 items loaded onto this factor were related to the amenity services such as 'clean facilities and amenities', 'satisfactory service when shopping', 'satisfactory service in hotels/restaurants', 'high-quality food/cuisine in restaurants', 'great variety of shopping' and 'a variety of food in restaurants'.

Factor two, the '**accessibility**' factor, contained 3 items i.e. 'an easily accessible destination', 'convenient immigration & customs procedures' and 'convenient transport within the city'. This factor explained 7.4% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 2.3.

**Table 10 Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation of Perception of Destination Attribute Scale (n=303)**

Item Statement	Factor Loading								Communality	
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8		
<b>F1 - Amenity Services</b>										
-Clean facilities and amenities	.74									.67
-Satisfactory service when shopping	.73									.72
-Satisfactory service in hotels/restaurants	.70									.61
-High-quality food/cuisine in restaurants	.60									.64
-Great variety of shopping	.51									.65
-A variety of food in restaurants	.42									.70
<b>F2 - Accessibility</b>										
-An easily accessible destination		.82								.83
-Convenient immigration & customs procedures		.70								.70
-Convenient transport within the city		.59								.59
<b>F3 - Mixed Culture</b>										
-A flavor of cosmopolitan life			.79							.72
-A feeling of European culture			.77							.74
-Attractive urban and city sights			.69							.68
-Mixture of Chinese and western culture			.47							.47
<hr/>										
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8		
Eigenvalue	9.4	2.3	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.0		
Variance (percent)	32.5	7.4	5.8	5.0	4.8	4.4	3.8	3.5		
Cumulative variance (percent)	32.5	39.9	45.7	50.7	55.5	59.8	63.6	67.2		
Cronbach's alpha	.84	.75	.74	.78	.63	.65	.69	.75		
Factor Mean	3.44	3.53	3.43	3.37	3.54	3.36	3.41	3.62		
Number of items (total=26)	6	3	4	5	2	2	3	2		

(continued)

**Table 10 (continued) - Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation of Perceptions of the Destination Attribute Scale (n=303)**

Item Statement	Factor Loading								Communality	
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8		
<b>F4 - Chinese Culture</b>										
-Interesting sites of China's modern history				.78						.72
-Interesting museums				.68						.67
-Typical Southern Chinese traditions				.48						.68
-Typical Southern Chinese life style				.47						.58
-Interesting street market				.46						.76
<b>F5 - Restaurant/Hotel</b>										
-Reasonable prices in restaurants					.66					.66
-Comfortable hotel rooms					.54					.60
<b>F6 - Local Attitudes</b>										
-Local people are friendly and courteous						.79				.70
-Local people are helpful						.54				.60
<b>F7 - Entertainment</b>										
-Variety of entertainment activities							.75			.73
-Amusement and theme parks							.61			.75
-Interesting night life							.50			.65
<b>F8- Assurance</b>										
-Readily available tourist information								.78		.74
-A safe place to travel								.62		.69
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8		
Eigenvalue	9.4	2.3	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.0		
Variance (percent)	32.5	7.4	5.8	5.0	4.8	4.4	3.8	3.5		
Cumulative variance (percent)	32.5	39.9	45.7	50.7	55.5	59.8	63.6	67.2		
Cronbach's alpha	.84	.75	.74	.78	.63	.65	.69	.75		
Factor Mean	3.44	3.53	3.43	3.37	3.54	3.36	3.41	3.62		
Number of items (total=26)	6	3	4	5	2	2	3	2		

Factor three was labeled as the '**mixed culture**'. This factor contained 4 items and explained 5.8% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.7. This factor was associated with attractions aroused by a cultural mixture of east and west. The 4 items were 'a flavor of cosmopolitan life', 'a feeling of European culture', 'attractive urban and city sights', and 'mixture of Chinese and western culture'.

Factor four, the '**Chinese culture**' factor contained 5 items and accounted for 5.0% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.5. This factor was associated with attractions with more Chinese characteristics such as 'interesting sites of China's modern history', 'interesting museums', 'typical Southern Chinese traditions', 'typical southern Chinese life style' and 'interesting street market'.

Factor five, the '**restaurant/hotel**' factor contained only 2 items accounting for 4.8% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.4. The two factors were 'reasonable prices in restaurants' and 'comfortable hotel rooms'.

Factor six, the '**local attitudes**' factor, also contained 2 items, i.e. 'local people are friendly and courteous' and 'local people are helpful'. This factor explained 4.4% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.3.

Factor seven, the '**entertainment**' factor, explained 3.8% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.1. 3 items were found to be related to this factor, i.e. 'variety of entertainment activities', 'amusement and theme parks' and 'interesting night life'.

Factor eight was labeled as '**assurance**' which was loaded by 2 items i.e. 'a safe place to travel' and 'readily available tourist information'. This factor accounted for 3.5% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.0.

Due to low factor loading scores or low reliability, five items out of the 31 were deleted from the scale. These were 'a variety of food in restaurants', 'attractive rural and natural scenery', 'reasonable prices in stores', 'interesting festivals/events', and 'reasonable hotel rates'.

#### **4.4.2 Validation of Factor Analysis Results**

First of all, as factor analysis is used to identify a relatively small number of factors representing relationships among sets of many interrelated variables, where inter-correlation among variables should be strong. Therefore, the correlation matrix for 31 perception variables was computed. The results indicated that out of 496 coefficients of correlation derived from the correlation matrix, 272 coefficients, representing 54.8%, were found to be greater than 0.3 in absolute value, which was depicted by Noursis (1994) as the minimum acceptable value in the correlation matrix. Secondly, Barlett's test of sphericity was used to

test the presence of correlation among the variables. It provides the statistical probability that the correlation matrix has significant correlation among at least some of the variables. With the 31 perception scores, the value of the test statistic for sphericity was large (4143.7) and statistically significant at 0.0001 level. Thirdly, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is an index for comparing the magnitudes of the observed correlation coefficients to the magnitudes of the partial correlation coefficients. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy of the 31 variables was 0.84, which was meritorious (Kaiser 1974: 31-36). The variables were interrelated and they shared common factors. Lastly, communality, which is the squared multiple correlation coefficient between a variable and all other variables, is another indication of the strength of the linear association among the variables. The communalities ranged from 0.47 to 0.83 and the average communalities of most variables was above 0.50, suggesting that the variance of the original values was reasonably explained by the common factors.

#### **4.4.3 Interpretation of the Destination Dimensions**

The determination to include a variable in a factor was based on factor loadings, eigenvalue and percentage of variance explained. First, factor loadings represented the correlation between an original variable and its respective factor, and only factor loadings equal to or greater than 0.40 were included in a factor for interpretation. Second, only factors with eigenvalues equal to or greater than 1 were considered significant. The rationale for



retaining all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 is that individual factors should account for at least the variance of a single variable.

The principal component factor method was used to generate the initial solution. Principal component analysis was chosen to identify the minimum number of factors which accounted for the maximum proportion of variance. The underlying assumption was that the specific and error variance represented only a small proportion of the total variance. The eigenvalues ( $EV \geq 1$ ) suggested that an eight-factor solution was appropriate in this study. Subsequently, eight factors were rotated using varimax criterion. Varimax rotation helped to minimize the number of variables that had high loadings on the same factor and helped to shift the variables to all eight factors which allowed inter-correlation among factors or dimensions.

From the varimax rotated factor matrix, eight factors were extracted from the original 31 variables. The percentage of explained variance accounted for 67.2%, indicating a satisfactory solution. Eight factors were defined by the original 31 variables that loaded significantly (loading  $\geq 0.40$ ) on them. A clear factor structure emerged with relatively higher loadings on the appropriate factors. The higher loadings signaled the correlation of the variables with the factors on which they were loaded.

Reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of each factor. The results showed that the alpha coefficients for the eight

factors ranged from 0.63 to 0.84, the alpha coefficients were well above 0.70 for five of the factors and were a bit modest for the other three factors. However, according to Nunnally (1978), alpha coefficients above the minimum value of 0.50 are considered acceptable as an indication of reliability for basic research in its exploratory stages.

#### **4.5 PERCEPTIONS OF DESTINATION DIMENSIONS**

##### **AMONG GUANGDONG, HONG KONG AND MACAU**

Objective 2 of the study was to determine the image differences between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau; Hypothesis 1 postulated that the destination images of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau were perceived differently by international tourists. To test this hypothesis, the paired samples t-test was used.

Table 11 presents the paired samples t-test results and a comparison of destination perceptions underlying the eight dimensions among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau and statistically significant differences for all the dimensions were found. Hong Kong's mean scores were significantly higher in all dimensions than those of Macau and Guangdong except that for Chinese culture dimension for Guangdong it was higher than Hong Kong's score. When comparing the mean scores between Macau and Guangdong, statistically significant differences were found in five of the eight dimensions with Macau having higher mean scores for three of the five dimensions (accessibility, mixed culture, and entertainment) and Guangdong having significantly higher scores for Chinese culture and

**Table 11 Paired Samples T Test Results - Testing for Differences Between Each Pearl River Delta Destination's Attractiveness as Perceived by Tourists (n=303)**

<b>Destination Dimensions</b>	<b>Guangdong (mean)</b>	<b>Hong Kong (mean)</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>2-tail Sig*</b>
1. Amenity Services	3.20	3.89	-17.19	0.001
2. Accessibility	3.29	3.82	-13.38	0.001
3. Mixed Culture	2.89	3.93	-24.29	0.001
4. Chinese Culture	3.62	3.39	7.28	0.001
5. Restaurant/Hotel	3.46	3.69	-6.32	0.001
6. Local Attitudes	3.32	3.51	-4.90	0.001
7. Entertainment	3.19	3.75	-13.15	0.001
8. Assurance	3.41	4.01	-12.07	0.001
<b>Destination Dimensions</b>	<b>Macau (mean)</b>	<b>Hong Kong (mean)</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>2-tail Sig*</b>
1. Amenity Services	3.24	3.88	-20.39	0.001
2. Accessibility	3.47	3.82	-12.82	0.001
3. Mixed Culture	3.48	3.93	-17.11	0.001
4. Chinese Culture	3.13	3.39	-13.24	0.001
5. Restaurant/Hotel	3.47	3.69	-8.46	0.001
6. Local Attitudes	3.22	3.50	-8.51	0.001
7. Entertainment	3.30	3.75	-15.16	0.001
8. Assurance	3.42	4.01	-14.01	0.001
<b>Destination Dimensions</b>	<b>Guangdong (mean)</b>	<b>Macau (mean)</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>2-tail Sig*</b>
1. Amenity Services	3.20	3.25	-1.26	0.208**
2. Accessibility	3.29	3.47	-5.35	0.001
3. Mixed Culture	2.89	3.48	-15.61	0.001
4. Chinese Culture	3.62	3.13	15.91	0.001
5. Restaurant/Hotel	3.46	3.47	-0.12	0.905**
6. Local Attitudes	3.32	3.24	2.69	0.008
7. Entertainment	3.19	3.30	-3.11	0.002
8. Assurance	3.41	3.43	-0.76	0.447**

\* 2-tail Significance

\*\* t-test 2-tail probability > 0.05 which means that there is no statistically significant difference.

local attitudes dimensions. No significant differences were found for the dimensions of amenity services, restaurant/hotel, and assurance. In general, Hong Kong's mean scores were significantly higher than both Macau and Guangdong. However, for the dimension of 'Chinese culture', Guangdong had a significant higher mean score than both Hong Kong and Macau, while Hong Kong's mean score was significantly higher than Macau's score.

In order to examine the nature of the differences between each of the three destinations, the mean scores are summarized for all destinations in Table 12, showing whether the mean scores are distinctly different or not.

**Table 12 Summarization of the Mean Scores for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau Based on the Mean Score Differences Shown in Table 11 (n=303)**

Dimension	Mean Scores*		
	Guangdong	Hong Kong	Macau
Amenity Services	3.20 <sub>A**</sub>	3.88 <sub>B</sub>	3.24 <sub>A</sub>
Accessibility	3.29 <sub>A</sub>	3.82 <sub>B</sub>	3.47 <sub>C</sub>
Mixed Culture	2.89 <sub>A</sub>	3.93 <sub>B</sub>	3.48 <sub>C</sub>
Chinese Culture	3.62 <sub>A</sub>	3.39 <sub>B</sub>	3.13 <sub>C</sub>
Restaurant/Hotel	3.46 <sub>A</sub>	3.69 <sub>B</sub>	3.47 <sub>A</sub>
Local Attitudes	3.32 <sub>A</sub>	3.51 <sub>B</sub>	3.22 <sub>C</sub>
Entertainment	3.19 <sub>A</sub>	3.75 <sub>B</sub>	3.30 <sub>C</sub>
Assurance	3.41 <sub>A</sub>	4.01 <sub>B</sub>	3.42 <sub>A</sub>

\* Based on a 5 point scale from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree

\*\* Destinations with the same letter are not significantly differentiated from each other. Destinations with different letters are significantly differentiated.

It was clear that for most of the destination dimensions, the perceived mean scores of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau were significantly different. In other words, their destination image was perceived to be different by tourists. Thus Hypothesis 1 (i.e. the three PRD travel destinations of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau are perceived by international tourists to have different destination images) was accepted.

#### **4.6 DETERMINANTS OF OVERALL SATISFACTION LEVEL OF TOURISTS**

The third study objective was to assess the relative impact of underlying dimensions of the PRD area's destination attributes upon tourists' overall satisfaction level; Hypothesis two postulated that tourists to a particular travel destination in the PRD sub-region have a unique set of determinant dimensions leading to their satisfaction with the destination. To test hypothesis 2, multiple regression analysis was employed to determine whether a group of independent (predictor) variables constituted by the eight destination factors, exerted a significant influence on the dependent (criterion) variable, i.e. overall satisfaction with the visit to the Pearl River Delta travel destinations of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau.

The results of the regression analysis for the destinations of the PRD area, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, are shown in Tables 13, 14, 15 and 16, respectively. The

**Table 13 Regression Analysis Results: Determinant Destination Dimensions on Tourists' Overall Satisfaction <sup>(1)</sup> for the Pearl River Delta Area (n=303)**

Independent Variable	B <sup>(2)</sup>	$\beta$ <sup>(3)</sup>	T-value	P
<b>Final Model (using backward elimination method):</b>				
$r^2 = .48$ adjusted $r^2 = .48$				
<b>Parameter Estimates:</b>				
Mixed Culture	.77	.37	7.76	.0001
Accessibility	.31	.18	3.50	.0005
Assurance	.29	.16	3.27	.0012
Restaurant/hotel	.28	.16	3.01	.0028
Entertainment	.24	.12	2.44	.0153

**Collinearity Diagnostics:**

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF <sup>(4)</sup>	Cond. Index <sup>(5)</sup>
Mixed Culture	.77	1.29	19.05
Accessibility	.63	1.60	15.05
Assurance	.71	1.40	25.12
Restaurant/hotel	.65	1.53	20.84
Entertainment	.76	1.32	21.45

(1) Dependent variable.

(2) Regression coefficient estimate.

(3) Standardized regression coefficient estimate.

(4) Variable inflation factor

(5) Condition index

**Table 14 Regression Analysis Results: Determinant Destination Dimensions on Tourists' Overall Satisfaction <sup>(1)</sup> for Guangdong (n=303)**

Independent Variable	B <sup>(2)</sup>	$\beta$ <sup>(3)</sup>	T-value	P
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**Final Model (using backward elimination method):**

$r^2 = .52$     adjusted  $r^2 = .51$

**Parameter Estimates:**

Restaurant/Hotel	1.21	.25	4.36	.0001
Chinese Culture	1.12	.24	4.39	.0001
Mixed Culture	1.08	.20	3.86	.0001
Accessibility	.77	.18	3.37	.0009
Amenity Services	.74	.15	2.34	.0201

**Collinearity Diagnostics:**

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF <sup>(4)</sup>	Cond. Index <sup>(5)</sup>
Restaurant/Hotel	.62	1.62	21.89
Chinese Culture	.64	1.56	18.33
Mixed Culture	.76	1.31	17.13
Accessibility	.71	1.40	14.01
Entertainment	.50	1.99	13.08

(1) Dependent variable.

(2) Regression coefficient estimate.

(3) Standardized regression coefficient estimate.

(4) Variable inflation factor

(5) Condition index

**Table 15 Regression Analysis Results: Determinant Destination Dimensions on Tourists' Overall Satisfaction <sup>(1)</sup> for Hong Kong (n=303)**

Independent Variable	B <sup>(2)</sup>	$\beta$ <sup>(3)</sup>	T-value	P
<b>Final Model (using backward elimination method):</b>				
$r^2 = .55$ adjusted $r^2 = .53$				
<b>Parameter Estimates:</b>				
Entertainment	1.25	.32	5.96	.0001
Accessibility	.88	.24	4.36	.0001
Restaurant/Hotel	.83	.21	3.89	.0001
Mixed Culture	.80	.17	3.13	.0020
Assurance	.56	.15	2.46	.0144
Chinese Culture	-.61	-.12	-2.47	.0143

**Collinearity Diagnostics:**

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF <sup>(4)</sup>	Cond. Index <sup>(5)</sup>
Entertainment	.66	1.53	24.58
Accessibility	.60	1.66	15.25
Restaurant/Hotel	.64	1.57	21.21
Mixed Culture	.63	1.60	19.02
Assurance	.54	1.86	27.28
Chinese Culture	.73	1.36	19.82

(1) Dependent variable.

(2) Regression coefficient estimate.

(3) Standardized regression coefficient estimate.

(4) Variable inflation factor

(5) Condition index



**Table 16 Regression Analysis Results: Determinant Destination Dimensions on Tourists' Overall Satisfaction <sup>(1)</sup> for Macau (n=303)**

Independent Variable	B <sup>(2)</sup>	$\beta$ <sup>(3)</sup>	T-value	P
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**Final Model (using backward elimination method):**

$r^2 = .46$     adjusted  $r^2 = .45$

**Parameter Estimates:**

Restaurant/Hotel	1.64	.34	5.72	.0001
Entertainment	.93	.18	3.21	.0015
Amenity Services	.78	.16	2.31	.0218
Accessibility	.62	.14	2.49	.0134
Chinese Culture	.64	.10	1.78	.0758

**Collinearity Diagnostics:**

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF <sup>(4)</sup>	Cond. Index <sup>(5)</sup>
Restaurant/Hotel	.64	1.56	19.06
Entertainment	.71	1.41	24.96
Amenity Services	.48	2.08	15.05
Accessibility	.73	1.37	16.84
Chinese Culture	.73	1.36	17.97

(1) Dependent variable.

(2) Regression coefficient estimate.

(3) Standardized regression coefficient estimate.

(4) Variable inflation factor

(5) Condition index

significant factors that remained in the regression equation were shown in order of importance based on the beta coefficients:

<u>PRD area:</u>	<u>Guangdong:</u>	<u>Hong Kong:</u>	<u>Macau:</u>
Mixed culture	Restaurant/hotel	Entertainment	Restaurant/hotel
Accessibility	Chinese culture	Accessibility	Entertainment
Assurance	Mixed culture	Restaurant/hotel	Amenity services
Restaurant/hotel	Accessibility	Mixed culture	Accessibility
Entertainment	Entertainment	Assurance	Chinese culture
		Chinese culture	

In predicting the 'goodness of fit' of the regression models, the multiple correlation coefficient (R), coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) and F-ratio were examined. First, the R of independent variables and dependent variable (overall satisfaction) of the PRD area, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau were 0.70, 0.72, 0.74 and 0.68, respectively. It showed that tourists' overall satisfaction level and the remaining factors in the equation were highly and positively correlated. Second, the  $R^2$  (i.e. explained variance of each model) was approximately 48%, 52%, 55% and 46% in determining the variation with overall satisfaction of visits to the PRD area, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, respectively. This indicated that the remaining independent variables have satisfactorily predicted the variance in overall satisfaction. Lastly, with the highly significant F-ratio ( PRD:  $F=55.78$ , Guangdong:  $F = 53.93$ , Hong Kong:  $F = 48.97$ , Macau:  $F = 41.78$  at  $p < 0.0001$ ), it can be concluded that the results of the regression models could hardly have occurred by chance. The regression models were considered to have achieved a satisfactory level of 'goodness of fit' in predicting the variance of overall satisfaction by the remaining factors, as measured by the above-mentioned R,  $R^2$ , and F-ratio statistics. The degree of variable collinearity was

considered to be acceptable with the tolerance value bigger than 0.10, the variance inflation less than 10, and the condition indices less than 30 (Belsley 1991).

In summary, though the findings indicate that criteria, such as 'Restaurant/hotel', 'Chinese culture', and 'Accessibility' were regarded as important for all the three destinations, rankings of vacation destination criteria for each destination were found to be different. Hence, the results support Hypothesis 2 which postulated that tourists to a particular travel destination in the PRD sub-region have a unique set of determinant dimensions leading to their satisfaction with the destination.

#### **4.7 PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATIONAL ATTRIBUTES**

Respondents' perceived importance of motivational attributes based on the mean scores are shown in Table 17. The top four rated motivations were 'going to a safe area' (4.1), 'learning about a new culture or area' (3.8), 'visiting cultural/historical attractions' (3.7), and 'visiting mainly famous places and attractions' (3.7). The least important attributes include 'enjoying variety of night life' (2.5), 'meeting new people' (2.5), and 'seeking adventure' (2.5).

**Table 17 Perceived Mean Importance Scores of Motivational Attributes (n=303)**

<b>Motivational Attributes</b>	<b>Mean *</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>
-Going to a safe area	4.07	1.08
-Learning about a new culture or area	3.76	.97
-Visiting cultural/historical attractions	3.74	.98
-Visiting mainly famous places and attractions	3.72	.93
-Viewing beautiful natural or rural scenery	3.54	1.11
-Experiencing new and different things	3.50	1.06
-Taking advantage of discounted fares/tour package prices	3.46	1.23
-Experiencing a different life style	3.34	.97
-Fulfilling a dream of visiting a vacation destination I have always wanted to	3.31	1.19
-Going to places where my friends or most people have not been	3.29	1.16
-Enhancing social interaction	3.29	.99
-Maintaining ties with my cultural roots	3.20	1.05
-Having fun or being entertained	3.14	1.03
-Visiting a vacation destination which most people value and/or appreciate	3.07	1.20
-Shopping	3.01	1.21
-Enjoying Chinese food	2.86	1.32
-Escaping from the daily routine which bores me	2.79	1.21
-Participating in activities that offer thrills	2.73	1.15
-Not to plan a vacation in detail so as to have something unexpected or surprising	2.59	1.10
-Seeking adventure	2.53	1.23
-Meeting new people	2.51	1.16
-Enjoying variety of night life	2.47	1.13

\* Based on a 5 point scale ranging from 1-not at all important to 5-extremely important.

#### 4.8 UNDERLYING DIMENSIONS OF MOTIVATIONAL ATTRIBUTES

Objective 4 of the study sought to identify tourists' perceived motivational attributes when choosing the PRD area as a travel destination. Factor analysis was used to condense the motivational attributes into a smaller set of new composite dimensions. The principal components method with varimax rotation was used in the factor analysis. Only factor loadings equal to or above 0.40 were included in a factor for interpretation, and only factors with eigenvalues equal to or greater than 1 were considered significant. From the varimax rotated matrix, four factors were extracted from the original 22 variables. The percentage of explained variance accounted for 55.9%. The results are presented in Table 18, with the four factors which emerged from the analysis. The factors were:

Factor one, the '**novelty seeking**' factor contained 5 items and explained 29% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 5.51. This factor was found to be related to novelty seeking such as 'meeting new people', 'participating in activities that offer thrills', 'not to plan a vacation in detail so as to have something unexpected or surprising', 'experiencing a different life style', and 'escaping from the daily routine which bores me'.

Factor two, the '**prestige / social interaction**' factor contained 5 items and explained 11.7% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 2.23. This factor was related to prestige and social interaction. The attributes included 'fulfilling a dream of visiting a vacation

**Table 18 Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation of Perceptions of Motivation Scale (n=303)**

Item Statement	Factor Loading				Communality
	F1	F2	F3	F4	
<b>F1 - Novelty Seeking</b>					
-Meeting new people	.83				.72
-Participating in activities that offer thrills	.75				.60
-Not to plan a vacation in detail so as to have something unexpected or surprising	.74				.58
-Experiencing a different life style	.45				.44
-Escaping from the daily routine which bores me	.40				.33
<b>F2 - Prestige / Social Interaction</b>					
-Fulfilling a dream of visiting a vacation destination I have always wanted to		.75			.59
-Visiting mainly famous places and attractions		.67			.59
-Visiting a vacation destination which most people value and /or appreciate		.64			.65
-Enhancing social interaction		.52			.47
-Going to places where my friends or most people have not been		.47			.45
<b>F3 - Benefits/Safety Seeking</b>					
-Shopping			.81		.67
-Enjoying Chinese food			.77		.65
-Taking advantage of discounted fares/tour package prices			.67		.51
-Going to safe place			.54		.57
<b>F4 Culture/History Seeking</b>					
-Learning about a new culture or area				.71	.60
-Maintaining ties with my cultural roots				.57	.61
-Experiencing new and different things				.53	.53
-Visiting cultural/historical attractions				.43	.49
	F1	F2	F3	F4	
Eigenvalue	5.51	2.23	1.84	1.05	
Variance (percent)	29.0	11.7	9.7	5.5	
Cumulative variance (percent)	29.0	40.7	50.4	55.9	
Cronbach's alpha	.73	.75	.73	.77	
Factor Mean	2.79	3.34	3.35	3.53	
Number of items (total=18)	5	5	4	4	

destination I have always wanted to', 'visiting mainly famous places and attractions', 'visiting a vacation destination which most people value and/or appreciate', 'enhancing social interaction', 'going to places where my friends or most people have not been'.

Factor three, the '**benefits/safety seeking**' factor contained 4 items and explained 9.7% of the variance in the data with an eigenvalue of 1.84. This factor was associated with destination benefits and safety such as 'shopping', 'enjoying Chinese food', 'taking advantage of discounted fares/tour packaged prices', and 'going to a safe place'.

Factor four, the '**culture/history seeking**' factor contained 4 items, i.e. 'learning about a new culture or area', 'maintaining ties with my cultural roots', 'experiencing new and different things', and 'visiting cultural/historical attractions'. This factor explained 5.5% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.05.

To test the presence of correlation among variables, Barlett's Test of Sphericity was used. With the 22 perception scores, the value of the test statistic for sphericity was large (1754.2) and statistically significant at 0.0001. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy of the 22 variables was 0.79. The cumulative variance was 55%. The communalities of the items ranged from 0.33 to 0.83 and the average communality of the variables was above 0.50, suggesting that the variance of the original values was reasonably explained by the common factors. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of each factor. The results showed that the alpha coefficients for

the four factors were ranged from 0.73 to 0.77, which were considered acceptable as a good indication of construct reliability (Nunnally 1978). Four items were deleted from the scale because the item did not meet the minimum factor score cut off of .40 or the item did not load onto the correct factor. These items were 'seeking adventure', 'enjoying variety of nightlife', 'having fun or being entertained', and 'viewing beautiful natural or rural scenery'.

#### **4.9 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DESTINATION DIMENSIONS AND MOTIVATIONAL DIMENSIONS**

The fifth and final study objective was to examine the relationship between the PRD area's destination attributes and tourists' motivational attributes; Hypothesis 3 postulated that there is a positive relationship between the destination image dimensions and the motivation dimensions - i.e. personal fulfillment/social, sightseeing, new experience, prestige and novelty seeking. To test Hypothesis 3, canonical correlation analysis was employed to determine the nature and magnitude of the relationship between the two sets of variables. The criterion (dependent) variables included eight destination dimensions, i.e. amenity services, accessibility, mixed culture, Chinese culture, restaurant/hotel, local attitudes, entertainment and assurance. The predictor (independent) variables constituted four motivational dimensions, i.e. novelty seeking, prestige / social interaction, benefits/safety seeking and culture/history seeking.



The results of the canonical correlation analysis are shown in Tables 19, 20 and 21. As shown in Table 19, canonical correlation analysis of both destination and motivation dimensions resulted in three canonical functions significant at the 0.01 probability level. The canonical correlation coefficients ranged from 0.13 to 0.60. The overlapping variances between pairs of canonical variates (eigenvalues) ranged between 1.7% and 35.9%. According to the redundancy index, the destination dimension variance that could be accounted for by the variability in motivations was 12.6% (redundancy), whereas the motivation dimension variance that could be accounted for by the variability in destination dimensions was 21.7% (redundancy). Only variate pairs with a redundancy index greater than 1.5 percent for both the destination and motivation variates were considered in the final analysis, because low redundancy indicates that little variation in one variate can be accounted for by the other variate. Thus, two significant variates remained in the final analysis. Table 20 showed that all dimensions have at least one significant canonical loading over 0.40 on either of the two variates except 'accessibility', 'local attitudes' and 'entertainment' which all belong to the destination dimensions.

To further show the canonical relationship between the destination dimensions and motivational dimensions, variables with a canonical loading of 0.40 or above were considered for the interpretation of the variates as shown in Table 21. Table 21 gives a summary of the two significant variates with their associated destination and motivation dimensions. The first variate pair shows that the destination dimensions of mixed culture, Chinese culture, amenity services and restaurant/hotel are significantly correlated with the

**Table 19 Overall Results of Canonical Correlation Analysis between Destination and Motivation Dimensions for the Pearl River Delta (n=303)**

Variate Number	1	2	3	4
Canonical correlation	0.599	0.461	0.250	0.132
Eigenvalue	0.359	0.213	0.063	0.017
Wilks Lambda	0.465	0.725	0.921	0.983
F-Value	133.49	56.09	14.36	3.06
Significance (P<)	0.001	0.001	0.279	0.691
(% of variance traced				
Destination dimensions	25.6	12.6	8.7	10.4
Cumulative (%)	25.6	38.2	46.9	57.3
Motivation dimensions	36.9	33.7	18.2	11.2
Cumulative (%)	36.9	70.4	88.6	99.8
Redundancy (%)				
Destination dimensions	9.2	2.7	0.5	0.2
Cumulative (%)	9.2	11.9	12.4	12.6
Motivation dimensions	13.2	7.2	1.1	0.2
Cumulative (%)	13.2	20.4	21.5	21.7

**Table 20 Canonical Loadings for Destination and Motivation Dimensions of the Pearl River Delta (n=303)**

	Variates		Mean
	1	2	
<b>Destination Dimensions:</b>			
Amenity Services	0.64	0.29	3.44
Accessibility	0.19	0.24	3.53
Mixed Culture	0.79	0.02	3.43
Chinese Culture	0.77	0.27	3.37
Restaurant/Hotel	0.41	0.33	3.54
Local Attitudes	0.39	0.07	3.36
Entertainment	0.24	0.16	3.41
Assurance	0.11	0.81	3.62
<b>Motivation Dimensions:</b>			
Novelty Seeking / Escape	0.81	0.13	2.79
Prestige /Social Interaction	0.45	0.72	3.34
Benefit Seeking / Safety	0.67	0.17	3.35
Culture/History Seeking	0.38	0.89	3.53

Note: Only variate pairs with the eigenvalue greater than 10% and redundancy index greater than 1.5 in Table 19. were considered in the analysis.

motivation dimensions of novelty seeking, benefits/safety seeking and prestige / social interaction. The second variate pair indicates that destination's assurance dimension is significantly correlated with the motivational dimensions of culture/history seeking and prestige / social interaction.

**Table 21 Description of Variates for Destination and Motivation Dimensions of the Pearl River Delta**

Variate Label	Destination Dimensions *	Motivation Dimensions *
Variate 1	Mixed Culture (0.79) Chinese Culture (0.77) Amenity services (0.64) Restaurant/Hotel (0.41)	Novelty Seeking (0.81) Benefits/Safety Seeking (0.67) Prestige / Social Interaction (0.45)
Variate 2	Assurance (0.81)	Culture/History Seeking (0.89) Prestige / Social Interaction (0.72)

\* Destination and motivation dimensions which have canonical loadings of 0.40 or above were used.

Thus, Hypothesis 3 (i.e. there is a positive relationship between the motivation dimensions and the destination image dimensions) was accepted.

## CHAPTER FIVE - DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a discussion of the results presented in Chapter Four, addressing seven major issues.

### 5.1 DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES OF THE PEARL RIVER DELTA TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

The results showed that the PRD regional destination's most favorable attributes were mostly consistent with Hong Kong's. This may indicate that Hong Kong's destination image is dominant among this region in comparison with the other two destinations of Guangdong and Macau. The results also indicate that the PRD area as a whole is perceived as attractive by the tourists.

For Guangdong, there were four attributes which received mean scores higher than Hong Kong and Macau - 'typical Southern Chinese traditions' (3.85), 'interesting sites of China's modern history' (3.81), 'attractive rural and natural scenery' (3.67), and 'typical Southern Chinese life style' (3.65). These attributes indicates that Guangdong may possibly find its unique position in these aspects.

Among all the destination attributes, Hong Kong's 'variety of shopping' received the highest mean score (4.28). The other two attributes related to shopping - 'reasonable prices

in stores' and 'satisfactory service when shopping' with mean scores of 3.41 and 3.59, respectively. The findings suggest that while tourists may be satisfied with Hong Kong's variety of shopping, they are not so highly satisfied with its prices and shopping services.

There was one destination attribute of Hong Kong - 'reasonable hotel rates' - which obtained a unfavorable mean score rating (2.95). This implies that Hong Kong's competitiveness may be affected by its high hotel rates. This result confirms the view of Hobson (1995a), who observed that hotels in Hong Kong were closing at a much faster rate than they are opening, and it was many of the popular medium-priced hotels that were closing. As a consequence, a shortage of hotel rooms led to higher room and occupancy rates.

For Macau, there were two attributes - 'a feeling of European culture' (4.04), and 'reasonable hotel rates'(3.82), which received higher mean scores than both Hong Kong and Guangdong. This indicates that Macau could possibly make effort to establish its unique image reflecting its features of European culture. This result supports MGTO's position to establish an image of 'Macau: a touch of Europe'. Besides, Macau might make use of its advantage in hotel rates to target its marketing strategy at average travelers, i.e. at the greatest volume of travelers available, rather than just the highest spending travel market.

## 5.2 DESTINATION DIMENSIONS OF THE PEARL RIVER DELTA TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

The underlying dimensions of tourists' perceptions of the PRD destination attributes were identified by factor analysis. Eight factors capturing 26 out of 31 original destination attributes were identified in this study.

Factor 8 - 'Assurance' which included 'readily available tourist information', and 'a safe place to travel' obtained the highest mean score (3.62), indicating that tourists held the most favorable perception towards the area's 'assurance' factor. In general, traveling in this area is safe, and there was a lot of available information about this area's attractions. Factor 5 - 'Restaurant/hotel' which included two items of 'reasonable prices in restaurants' and 'comfortable hotel rooms' obtained the second highest mean score (3.54). This indicates that tourists enjoyed the delicious Chinese food with acceptable prices, and their stay in the hotel was comfortable. Another factor with a relatively high mean score was Factor 2 - 'Accessibility'(3.53). This factor included three items, i.e. 'an easily accessible destination', 'convenient immigration & customs procedures', and 'convenient transport within the city'. It was found that tourists perceived this area as an easily accessible destination. The other five factors received mean scores above the mid-point of '3' which indicate that tourists visiting the Pearl River Delta area generally held favorable perceptions towards the destination images of the respective Pearl River Delta travel destinations. The study results indicate an overall favorable perception of the PRD area as a travel destination.

The perception scores of the PRD area's destination dimensions used were based on the overall average of the mean scores of the three destinations of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, the PRD area's perception scores do not necessarily reflect the individual positions of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau in terms of the eight factors. In other words, the highly scored factor of the PRD area as a whole did not necessarily mean that the score of that factor was also perceived highly in all the three respective destinations. Table 22 shows that the mean score ratings of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau are not in the same order. Guangdong's top factor which obtained the highest perception mean score (3.62) was Factor 4 - 'Chinese culture'. This finding indicates that Guangdong may be well known for its Southern Chinese characteristics. Hong Kong's top factor was 'Assurance'(4.01), indicating that Hong Kong was relatively a very safe place, and its tourist information was readily available. Hong Kong's second most favorable factor was 'Mixed culture'(3.93), which suggests that Hong Kong is well-known as a destination with a mixed culture. Macau's top factor was 'Mixed culture'(3.48), indicating that Macau was also perceived as a destination with a mixture of both Chinese and European features.

In addition, there were five items which were deleted from the scale because these items did not meet the minimum factor score (loading  $\geq 0.40$ ) or had low reliability. The deleted destination items were item 8 - 'a variety of food in restaurants', item 13 - 'attractive rural and natural scenery', item 21 - 'reasonable prices in stores', item 22 - 'interesting festivals/events', and item 24 - 'reasonable hotel rates'. Here specific attention should be





addressed to items 8, 13, and 24. As for item 8, this item was the second most favorable item of the PRD area as a whole, which indicates that the variety of cuisine was an advantage of this area's attraction. As for item 13, in general, the PRD area received a low average score on the rural and natural scenery (3.25). These results indicate that the three individual destinations as a whole were perceived to be relatively unattractive in terms of natural and rural scenery. It is understandable given that Hong Kong and Macau are two

**Table 22 Ranking of Destination Dimensions of the Pearl River Delta Travel Destinations (n=303)**

Factor	Mean Scores*			
	Pearl River Delta	Guangdong	Hong Kong	Macau
Assurance	3.62	3.41	4.01	3.42
Restaurant/Hotel	3.54	3.47	3.69	3.47
Accessibility	3.53	3.29	3.82	3.47
Amenity Services	3.44	3.19	3.88	3.24
Mixed Culture	3.43	2.89	3.93	3.48
Entertainment	3.41	3.19	3.74	3.30
Chinese Culture	3.37	3.62	3.39	3.13
Local Attitudes	3.36	3.32	3.50	3.22

\* Based on a 5 point scale from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree

small places and its scenery mostly confined in urban areas. Although Guangdong received a relatively higher mean score (3.67) in 'attractive rural and natural scenery', its scenery is not well-known when compared to China's other famous cities (such as Guilin, Suzhou, Wuxi and Hangzhou). As for item 24 - reasonable hotel rates, it is found that Hong Kong received the lowest mean score (2.95) on this item among all the attributes, whereas it was Macau's second highest score (3.82) among all its attributes. This indicates that this item should not be generalized in the image study of the PRD area. In practice, this finding implies that Hong Kong should provide more medium-tariff hotel rooms in the near future so as to meet the high market demand of average travelers, while Macau can make full use of this advantage in order to strengthen its competitiveness and increase market share.

### **5.3 IMAGE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GUANGDONG, HONG KONG AND MACAU**

It was found that there were significant differences between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau on all the eight factors. Specifically, all Hong Kong's destination dimensions except for 'Chinese culture' received significantly higher scores than both Guangdong and Macau. The results indicate that Hong Kong's attractions are dominant in the PRD area. Basically, destinations with strong, salient, and benign images are preferred by travel consumers (Hunt 1975, Goodrich 1978, Woodside and Lysonski 1989). This finding implies that Hong Kong can play a major role in attracting potential tourists to the PRD region, while Guangdong

and Macau stand to benefit from any joint marketing cooperation which promotes and integrates the sub-region.

Guangdong obtained a higher mean score over Hong Kong and Macau in the 'Chinese culture' factor. This implies that Guangdong may possibly find a niche market and retain a unique image of its own by strengthening the attractiveness of this destination dimension. However, one travel writer commented that "Although Guangzhou is a famous city in China, its historical sites are not as attractive as those in Beijing, Xi'an and Kaifeng; and its scenic spots and facilities are not as good as those of Hangzhou and Suzhou" (*Travel Business Analyst* 1993). This indicates that, although Guangdong has some advantages over Hong Kong and Macau in respect of 'Chinese culture', it is doubtful how much Guangdong can make use of this advantage to establish a unique 'Chinese culture' image given other more well known and recognized area throughout China.

In this study it was found that although some of Macau's destination dimensions, such as 'accessibility', 'mixed culture' and 'entertainment', obtained higher mean scores over Guangdong, Macau did not appear to have any advantages over Hong Kong. This indicates that Macau has difficulty to differentiate itself from the bright lights of Hong Kong. This finding was consistent with the previous literature about Macau's destination image (Boey 1994, Hobson 1995b, Shaw 1995).

## **5.4 IMPORTANT DESTINATION FACTORS IN INFLUENCING TOURISTS' OVERALL**

### **SATISFACTION WITH THE PRD TRAVEL DESTINATIONS**

Although much of the previous image research (e.g. Reilly 1990, Chon 1991, Fakeye and Crompton 1991) focused on identifying the various image dimensions for a particular destination, assessing the relative importance of destination image dimensions could provide tourism marketers with some important marketing information. Therefore, this study also examined the relative importance of each destination's image dimensions in explaining tourists' overall satisfaction.

As for the PRD area, the factor of 'mixed culture' appeared to be the most important factor, followed by 'accessibility', 'assurance', 'restaurant/hotel', and 'entertainment'. Since tourists to each particular travel destination may have a unique set of determinant dimensions leading to their satisfaction, the regression model for the PRD did not necessarily reflect the actual importance of the dimensions for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau individually.

For Guangdong, the factor of 'restaurant/hotel' emerged as the most important one in affecting tourists' satisfaction. Its second most important determinant factor was 'Chinese culture' which was also found to be an important and significant factor in satisfying tourists, followed by 'accessibility' and 'amenity services'. It is worth noting that, although 'amenity services' was identified as an important factor to satisfy tourists, this factor obtained the

second lowest mean score (3.19) among all Guangdong's destination dimensions. In reality, the problem of China's poor levels of service resulting from the use of unlicensed or untrained people (especially of tour guides) had been considered to be serious and harmful to China's tourism development (Edwards 1995, Cai and Woods 1993). This result implies that in order to strengthen its competitiveness and satisfy tourists' needs, there is much room for improvement of Guangdong's service standards. It is surprising to find that 'mixed culture' also carried some important Beta weights in the Guangdong regression model. However, this factor obtained the lowest weighting and also had the lowest mean score of 2.89. Therefore, it could be concluded that Guangdong did not appear to be able to meet tourists' needs in terms of the factor of 'mixed culture'. In other words, tourists, in general, did not perceive Guangdong's 'mixed culture' attractive, whereas it was perceived to be an important factor in determining their satisfaction.

'Entertainment' was the most important factor in Hong Kong, followed by 'accessibility'. The other important factors included 'restaurant/hotel', 'mixed culture', 'assurance' and 'Chinese culture'. The result is generally consistent with the findings of Yau and Chan's (1990) study. They found variables of 'shopping and transportation', 'services in hotels and restaurants', 'entertainment and attractions' were significant in satisfying tourists who had visited Hong Kong.

With Macau, the factor 'restaurant/hotel' was found to be the most important factor. It was interesting to find that this factor was the most important for both Guangdong and Macau

in determining tourists' satisfaction. The second most important factor was 'entertainment', followed by 'amenity services', 'accessibility' and 'Chinese culture'. It is surprising to find that 'mixed culture' did not turn out to be a significant factor in the satisfaction model, though its factor mean score was the highest (3.48) among all of Macau's destination factors.

There were three factors - 'restaurant/hotel', 'Chinese culture', and 'accessibility' - which were regarded as significant and important factors leading to tourists' satisfaction for all the three destinations. This finding indicates that tourists' satisfaction with the PRD tour may be enhanced by these factors. The main implication is that the three partners may undertake common and cooperative efforts to strengthen the images of these factors. In other words, failure to address these aspects may result in lower levels of tourists' satisfaction with their visit to the PRD area.

The results of this study showed that some of the factors - Guangdong: 'local attitudes', 'entertainment' and 'assurance', Hong Kong: 'amenity services' and 'local attitudes', Macau: 'mixed culture', 'local attitudes' and 'assurance' - were not found to be significant in explaining tourists' satisfaction. Nevertheless, this does not mean that these factors are unimportant, since these might be tourists' basic expectations with respect to these factors for each respective destination. If the destination does not achieve these standards, the tourists' perceptions of their satisfaction could be affected (Oliver 1981). For instance, 'local attitudes' was not found to be significant in explaining tourists' satisfaction with their

visit to all the three destinations. This does not mean that marketers can neglect this factor in practical marketing activities. Hoffman and Low (1981), in a study of visitors to Phoenix, Arizona, found that the most important variable in any decision to return in the future was the visitor's image of the friendliness of the local residents. Pearce (1980) revealed that residents' negative reaction towards tourists could sharply decrease travelers' satisfaction and severely damage a community's image. Knox (1982) also commented that tourists may have their vacation spoiled or enhanced by local attitudes. It is obvious that local residents' attitudes to tourists is a basic factor in affecting tourists' satisfaction. However, it was found that the mean scores of 'local attitudes' of Macau and Guangdong were relatively low (3.22 and 3.32, respectively), and Hong Kong's 'local attitudes' obtained the second lowest score (3.50) among all its destination dimensions. This indicates that there is much room for the PRD travel destinations to improve its image in terms of 'local attitudes'.

### 5.5 PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATIONAL ATTRIBUTES

The top five motivation attributes for travel to the PRD area based on the mean scores were 'going to a safe area', 'learning new culture', 'visiting cultural/historical attractions', 'visiting famous places', and 'viewing natural or rural scenery' (in descending order of importance). Safety (mean score - 4.07) was rated as the most important attribute in choosing the PRD sub-region as a travel destination. This finding of safety as an important concern by pleasure tourists was consistent with previous studies (Knutson 1988, Banerjee 1994, Clow, Garretson and Kurtz 1994, Mok, Armstrong and Go 1995).

'Enjoying variety of night life' (mean score - 2.47) was perceived to be the least important attribute, followed by the attributes of 'meeting new people', 'seeking adventure', 'surprising trip', 'thrilling trip', and 'escaping'. These attributes relate to the dimensions of novelty and escape. The results indicate that respondents visiting the PRD area regarded this area as a highly culture-oriented destination. Novelty-related attributes were considered to be less important than other motivational attributes in choosing the PRD as a travel destination.

#### **5.6 Underlying Dimensions of the Perceptions of Tourists' Motivational Attributes**

The study has helped to identify important motivational dimensions. Four factors capturing 18 out of 22 original motivational attributes were identified in this study, namely, 'novelty seeking', 'prestige/social interaction', 'benefits/safety seeking', and 'culture/history seeking'.

The 'culture/history seeking' factor emerged as the most important motivational factor (mean score: 3.53). This indicates that tourists visiting this area expected to visit Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau's unique cultural and historical attractions. Tourists visiting the PRD area expected to experience a culture which is different from their own, to maintain ties with their cultural roots, and to visit cultural and historical attractions. Kim, Pearce, Morrison and O'Leary (1996), in distinguishing the importance of different



motivational factors in overseas trips for Korean people, observed that the 'cultural interest' factor was perceived to be the most important one for Korean tourists. In another motivational study of the Australian international pleasure travel market, McGehee, Murphy and Uysal (1996) observed that cultural experience was ranked by Australian tourists as the most important push factor for overseas pleasure travel. This indicates that experiencing different cultures may be the tourists' common motivation when deciding to travel. In other words, a destination favored with unique cultural attractions could attract pleasure tourists by designing its distinctive culture-oriented image.

The 'benefits/safety seeking' factor emerged as a second important motive with a mean score of 3.35, indicating that tourists considered this area as an ideal place for shopping and enjoying delicious Chinese cuisine, and that tourists traveling in groups are concerned about tour price and safety issues. According to a survey by *Touche Ross and Company* (1975), convenience and budget priced tours were the most frequently cited reasons for purchasing a package tour. This indicates that safety, convenience and tour price, etc. may be group tourists' common concern.

The third important motivational factor was 'prestige / social interaction' with a mean score of 3.34, indicating that tourists may consider this area as a well-known travel destination. Visiting such kinds of travel destinations may fulfill tourists' dreams of visiting famous places and/or enhancing their social positions. This implies that the tourism marketers of

this area should consider and develop suitable products to satisfy tourists' social, cultural interaction and prestige needs

The least important factor was 'novelty seeking' (2.79), which indicates that tourists choosing the PRD area as their travel destination were less likely to be novelty seekers, e.g. expecting to participate in thrilling activities, or to have unexpected or surprising experience, etc. Yuan and McDonald (1990) examined the motivations of tourists from Japan, France, West Germany, and the United Kingdom and found novelty was ranked as the most important push factor in the decision for an overseas vacation. The discrepancy on the importance level of novelty implies that tourists' motives may change in relation to different destinations. According to Oh et. al. (1995), reasons for choosing particular destinations and the level of importance attached to the factors might differ among countries. This implies that specific motivation analysis is necessary when dealing with each specific travel destination.

#### **5.7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DESTINATION FACTORS AND MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS**

The results of the canonical correlation analysis confirmed that destination attributes were positively related to the motivational attributes. The first variate pair showed that the destination items of 'mixed culture', 'Chinese culture', 'amenity services' and 'restaurant/hotel' had some relation to the motivation items of 'novelty seeking', 'benefits/safety seeking' and 'prestige / social interaction'. This variate revealed the most

general underlying dimensions of both the destination and tourists' motives. This indicates that the PRD destination dimensions of mixed culture, Chinese culture, amenity services and restaurant/hotel service should attempt to cater to the motives of novelty and benefits seeking, and prestige / social interaction. The second variate pair showed that the motivational factors of 'culture/history seeking', 'prestige / social interaction' had some relation to the destination factor of 'assurance'. This indicates that the destination's safety and the convenient availability of tourist information should appeal to tourists' social, cultural interaction and prestige needs. The result of this study is consistent with the previous studies (Pyo et. al. 1989, Uysal and Jurowski 1994, Oh et. al. 1995, Baloglu and Uysal 1996) where it was generally found that a reciprocal relationship exists between destination attributes and motivational attributes.

In summary, this chapter examined the destination images of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, respectively, in the context of the PRD sub-region. Each destination's distinct images, the important image dimensions in explaining tourists' overall satisfaction with each destination, tourists' important motivational attributes in choosing the PRD as a travel destination and the relationship between destination and motivational attributes were identified and discussed.

## CHAPTER SIX - CONCLUSIONS

This study was based on the idea that: 1) destination image is the most important aspect of a tourist attraction; 2) an accurate assessment of a destination's image is a prerequisite to designing an effective marketing strategy; and 3) measuring and managing destination image is a major priority for tourism marketing researchers. It was assumed that an ideal measurement of a destination image should reflect not only the supply side's 'pull' factors - destination attributes, but also the demand side's 'push' factors - tourists' socio-psychological motives. Oh et. al. (1995) suggested that push and pull factors may react with each other in a reciprocal relationship where destination attributes depend upon motivations for attractiveness while at the same time they contribute to motivating tourist activity. In this study, in an attempt to measure a more integrated destination image, incorporating both destination attributes and tourists' motives, was attempted.

The original purpose behind the research was to examine the destination images of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau in the context of the PRD sub-region, thus giving marketing clues to tourism marketers who are engaged in the tourism development and promotion of this sub-region. In this study, five specific objectives were formulated and the following section attempts to ascertain how far these objectives were achieved.

## 6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Objective 1. To identify tourists' perceived destination attributes of the PRD area as a sub-regional travel destination:

Eight factors were identified from a perceived list of destination attributes. It was found that tourists held the most favorable perceptions towards the 'assurance' factor (i.e. safety and security) of the PRD sub-region as a whole. Other factors, in order of their favorable perceptions, were 'restaurant/hotel', 'accessibility', 'amenity services', 'mixed culture', 'entertainment', 'Chinese culture', and 'local attitudes'. Specifically, Guangdong's most favorable factor was 'Chinese culture', Hong Kong's was 'assurance', and Macau's was 'mixed culture'.

Among all the destination attributes, Guangdong's attributes which received higher mean scores than Hong Kong and Macau were related to Chinese culture and history; Hong Kong's 'variety of shopping' received the highest mean score among all the three destinations; Macau had two attributes - 'a feeling of European culture' and 'reasonable hotel rates', which obtained higher mean scores than the other two partners.

Objective 2. To determine the image differences between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau:

The results showed that all Hong Kong's destination dimensions except for 'Chinese culture' received significantly higher mean scores than both Guangdong and Macau. Compared with Hong Kong and Macau, Guangdong held a strong point in the 'Chinese culture', while its other attractions were perceived to be less attractive. Within the scope of this study, Macau seemed to lack a distinctive image, though it held some strong points over Guangdong in the aspects of 'accessibility', 'mixed culture', and 'entertainment'. Hypothesis 1 (which suggests the three PRD travel destinations of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau are perceived by international tourists to have different destination images) was supported.

Objective 3. To assess the relative impact of underlying dimensions of the PRD area's destination attributes upon tourists' overall satisfaction level:

The most important factor contributing to tourists' overall satisfaction level with their visit to Guangdong was 'restaurant/hotel', followed by 'Chinese culture'. Comparatively, Hong Kong's two most important factors were 'entertainment' and 'accessibility'. Macau's two most important factors leading to tourists' overall satisfaction were 'restaurant/hotel', followed by 'entertainment'. Hypothesis 2 that postulated tourists to a particular travel destination in the PRD sub-region have a unique set of determinant dimensions leading to their satisfaction with the destination was supported.

Objective 4. To identify tourists' perceived motivational attributes when choosing the PRD area as a travel destination:

In this study, four motivational factors were identified from a factor analysis of a list of variables and the most important factor which drew tourists to visit the PRD sub-region was 'culture/history seeking'. The second important one was 'benefit/safety seeking', followed by 'prestige / social interaction'. The least important factor was 'novelty seeking'. Among all the individual motivational attributes, the items of 'going to a safe area', 'learning new culture' and 'visiting cultural/historical attractions' were perceived as the most important motivators.

Objective 5. To examine the relationship between the PRD area's destination attributes and tourists' motivational attributes:

The results of the canonical correlation analysis showed that the destination dimensions had positive relationship to the motivational dimensions. Hypothesis 3 (that there is a positive relationship between the destination image dimensions and the motivation dimensions - i.e. personal fulfillment/social, sightseeing, new experience, prestige and novelty seeking) was supported.

## 6.2 IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

In general, the Pearl River Delta (PRD) area as a whole was perceived favorably by tourists. Tourists perceived the PRD area as a safe place to visit, they were satisfied with the restaurant and hotel services and regarded this area as an easily accessible destination. In terms of the delta area's accessibility, for instance, there are now at least four international airports, which are located in Hong Kong, Macau, and Guangdong's Guangzhou and Shenzhen, which make it possible for tourists to choose a number of entry ports to enter or exit the PRD sub-region. Besides, there are many ferry services and roads linking Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. Tourists would find traveling in the PRD area very convenient.

### Guangdong:

Guangdong was perceived to hold some advantages over Hong Kong and Macau in terms of 'Chinese culture'. This implies that Guangdong may possibly establish a niche market and retain a unique image of its own by strengthening the attractiveness of this destination dimension. In practice, Guangdong province seems to have realized the importance of developing Chinese culture oriented products, in order to strengthen its marketing position in its cooperation with Hong Kong and Macau. For instance, in Guangzhou, the development of its tourism resources have mainly focused on featuring Southern Chinese characteristics. The special economic zone of Zhuhai has been looking to host various



cultural events and recently built a replica of the Beijing Summer Palace (Hobson 1995b). Shenzhen has already developed several culture oriented theme parks, such as Splendid China and the China Folk Culture Village. However, the point is that, to compare Guangdong with China's ancient capital cities such as Beijing, Xi'an and Nanjing, etc., Guangdong would find it difficult to keep the dimension of 'Chinese culture' as having a unique image in the international market.

In reviewing the literature, research about Guangdong's tourism is hardly available, thus comparison of the results with previous literature becomes difficult. Moreover, the previous literature on China's tourism seldom mentioned Guangdong's attractions or images. For instance, Bailey (1995) cited China's most popular destinations as Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou (for traditional Chinese gardens), Wuxi (for its lake and picturesque canals), Hangzhou (a scenic city, known for its West Lake), Guilin (China's best known natural beauty spot) and Xi'an (ancient Capital of China known primarily for its Qin Dynasty terra cotta army). In terms of tourist arrivals, Guangzhou is a popular destination mainly for Hong Kong and Macau tourists. Compared with other tourist cities, the cities in Guangdong province may find it hard to distinguish its cities with distinctive destination images. In other words, it is doubtful as to what extent the favorable destination attributes which Guangdong hold over Hong Kong and Macau can really meet the demand of international tourists who are interested in visiting Guangdong. Compared with other famous Chinese cities such as Beijing and Xi'an, Guangdong may lose its advantage. This study implies that Guangdong should be cautious about the 'advantage', and what is

important for Guangdong would be to develop a distinctive image with its own unique characteristics.

#### Hong Kong:

Hong Kong was perceived to be a safe and convenient travel destination. Its attractions were perceived to be dominant in the PRD area, which implies that Hong Kong plays a major role in attracting potential tourists to the PRD sub-region.

Shopping used to be considered as one of Hong Kong's most important factors leading to tourists' satisfaction (Yau and Chan 1990, Hobson and Ko 1994). However, as Hobson and Ko (1994) observed, Hong Kong's inflation has pushed up prices at a much faster rate than at other comparable Asian and Western destinations. Consequently, Hong Kong was becoming relatively more expensive than many other destinations, and is no longer the 'shopping paradise' it once was. In other words, especially in terms of price, Hong Kong might eventually lose this advantage and reputation as a 'shopping paradise'.

The findings also indicated that Hong Kong's competitiveness might be affected by its high hotel rates. Hobson (1995a) pointed out that, this was making Hong Kong as an increasingly expensive destination for the average travelers. The *Hang Seng Economic Monthly* (1994) concluded that, with room rates already exceeding those in most Asian countries, Hong Kong hotels are becoming less competitive. This, coupled with the general

rise in the cost of living, would weaken Hong Kong's claim to be a popular tourist destination. According to the HKTA's 1996 statistical report, Hong Kong's inbound tourist arrivals are mainly dominated by the short-haul markets of Japan, China, Taiwan, South Korea and the ASEAN countries. Considering that Hong Kong is likely to see a greater number of travelers from short-haul markets, especially from Mainland China, the tourism authorities of Hong Kong should find a way to tackle this image problem. To remedy this, Hong Kong should look to supplying more medium-rated hotels in the near future.

#### Macau:

This study found that it might be hard for Macau to differentiate itself from the bright lights of Hong Kong and establish its own distinctive image. Though Macau has been promoting itself as 'A Touch of Europe' and 'a culture city', the reason for not being able to differentiate it from Hong Kong's image might be because Macau is comparatively too small. According to Gartner (1996), the smaller the entity in relation to the whole, the less of a chance to develop an independent image. In the context of sub-regional travel destinations, destination images are perceived to be different as a reflection of the uniqueness of their specific local environment, historical and cultural background. However, comparatively speaking, a smaller travel destination may find it more difficult to establish distinctive or independent destination images, than its larger sub-regional partners.

Considering its future strategies, Hobson (1995b) pointed out that, on the one hand, it needed to integrate itself into the development of the PRD region. On the other hand, it needed to carve out a niche for itself and retained a uniqueness of its own, and it was obvious for gambling to be the focus. Hobson (1995b) further noted that gambling had always been a fact of life in Macau and would undoubtedly continue to be the primary reason for visitors to come to Macau. It has been observed that the enclave was often corruptly run and poorly controlled and Boey (1994) noted that the associated activities connected with gambling in Macau were primarily prostitution and crime. Macau still has difficulty shaking off these bad images. An increase in crime has always been a feature of what is becoming modern Macau (Hobson 1995b), and currently, a spate of gang or triad related shootings and knifings have plagued the enclave. The study findings and discussion implies that currently Macau may still need to mainly depend on its legalized casino gambling to distinguish itself and attract tourists. However, it is suggested that currently the tourism authority of Macau could make efforts to retain a uniqueness of its own by improving the image of its gambling industry, especially by tackling the problems of prostitution and crime which are harmful to its image.

Macau was also perceived to hold strong points in 'a feeling of European culture' and 'reasonable hotel rates'. The results indicate that Macau could possibly make effort to establish its unique image reflecting its European cultural features, and make use of the advantage in its low hotel rates to attract more economy or budget conscious tourists.

From a management perspective, if the dominant destination image factors which affect tourists' overall satisfaction are identified, destination managers and/or marketers should then focus attention and resources on those factors. Considering the aspects affecting tourists' satisfaction with their visit to the PRD area, it is suggested that Guangdong should put more effort on improving attractions related to 'restaurant/hotel' and 'Chinese culture'. There is also much room for improvement of Guangdong's service standards in order to strengthen its competitiveness and satisfy tourists' needs. Hong Kong should consider its 'entertainment' and 'accessibility' factors with a view to enrich its variety of entertainment activities, and to facilitate its immigration and customs procedures so as to make the access to/from Hong Kong more convenient, and Macau should pay more attention to the aspects of 'restaurant/hotel' and 'entertainment' so that it can make the tourists' stay in Macau more satisfying with improvement of services provided at restaurants and hotels, and the offering of a variety of entertainment activities. 'Local attitudes' was a basic factor in affecting tourists' satisfaction and there is much room for all three destinations to improve their image in terms of 'local attitudes'. In order to be more competitive, marketers from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau should aim to: improve the quality of restaurant and hotel services; promote more interesting Chinese-culture oriented activities and scenic spots; improve transport network linkages - such as improving road conditions; simplify immigration and customs procedures by setting up a direct transit passage to airports; provide simple visa application procedures and; enhance customs clearance efficiency. Fortunately, these are some of the problems that the three partners of the PRD Tourism

Marketing Organization have agreed to tackle together as mentioned previously in Chapter One.

With respect to the tourists' motivations, this study implies that safety is a prerequisite for international tourists when making a decision of destination selection. Furthermore, traveling in groups with all travel arrangements taken care of by tour operators creates a feeling of security and familiarity (Mok et. al. 1995), could also imply that tourists preferring to travel in groups may be concerned more about safety and security than individual and fully independent tourists. This finding sends a crucial message for travel marketers in the Pearl River Delta area who want to promote a successful destination image and attract international tourists to visit this region.

This study further found that experiencing different cultures may be the tourists' common motivation when deciding to travel. In other words, a destination favored with unique cultural attractions could attract pleasure tourists by focusing on its distinctive culture-oriented image. This finding implies that the PRD travel destinations should move in this direction by developing tour products reflecting the area's special cultural and historical characteristics. Tourism marketers could use further insights into tourist motivation for the purposes of product development, service quality evaluation and image development (Fodness 1994). In practice, the tourism authorities of this area seem to have noticed the importance of culture, and have made efforts to enrich their tourist products by featuring its cultural and historical characteristics. Hong Kong, for instance, has endeavored to establish

its image as 'a uniquely vibrant destination blending Asian mystique and Chinese lifestyles, festivals and culture, with the excitement and dynamism of a modern, cosmopolitan destination' for its long-haul markets, and establish its image as 'a uniquely vibrant destination offering all the sophistication, luxury and excitement of a stylish cosmopolitan city together with the fascinating culture of her Chinese heritage' for the short-haul markets (HKTA 1995). The HKTA has also supported the development of cultural events like the "Hong Kong Arts Festivals" and the "Heritage Tour" to strengthen its culture oriented destination image (Hobson and Ko 1994). The MGTO has started to promote Macau with a new image - "Macau: City of Culture", and is planning a number of projects, hoping to retain the destination's old world charm with modern-day facilities and landscaping. These projects include a new museum of architecture and history, theater, outdoor stage, gardens, terraces and continental - style cafes, etc. (Logarta 1996). In Guangdong province, the city of Shenzhen has already developed several culture oriented theme parks, such as Splendid China and the China Folk Culture Village. What would be important for the PRD tourism authorities seems to be that the cultural products provided should try to avoid replicas of each other's and should highlight their own unique characteristics.

Furthermore, with the sovereignty change of Hong Kong to China in 1997 and approaching change of sovereignty of Macau to China in 1999, Hong Kong and Macau have or will become tourists' hot spots. Before the return of sovereignty to China, it seems that tourists would like to come to take a last look at these colonies, to learn and experience their unique history and culture with a mixed influence of both Chinese and Western culture. After the

return of sovereignty, tourists may be interested to come back again, to see if there are any changes to these former colonial societies. As for Guangdong, China's miracle of economic development which has drawn world-wide attention has taken place initially and mainly in this province. Curiosity has driven tourists to come to Guangdong, to experience and share China's economic miracle which resulted from its open-door policy. The above discussion indicates that, it would become more significant for tourism marketers to take tourists' motives into consideration, when conducting marketing and promotional activities. This further implies that the tourism marketers should include the culture/ historical aspects in designing of their destination images.

The findings also imply that the PRD travel destinations should develop and provide products that have features highlighting a high standard of services and good quality shopping and restaurants, and reasonable tour package prices. Tourism marketers should reassure tourists of the safety of their destinations, and bring pressure on the respective authorities to provide protection for tourists. Macau, for instance, obtained a lower mean score as 'a safe place to travel' (3.28) in comparison with Hong Kong (3.99) and Guangdong (3.54), indicating that tourists perceived Macau as the least safe destination in the PRD area. In reality, the situation of public security in Macau does not seem to have improved, yet it has had exerted negative impacts on Macau's tourism. In 1996, the number of tourists from Hong Kong - Macau's largest tourist generator, decreased by 6% over the previous year as a result of some widely publicized triad or gang related killings (MGTO 1997).



The three partners of the PRD Tourism Marketing Organization have agreed to tackle a number of challenges such as hotel room supply and room rates, linkages of the transport network and simplification of immigration and customs procedures (as mentioned previously in Chapter 1.4.4). The findings and implications discussed in this study are generally consistent with the identified problems and issues which offer support to the measures taken by the organization. Issues that were not addressed and require attention based on the study findings, are safety, local attitudes and cultural /historical attractions. It is suggested that efforts by the tourism authorities need to ensure that traveling in this area is really safe, especially in Macau; An awareness and courtesy campaign needs to be launched among local citizens to make tourists feel they are genuinely and warmly welcomed in the PRD area; and from an marketing point of view, newly developed tourist attractions should reflect the PRD area's special cultural and historical characteristics.

The results of the canonical correlation analysis confirmed that destination attributes were positively related to the motivational attributes. According to McGehee et. al. (1996), "destination attributes may respond to, stimulate, and reinforce the inherent push factor motivations. ... Intrinsic motivations may depend upon destination attributes for expression and fulfillment while destination attributes may depend upon motivations for their attractiveness"(p46-47). This finding suggests that a successful matching of destination and motivation factors may help to identify a more integrated destination image. In other words, to measure destination image by studying both destination attributes and motivational

attributes, seems to be more appropriate than studying the topic just from the supply side of destination attributes, or only the demand side's motivational attributes. The results of this study demonstrated that the research framework (as mentioned in Chapter 3.1.2) which was developed and based on Stabler's (1988) 'linkage of destination attributes, image and demand theory' (as mentioned previously in Chapter 2.1.3 and Figure 3), was found to be a relevant and applicable research model for destination image analysis. The main practical implication of this framework for the tourism marketers of the PRD area is that, on one hand, they should try to portray or develop favorable images of the PRD sub-regional travel destination on the bases of their favorable destination attractions, in order to enhance tourists' choices. On the other hand, marketers should have accurate and reliable information about potential tourists' needs in order to successfully market their tour products. For example, while the Pearl River Delta Tourism Marketing Organization hopes to develop a destination image for the PRD area based on its distinctive destination image attributes, this image should also reflect this area's cultural and historical attractions. According to Crofts and Rekom (1994), such an understanding can assist management in 'fine tuning' its abilities to help an organization define the image to be projected in a promotional campaign.

### **6.3 LIMITATIONS**

In this study, there were some limitations that need to be acknowledged.

Respondents were sampled only from those participating in a package tour group. It was possible that group tourists might be easier to form 'group perceptions' which was largely determined by the designated itinerary and activities organized by the tour operator, rather than forming individual perceptions. Considering that individual tourists who were not covered in this sample survey might have different tour experiences and perceptions, the sampling should not be regarded as representative for all pleasure tourists visiting the PRD area.

Since the actual number of visitors choosing the PRD area for traveling is still small and largely unknown, to sample and collect data from such a small and unknown population proved to be difficult. Due to the nature of the population, the sample was not randomly chosen. Furthermore, respondents in terms of residence of country was dominated by tourists from one or two countries - Japan and Korea. The survey was conducted during the winter season, thus those who visited the PRD area in other seasons were not included in the sample. From this point of view, the sample might not be free from coverage errors or bias. Thus, there is no attempt to generalize the study findings to the population at large.

#### **6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The use of two sets of variables of both destination attributes and tourists' motives provides a base in the field of destination image measurement and development, and represents the beginning of a longitudinal study for further research.

There is a limitation for the generalization of the results due to the non-random sampling adopted in this study, since all respondents surveyed in this study were package group tourists. It is suggested that the findings may be more significant by surveying all types of tourists in the future studies.

Further research is also needed to compare the destination images of the PRD area with other travel destinations in the Asia region, such as Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam, etc. It is generally assumed that these destinations are strong competitors of the PRD sub-regional destinations, especially for attracting potential tourists from the longhaul markets such as the North American and Western European countries.

Considering that tourists from different countries and cultures may have different perceptions (Mill and Morrison 1985), further research seems to be necessary to focus on specific market segments as well.

In summary, this study does not claim to answer all the questions related to the destination images of the PRD sub-region, but has attempted to address some of them, and provide a foundation for future work in the area.

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**APPENDIX A**

**MEMORANDUM FOR CONDUCTING THE SURVEY**



## Memo

### Conducting the Pearl River Delta Tourist Survey

To: Tour Leaders and Escorts  
From: Dr. John Ap and Mr. Samson Wang,  
Date: December 16, 1996

#### Background of the Survey

Tourism is a very important industry in the Pearl River Delta area i.e. Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. Due to some limitations and constraints on the process of tourism development faced by each area, they are becoming more and more interdependent in terms of strengthening competitiveness and improving attractiveness. Considering that image is the most important aspect of a tourist attraction, it is essential to create an integrated image for the Pearl River Delta area. The results of this study will provide valuable information to the tourism marketers so that the Pearl River Delta area can be promoted in a more efficient and cost effective way.

The objective of this survey study is to examine and compare the images of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau as travel destinations by international tourists.

#### Instructions for Tour Escorts / Leaders Distributing the Survey Questionnaire

- Description of the survey questionnaire:

The questionnaire includes four sections:

Section 1 - Asks about the attractiveness of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. Tourists are asked to indicate their level of agreement on statements which describe various characteristics of each destination;

Section 2 - Examines the reasons why tourists visit the Pearl River Delta. Tourists are asked to indicate their level of importance on a list of reasons why they have traveled to the Pearl River Delta;

Section 3 - Asks about the frequency of visits and main purpose of travel, etc.; and,

Section 4 - Asks about the social and demographic characteristics of the tourists (e.g. gender, age, country of residence, etc.).

Please read the questionnaire before it is distributed to tourists. If you do not understand a question, please give Samson Wang a telephone call on 2766 6356 during office hours. Thank you.

- Selecting respondents:

Respondents should be:

- International tourists on a tour itinerary covering Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, and
- Aged 18 years and over,
- Exclude tourists from mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau.

- Procedure:

Distribution of Questionnaire:

Questionnaires should be distributed to the respondents toward the end of the Pearl River Delta tour. For example, if tourists are traveling through the Pearl River Delta on a tour bus, questionnaires can be distributed on the way back, and may be answered by the respondents on the bus.

Collection of Questionnaire:

Request respondents to complete the questionnaire on the tour bus/train/ferry etc. and inform them that you will collect it before arrival in Hong Kong.

- Answering questions from respondents about the questionnaire.
  - How long does it take to complete the questionnaire ? *Approximately 8-10 minutes.*
  - Do I need to write my name on the questionnaire ? *No.*
  - Do I have to answer all the questions ? *Yes.*
  - For question part one, do I have to make a choice by circling one number for each item and for each place visited - Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, respectively ? *Yes.*
  - For each item and for each place visited, can I circle more than one number ? *No.*
  - What do I do if I can not make up my mind as to which choice to circle ? *Since your opinion is very important to this study, please do not leave it blank and just try to make a choice which you think may best describe your opinion. There is no right or wrong answer.*
- Incentive: Provide all respondents with the small souvenir as the incentive for completing the questionnaire.

Dr. John Ap  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Hotel & Tourism Management  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Samson Wang  
Research Student  
Department of Hotel & Tourism Management  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

**APPENDIX B**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE SURVEY**



# TOURISM SURVEY

## On the Pearl River Delta

*Guangdong*



*Macau*

*Hong Kong*

Winter, 1996



THE HONG KONG  
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

香港理工大學

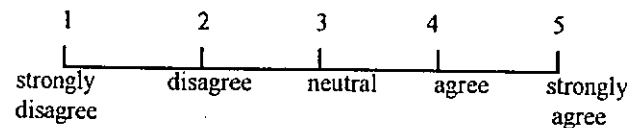
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Dear Sir / Madam,

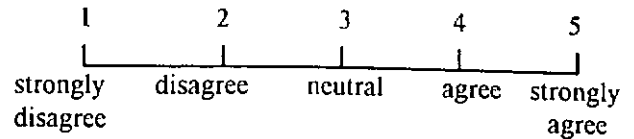
This questionnaire will take you approximately eight minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated. Your answers will be of great value to our study and will remain strictly confidential. (In this study, Guangdong /Canton Province mainly refers to the cities such as Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai etc. in the Pearl River Delta area).

### **PART ONE:**

Please give us your opinion about the factors listed below by circling the category which best describes your level of **AGREEMENT** with the statements listed. There are no right or wrong answers. For each statement, please CIRCLE one number below Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, respectively.



<b>Factors:</b>	<b><u>Guangdong</u></b>	<b><u>Hong Kong</u></b>	<b><u>Macau</u></b>
Mixture of Chinese and western culture.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Typical Southern Chinese life style.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Attractive urban and city sights.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
A flavor of cosmopolitan life.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Interesting sites of China's modern history.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
A feeling of European culture.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Amusement and theme parks.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
A variety of food in restaurants	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Variety of entertainment activities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Great variety of shopping.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Interesting museums.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Satisfactory service in hotels /restaurants.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Attractive rural and natural scenery.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Interesting open street market.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Interesting night life.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
High-quality food/cuisine in restaurants.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Typical Southern Chinese traditions.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Clean facilities and amenities.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Satisfactory service when shopping.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5



<b>Factors:</b>	<b>Guangdong</b>	<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>Macau</b>
Local people are helpful.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Reasonable prices in stores.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Interesting festivals /events.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Local people are friendly and courteous.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Reasonable hotel rates.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Exciting casinos.			1 2 3 4 5
Reasonable prices in restaurants.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Comfortable hotel rooms	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Readily available tourist information.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
A safe place to travel	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Convenient transport within the city.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
An easily accessible destination	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Convenient immigration & customs procedures.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

In general, how would you rate the overall attractiveness of :

	Very Unattractive	Unattractive	Somewhat Unattractive	Neutral	Somewhat Attractive	Attractive	Very Attractive
i) <b>Guangdong</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ii) <b>Hong Kong</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
iii) <b>Macau</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How did your expectations of each area match your visit experience:

(note: Expectations refer to your thoughts and images of each destination before your first visit.)

	Much worse than expected	Worse than expected	Somewhat worse than expected	Neutral	Somewhat better than expected	Better than expected	Much better than expected
i) <b>Guangdong</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ii) <b>Hong Kong</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
iii) <b>Macau</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Overall, how satisfied were you with the visit to the Pearl River Delta region ?

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
i) <b>Guangdong</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ii) <b>Hong Kong</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
iii) <b>Macau</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**PART TWO:**

People often have different reasons for taking a vacation. Please indicate how **important** each of the following factors was in your decision of taking a vacation in the Pearl River Delta region (i.e. Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau). (Circle one number in each row).

<i>Reasons:</i>	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very Important	Extremely important
Participating in activities that offer thrills	1	2	3	4	5
Not to plan a vacation in detail so as to have something unexpected or surprising.	1	2	3	4	5
Meeting new people.	1	2	3	4	5
Viewing beautiful natural or rural scenery	1	2	3	4	5
Seeking adventure	1	2	3	4	5
Enjoying variety of night life.	1	2	3	4	5
Going to a safe area.	1	2	3	4	5
Learning about a new culture or area.	1	2	3	4	5
Experiencing new and different things	1	2	3	4	5
Maintaining ties with my cultural roots	1	2	3	4	5
Escaping from the daily routine which bores me.	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting cultural /historical attractions.	1	2	3	4	5
Enhancing social interaction.	1	2	3	4	5
Having fun or being entertained.	1	2	3	4	5
Experiencing a different life style.	1	2	3	4	5
Taking advantage of discounted fares /tour package prices.	1	2	3	4	5
Going to places where my friends or most people have not been.	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting mainly famous places and attractions.	1	2	3	4	5
Enjoying Chinese food.	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting a vacation destination which most people value and /or appreciate.	1	2	3	4	5
Fulfilling a dream of visiting a vacation destination I have always wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5
Other, (Please specify)	1	2	3	4	5

**PART THREE:**

*Please CIRCLE a number below Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau respectively.*

(1) How many times have you been to

Guangdong: \_\_\_\_\_ times

Hong Kong: \_\_\_\_\_ times

Macau: \_\_\_\_\_ times

(2) What was the main purpose of your current visit ?

	<u>Guangdong</u>	<u>Hong Kong</u>	<u>Macau</u>
Business /meetings	1	1	1
Visit friends & relatives	2	2	2
Vacation	3	3	3
En route	4	4	4
Others ( please specify )	_____	_____	_____

**PART FOUR:**

*Please give some information about yourself.*

1. What is your gender ?

1) Male

2) Female

2. In what age group are you ?

1) 20 years old or below

2) 21 - 30 years old

3) 31 - 40 years old

4) 41 - 50 years old

5) 51 - 60 years old

6) 61 years old or above

3. What is your country of residence ? \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION !**