

**Victoria University
School of Applied Economics
Faculty of Business and Law**

Ph.D. Thesis

**TRAVEL GUIDEBOOKS AND THE
INDEPENDENT TRAVELLER IN THE
ASIA PACIFIC REGION**

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[.....] when at the sight of the typewriter I am taken by an overwhelming nausea, symptoms that normally appear at the end of the academic year, I become a dog amongst dogs, or better an animal amongst animals.

(Konrad Lorenz, 1967, p. 267)

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ABSTRACT

The constant increase in the number of independent travellers has prompted the need for accurate and reliable information to plan holidays and to evaluate on-site activities. In organising and undertaking independent tours, travellers face the challenge of searching useful information about the destinations they are visiting. Specifically, potential tourists have a need for information with the purpose of reducing risks associated with the consumption of tourism services. It is clear that information acquisition is necessary both for selecting a destination and for on-site decisions. However, values, beliefs and attitudes influence the levels and types of information needed, and therefore may impact on the levels and types of information sought. The purpose of this research is to investigate the need for information by independent travellers. This research has examined on-site information needs and search with a specific focus on travel guidebooks. A cross cultural approach has been taken and travellers from Japan, Korea, China, and North America have been surveyed. This research is quantitative in nature and the data have been analysed through the use of factor analysis and structural equation modelling.

This research has demonstrated that travel guidebooks are an aid in reducing risks associated with travelling independently, and they play a positive role in the recent tourism trend of a shift away from mass tourism towards independent tourism. This research has also demonstrated that cultural background is a determinant in the types of information searched and in the use of travel guidebooks while travelling. This research has provided a contribution to current theories of consumer behaviour, with specific focus on independent tourism and information needs. This study also enables unbiased discussion on the possible directions for travel guidebook publishers to be successful in the Asian market.

DECLARATION

I, Linda Osti, declare that the PhD thesis entitled Travel Guidebooks and the Independent Traveller in the Asia Pacific Region is no more than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

Signature.....

Date.....

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research background

The introduction of new technologies, enabling customers to gather information on flights, accommodation and destinations, and allowing direct bookings which bypass the need for intermediaries, is prompting a constant increase in the number of independent travellers. The new trend in requesting more personalised and often more specialised travel is a further boost to the independent tourism phenomenon, and is tending to shift travellers away from “package tourism” (Mueller, 2001; Buhalis, 2001; Knowles, et al., 2001).

In organising and undertaking independent tours, travellers face the challenge of searching useful information sources about the destinations they have selected. A variety of information sources is available – brochures and material published by tourist information centres and by tourist boards, articles in specialised journals or magazines, Internet, television, word of mouth by friends and relatives, travel agents, tour guides, and travel guidebooks.

1.1.1. Definition of the words

According to Yamamoto and Gill (1999), tourism may be categorised into three types: escorted tourism, package tourism and independent tourism. Escorted tours involve the use of tour guides; package tours imply the use of prearranged tourist services (for example air-seats, ground transfers, hotel arrangements, and meals) within the tour; while on the other hand, fully independent travel relates to travel arrangements made entirely by travellers themselves (although they may still use travel agents to purchase travel components such as tickets). Fully independent travellers (FIT) follow a personally determined schedule. There is little tangible difference between escorted tours and package tours. Drawing a distinction is unnecessary as the two are not mutually exclusive, particularly if reliance is placed on Middleton's (1991) looser definition, whereby package tours comprise the purchase of any two or more elements of transport, accommodation, food, destination attractions, and other facilities and services. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, escorted tours will be referred to as package tours. A key element of this study is to identify the difference between those participating in package tours and independent travellers. In the latter case, tourists are able to make personal decisions about how to travel to the destination and what to see and do. When adopting this approach, travellers are more dependent on travel information about the destination.

1.1.2. Why independent tourism

The difference between independent and package tourism, is not confined to the way in which the travel is organised. The two types of tourism have different impacts on

the receiving destinations. According to the literature, mass tour operators offer standardised packages. They tend to be large vertically, horizontally and/or diagonally integrated companies, leaving very little opportunity for secondary business run by locals (Poon, 1993; Kent, 1997). Due to the economies of scale in which they work, tour operators can exert enormous buying power. They also exercise considerable control over the distribution and sale of the destination in the marketplace.

The business environment of tour operators is characterised by small margins and consequently they offer a largely undifferentiated product. On the other hand, consumer demand is price-elastic. All-inclusive tours can represent a solution for both clients and destinations as they enable tourists to travel to exotic and distant destinations, and they provide a regular flow of visitors to the destination. However, in many cases tour operators have placed destination-based businesses at a bargaining disadvantage because, by persuading their clients on which destination to visit, they have seized the market (Laws, 1995). In the case of many islands, microstates or peripheral economies (most of the Pacific Island nations), primary control of the flow of tourism to the destination lies with companies based in the tourism-generating countries (Hall, 1994). The major components of a package tour are bought in the tourist's country of origin in the corresponding currency. The rest may be regarded as superfluous spending and as merely "crumbs from the table" (Omotayo Brown, 1995, cited in Curtin and Busby, 1999). The choice of destination by tour operators is closely associated with quickly changing criteria, such as economic conditions in the tourist's country of origin and image and status of the destination (Shaw and Williams, 2002). In these circumstances, the relationship between tour operators and destinations is a matter of convenience. The loyalty shown by tour operators to any destination is tenuous. As soon as the destination

becomes less popular and profitable, operators switch their allegiance; Jones, et al. (1997) note that “most creative energy from operators is spent on seeking new destinations for marketing” (Jones, et al., 1997, p. 284).

Independent tourism is sometimes viewed as a sustainable alternative to mass package tourism. Independent tourists are more likely than other types of tourists to use services and accommodation provided by local companies, to get in contact with the local population and therefore to learn and better appreciate the local culture, moving away from mass tours and discovering destinations that have been peripheral or of minor attraction. Furthermore, fully independent travellers (FIT) will be likely to book accommodation and internal flights at the destination via the Internet or directly with the supplier as opposed to purchasing in the source market. Such buying behaviour increases the foreign exchange flow for the destination market, both before and during the travel time. Consequently, during the course of travelling, FITs are more likely to pay for each activity, such as tours, meals and incidentals (including supermarket and small essential shopping) in the destination market. This behaviour has greater potential to allow for a trickle down of foreign expenditure into the local economy, impacting more directly on the local suppliers of goods and services. Potentially there will be fewer leakages of the foreign exchange back to the foreign owned suppliers of goods and services. As such there is a potentially higher benefit for destination markets to attract FIT tourists.

The majority of international tourists are generated from developed countries, with a substantial number travelling to economically disadvantaged regions of the world. This is particularly the case if we exclude business and VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives) tourism. VFR tourists tend to be FIT but are lower spending travellers. However, they do stay longer, and generally use surface transport rather than

travelling by air. They use accommodation that is freely provided by relatives and eat cheaply with the benefit of local knowledge to contain their expenses. Travel by independent holidaymakers transfers foreign exchange more quickly and much of this transfer is from the developed to the less developed world (Cleverdon and Kalisch, 2000).

FIT travel is both economically beneficial for destinations, and also increases international tourism between the developed and underdeveloped worlds. This offers prospective benefits for the economic development of various world regions.

1.2. Purpose of the research

Given the potential benefits for destinations of independent tourism over package tourism, this study aims to identify the types of information sought by such tourists with a view to stimulating independent travel. After an exploratory analysis of the existing literature on consumer behaviour for searching information, the present study focuses on travel guidebooks as an information source for independent travellers.

Travel guidebooks are one of the most widely used sources of information by independent travellers, and although few academic research papers have focused on their use and evolution, Battacharyya (1997), Carter (1998) and Sorensen (2003) do analyse the impacts of guidebooks on the tourism phenomenon, and the described image of the destination.

In this research, travel guidebooks are analysed as a means of obtaining information, with the aim to reduce potential risk during travel and to enhance the quality of the trip. The importance of travel guidebooks for independent tourism has been defined by Sorensen (2003). He states that travel guidebooks have facilitated the rapid expansion of the backpacker market. In the past, independent travellers were classified as backpackers but the market has expanded to the extent that today independent travellers are so heterogeneous that they cannot be readily classified. Sorensen (2003) suggests that this evolution is partially due to travel guidebooks. In the present research no specific distinction is made between backpackers and FIT.

Addressing the use of travel guidebooks as a stimulus to independent travel through risk reduction, Carter (1998) states that travel guidebooks are of particular importance to independent travellers because they provide essential information about how to avoid and reduce risks associated with the visit to the destination. He states that guidebooks offer safety and health advice, and inform the reader that “risk and danger cannot be avoided but can be controlled, thus permitting the risk to be safe but the place exciting” (Carter, 1998, p: 351).

The specific problems addressed here may be summarised as follows:

- What is the information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers?
- Do different cultures create different needs in the types of information searched?
- What are the key success factors for guidebooks to be effective in the independent travel market within the Asia-Pacific Region?

- What are the challenges and opportunities that confront travel guidebook publishers attempting to penetrate the Asia-Pacific market?

The present research aims to assess the effectiveness of the range and type of current information provided by published travel guidebooks in the Asia-Pacific travel market. It will also investigate future opportunities for travel guidebook publishers to penetrate the Asia-Pacific market.

The proposed regional focus is appropriate since Asia-Pacific is a fast growing region for both international tourist arrivals and departures. The two largest potential growth markets for departures (India and China) are located in the region alongside significant source markets like Japan. Intra-regional flows are also expanding rapidly. As such, this region is highly significant in global tourism and is an excellent market region for study purposes.

This study contributes new research to the tourism literature and offers the prospect of providing industry specialists with new knowledge about the information needs of independent travellers. The main aim of the research is to provide an enhanced understanding of the information needs of the growing number of independent tourists who have been recognised in the literature as contributing towards a more sustainable form of tourism (Curtin and Busby, 1999).

This study highlights consumer behaviour in the search for information within a broad and cross-cultural context. It also highlights the various alternative travel information sources and will compare their use by a variety of travellers. The research will also evaluate the independent traveller compared with the package tourist in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Proposed outcomes of the research include:

- Determination of the extent to which travel guidebooks are used relative to other sources of information within the intra Asia-Pacific travel market;
- A comparison of the content and type of information requested by travel guidebook users in the intra Asia-Pacific market from a cross-cultural perspective;
- From a cultural perspective an evaluation of information content, layout and market requirements for travel guidebooks;
- An assessment of the potential for travel guidebook publishers to penetrate the intra Asia-Pacific travel market.

A number of studies undertaken during the late 1980s and early 1990s focused on information search behaviour and typologies. However, there is a gap in the literature in regard to travel guidebooks.

As one of the many existing external information sources, travel guidebooks have been classified as commercial sources.

For independent travellers, travel guidebooks can provide useful and necessary information to decide on the destination and to plan the holiday; and often they are also a necessary on-site source of information. Travel guidebooks can facilitate independent tourism and enhance the benefits of travelling alone or in very small groups, enable the exploration of destinations away from mass tourism tours, and increase the opportunities for tourists to interact with locals by making use of

accommodation and services provided by local companies. This directly supports local economies. They are also a stand-alone and portable resource only requiring a one-off investment.

So far no specific research has focused on travel guidebook requirements. In particular, there are no studies on the requirements of the different travel groups in the Asia-Pacific markets, clustered according to nationality or culture of origin. Therefore, this research is both innovative and explorative in respect to travel guidebooks, and the independent traveller across the Asia-Pacific cultures.

1.3. Market profile for Asian tourism

According to the WTO study “Tourism: 2020 Vision” (WTO, 2000), outbound tourism from the Asia-Pacific region will almost double by 2010 to reach 193 million people, and by 2020 it is forecast to double again, with 405 million East Asia-Pacific residents travelling abroad—about 26% of the world total. Of this growth the largest flows are expected to be intra-regional movements. Currently, East Asia-Pacific residents are among the world's top spenders on tourism and there is also a growing trend towards independent tourism (Yamamoto and Gill, 1999). The market profile for Japan, for example, shows that “Japanese travellers are becoming more experienced and moving towards more independent travel, especially those in younger age groups. Although approximately half of all Japanese travellers still use package tours, more are opting for skeleton tours that allow participants to choose their own activity” (TBC, 2001).

1.4. Thesis structure

The thesis contains a literature review in Chapter 2 from which a conceptual model is developed in Chapter 3 that contrasts the concept of fully independent travel with package tourism, and expands upon the information needs of travellers based upon the literature review.

In Chapter 4 the research methodology is outlined, including the nature and purpose of data collection designed to analyse the hypotheses developed from the conceptual framework in Chapter 3.

Chapter 5 discusses the descriptive findings from the analysis of the survey.

Chapter 6 analyses the data collected in regard to testing the research conceptual framework, and the hypotheses derived from the conceptualisation of the current literature.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings of the hypotheses tested in Chapter 6, and concludes on the overall results of the research, as well as outlining the limitations of the research, and identifying directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The move from package to independent travel

The package tour has been described as “the ultimate, mass-marketed product” of the travel and tourism industry (Atherton, 1994). Especially after the 1950s, the package tour became an important factor in the expansion of international tourist markets (Shaw and Williams, 1993) and the Asian market has not been an exception to this phenomenon. Despite the worldwide growth of international tourism, the relative importance of package tours has recently declined. A shift away from package tourism may have significant consequences for the existing structure of the travel and tourism sector, including tourism distribution channels, booking systems, business and destination suppliers, and a greater need for information on tourist destinations to allow for a self planned holiday.

Urry (1995) considers that the “sea change” in contemporary tourism, including a shift from mass package tourism to more individualised travel, is intimately associated with a fundamental shift in the late 20th century capitalist economies. The recent change in tourism production and consumption has been said to have other consequences, such as fewer repeat visits, diverse types of holiday experiences, rapid turnover of tourist sites and experiences based on lifestyle research, the growth of green tourism and more individually tailored holidays.

There has been discussion in the literature about whether the decline of package tourism is the inevitable trend of contemporary tourism, or rather, whether package tourism complements the trend towards individual tourism with more specialised agents and operators, flexible package tour structures, design variations, and niche-marketing disguising the mass production of package tours (Ritzer and Liska, 1997).

Consumers are increasingly aware of their limited time and are looking for both value for time and value for money (Buhalis, 2000). Under such pressure, tourists shift from their annual one/two week long seaside holiday towards:

- More fragmented annual holidays,
- New types of holidays and special interests,
- More quality in the travel experience,
- More experience, education and more flexibility in their holidays,
- More special and unique experiences (Buhalis, 2000; Vanhove, 2001).

Independent tourism may be viewed as a natural evolution of the travel industry from mass package tourism based on long annual holidays, in “safe” and familiar destinations, to unique, special and tailor-made holidays.

This new independent tourism is not to be confused with the backpacker market, which has a long history in major tourist generating countries. Although both types of tourism have a common key element of independent organisation of the itinerary,

backpacker tourism tends to remain a segment of FIT (fully independent tourism) tourism that is based upon extended adventurous working holidays.

The recent changes in tourist behaviour, along with new technologies, rapid ongoing technological developments in the transport system, and a broader range of activities and destinations, has led to greater ease of travel and a consequent rise in independent holidays. This trend is not only affecting backpackers, but is affecting different market segments. Backpackers have been defined as “younger tourists that use a rucksack or backpack rather than a suitcase to carry all they need for their trip” (Swarbrooke and Horner, 1999, pp. 149-150). They have a number of common characteristics:

- Travelling independently rather than with package tours;
- Attempting to keep expenditures to a minimum;
- Being attracted to destinations and attractions off the beaten tourist tracks;
- Taking holidays, which often extend beyond the usual duration of one or two weeks;
- Experiencing the destination rather than just visiting the destination, by deeply penetrating the local culture.
- Destination funding related to working holidays.

From the above definitions it is clear that the distinction between FIT travellers and backpackers is becoming increasingly blurred as different demographic groups and cultures move into this broad categorisation of tourism.

2.1.1. The importance of independent tourism

Kent (1997) and Hall (1994) (cited in Curtin and Busby, 1999) describe tourism as an industry “dominated by large corporations which utilise a vertically integrated economic structure to maximise their returns from the tourist dollar; thereby leaving very little economic opportunities for secondary businesses run by the local people”.

The role played by source-market based mass tour operators has been controversial because of the negative impacts of mass tourism on destinations. Firstly, they are responsible for high concentrations of tourists. By operating according to the principles of economies of scale, they attempt to maximise the volume of tourists at the destination. As a result of such activities, rapid and often haphazard development is stimulated, where no consideration is given to the environment, and where local people are able to exercise little influence over the level and speed of development (Buhalis and Fletcher, 1995).

This process can lead to the commodification of tourist destinations and to the standardisation of environmental characteristics and culture. Popular destinations may lose their identity as a consequence of these processes. In this way destinations can become substitutes for each other, with tour brochures emphasising general

benefits such as beaches and entertainment. In these circumstances, a client's choice between destinations reflects price advantages and convenience, rather than the attributes of the specific place, its people and ecology. The commodification spiral is driven by four related factors: a) clients often have minimal loyalty to particular destinations, b) many tourists are keen to sample a variety of destinations, c) tour operators require consistent standards of facilities and service for their clients from every resort they do business with, and d) tour operators are able to switch clients to alternative destinations for a variety of logistical or other reasons (Laws, 1995).

Furthermore, as the supply side is stimulated through bulk contracting of hotel rooms, hoteliers rush to expand their properties and the total capacity experiences a dramatic increase. The expansion of supply increases competition and decreases price; tourists are able to buy cheap holidays which do not adequately cover the costs of the externalities. In some places this supply-led growth has apparently grown out of control in a variety of settings (Forsyth, 1996, cited in Curtin and Busby, 1999).

Of all the activities that make up the tourism industry, hotels probably have the greatest impact on the receiving countries. The majority of the largest hotels worldwide are owned, operated or managed by, or affiliated to, a small number of trans-national corporations (Madeley, 1999). Many hotels are locally owned, but are managed by companies based in developed countries. This underlines the difficulties associated with tourism direct employment. As Lea (1988) points out, many trans-national companies import the necessary skills and therefore, immigrant workers get much of the employment benefit leaving the menial roles for locals. Additionally, Tapper (2001) has noted that tour operators direct and influence the

volume of tourism and the tourist destinations and facilities that are used. The influence and power of mass tour operators is strictly linked to the manner in which tourism is marketed. There is an “interactive relationship between tour operators and their travel market” and “demand for tourist product is largely engineered by a travel industry network of image makers in affluent generating regions” (Reimer, 1990). Carey, et al. (1997) have described how the concept of designing a “cultural bubble” or controlling the product / holiday experience forms an essential component of competitive advantage strategy of the mass tour operators. Moreover, as the overall income of tour operators increases from excursion and ancillary service sales, “tourists are strongly encouraged to place more trust in tour operators’ arrangements than those offered by local suppliers” (Tapper, 2001, p. 355).

As business enterprises, tour operators are generally driven by what is best for, and demanded by the client; rather than by what is best for the destination economy.

The influence exercised by tour operators on destinations may be summarised under five main headings:

1. Tour operators design the itineraries which tourists will follow and thus decide where they will and will not go and what excursion they will take;
2. Tour operators contract services from local suppliers in the destination, notably hotels;
3. Tour operators provide the representatives in each resort who advise tourists on what to do in the destination;

4. Tour operators sell the destination to potential tourists via promotional messages in their brochures;
5. Tour operators have relatively little capital invested in most destinations and are therefore able to move from one destination to another relatively easily (Swarbrooke, 1998).

In summary, the tourism distribution system between tourist generating countries and receiving countries is firmly in the hands of the organisations based in the origin developed countries including tour operators, airlines and hotel groups.

To further understand the dependence of destination countries within the service chain, it is important to point out the environment in which tour operators work:

1. Tourism business operates in an economic environment where success is determined by price wars and short-term, flexible investment in fashionable destinations;
2. The tourism product is intangible and invisible;
3. For developing countries the commercialisation of hospitality is a relatively new concept;
4. Tourism normally is based on competitive entrepreneurship;
5. Tourism takes place in the producing location bringing with it social and cultural intrusion (Cleverdon and Kalisch, 2000);

6. The price-cutting competition of undifferentiated mass market operators continues to be a threat to sustainable destination development, while tour operators prevent the use of local suppliers - a fundamental principle of sustainability.

From the observations previously noted, it is clear that independent tourism is more sustainable than package tourism; both economically, by supporting local suppliers of goods and services, and environmentally, by preferring off the beaten track places and respecting and integrating with the local culture. However, it has to be recognised that tour operators, despite a less economically sustainable approach, are stimulating tourism in the destination and, along with that, a form of economic tourism development. Regardless, independent tourism is often more economically sustainable in the long term. It also depends to some extent upon the infrastructure created previously by the dominant mass tourism market.

2.2. Information search and consumer behaviour theories in tourism

Travellers face the challenge of searching for useful information about the destination when organising and undertaking independent holidays. Similar to consumers consulting a number of information sources, as has been noted, before the purchase or consumption of products and services, travellers consult information sources before deciding on their holiday. The sole difference is that travellers need information both prior to purchase and also during the consumption of the service in order to decide about on-site activities. Though the latter statement identifies the

differences in information search between the purchase of products and the consumption of a holiday, most of the existing literature on tourism information search is based on general consumer behaviour theories.

As Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) have stated, “The purpose of consumer behaviour models is to attempt to give a simplified version of the relationship of the various factors that influence consumer behaviour” (Swarbrooke and Horner, 1999, p. 41).

The models have been developed to identify behavioural patterns and describe consumer behaviour. Many consumer behaviour models have been developed over the years and include a search for information. One example is Anderson’s model (Anderson, 1965) and another Bettman’s model (Bettman, 1979). Both models emphasise the importance of information search towards product selection and purchase. In both the models, information search and the use of information sources are a primary stage of the consumer decision-making process. Information is sought in various sources, with marketing activities being a strong component.

The starting point for general consumer behaviour models is product purchase marketing. However, by its nature, tourism involves the provision of a service, rather than the production and sale of a product. Therefore, the intangible nature of a service affects the consumer during the decision, purchase and consumption processes in a different way to product purchasing.

The fact that a holiday cannot be sampled in advance, and is not replaceable or exchangeable, makes the decision on tourism purchase and consumption a high risk task. In this regard, Seaton (1994) stated that tourism involves the commitment of a large sum of money to something that:

“cannot be seen or evaluated before purchase. The opportunity cost of a failed holiday is irreversible. If a holiday goes wrong that is it for another year. Most people do not have the additional vacation time or money to make good the holiday that went wrong.” (Seaton, 1994, p.373)

Also, the process of information search in tourism differs from other industries. One of the peculiarities of tourism that has been neglected in past literature is that it involves a combination of services whereby the consumer faces multiple decisions for the consumption of different services over a length of time. As such, travellers search information to assist decision-making, not only during the planning phase, but also during the holiday. Analogous to general consumer behaviour models, tourism consumer behaviour models include information search as part of the process (see for example Wahab, et al., 1976; Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Schmoll, 1977; Cooper, et al., 1993).

“Understanding the consumer’s information-search-behaviour is critical to a firm’s decision-making” (Moorthy, et al., 1997, p. 263).

For this reason, a substantial amount of marketing research has focused on information search behaviour, for example the works of Gershoff, et al. (2001); Ariely (2000); Moorthy, et al. (1997); Murray (1991); Urbany, et al. (1989); Kiel and Layton (1981); Newmann (1977); Newman (1975) Srull (1983); Ozanne and Brucks (1992); Hoyer and Jacoby (1983); Alba (1983); Beatty and Smith (1987); Midgley (1983); Midgley (1989). In the literature, research on information search behaviour has been considered important for the following reasons (Newmann, 1977):

- Among the same product category, buyers choose products based on their knowledge of price and quality differences,
- Knowledge on information search is required to plan distribution and communication programs,
- Knowledge on information search is required by public policymakers to define measures to be adopted to provide buyers with the necessary information on which to base purchase decisions,
- Knowledge on information search provides a deeper understanding of human behaviour.

However, the final purpose of this study is not the understanding of tourism information needs in order to address communication problems or distribution for a specific product to prospective consumers (in the case of tourism this would be a destination, a hospitality service or transportation service). The aim of the study is to discover the type and content of information, which can facilitate independent tourism, particularly in regard to travel guidebooks.

There has been very little research done on the information search and information requirements of tourists. It is therefore necessary to first discuss the broad theories of information search, and to create a new theoretical structure on tourist information needs.

The information search has two main aspects in behavioural analysis: the acquisition of information and the processing of information. Information is acquired from a range of different sources: advertisements, literature, consultants, the internet,

friends and relatives and consumers' own experiences with similar products. The processing act requires that consumers perceive and remember the information acquired. Therefore, consumers must acquire information, retain it in memory and retrieve it when evaluating the range of services before selection.

2.2.1. Types and definitions of information sources

There are several information sources available to consumers. In the literature those sources have been classified as internal versus external (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993; Hawkins, et al., 1998; Solomon, 1999; Fodness and Murray, 1997; Beatty and Smith, 1987; Crofts, 1999); personal versus impersonal (Assael, 1992; Fodness and Murray, 1997; Fodness and Murray, 1998; Crofts, 1999); market controlled versus non-market controlled (Assael, 1992; Fodness and Murray, 1997; Fodness and Murray, 1998; Crofts, 1999); complementary versus exhaustive (Fodness and Murray, 1998). The distinction in information search is not only made with regard to information sources, but also in regard to search typologies: deliberate or active versus accidental or passive search (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993; Hawkins, et al., 1998), and purchase specific search versus ongoing search (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993).

Internal information is information stored in our memory from previous information searches, personal experiences and information involuntarily acquired and stored in normal everyday life. External information sources are all the other types of sources available on the market, from commercials, to friends and relatives, articles

in journals, magazines, newspapers and books (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993; Hawkins, et al., 1998; Solomon, 1999; Fodness and Murray, 1997; Beatty and Smith, 1987).

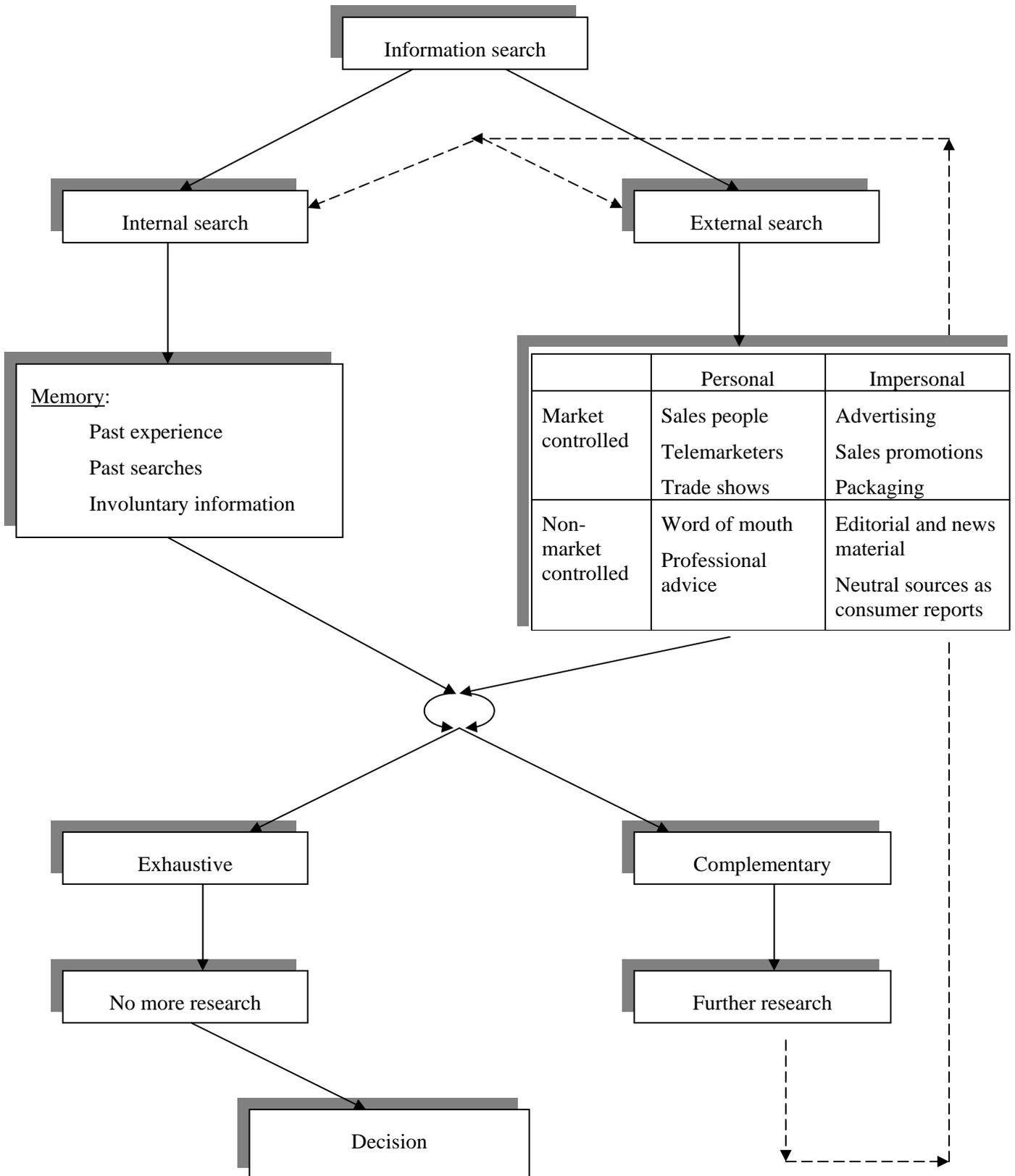
Personal sources refer to information acquired from other people such as friends and relatives or market agents, and market experts (Assael, 1992; Fodness and Murray, 1997; Fodness and Murray, 1998).

Market controlled sources are all those provided by the product marketers such as advertising, trade shows, telemarketing, and salespersons. Non-market controlled sources can be considered more neutral as they are created and controlled by individuals, who are not directly involved with the product (Assael, 1992; Fodness and Murray, 1997; Fodness and Murray, 1998).

Exhaustive information sources are those able to give all the necessary information to make a decision. With exhaustive information there is no need for further search. Complementary sources, on the other hand, are useful information sources, but not complete and extensive enough for making decisions (Fodness and Murray, 1998).

The type of information searches explained above can be classified as follows (Figure 2.1.):

Figure 2.1. Types of information searches



In regard to typologies and methods of information search, the research is defined as accidental or passive when the information is acquired unwillingly, perhaps through advertising campaigns or commercials, or through conversations with people or by reading. If the information is acquired because of a search, the information search is considered deliberate (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993; Hawkins, et al., 1998).

Purchase specific research is undertaken when information is required to make a decision regarding a specific purchase. Ongoing research is made when the consumer is involved with the product (for example an IT consultant with computers) and is constantly updating his/her knowledge on market innovation. In this distinction, purchase specific can never be accidental or passive (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993; Solomon, 1999).

The knowledge of the product to be purchased, the stage in the purchase process and the degree of need of the product will be determined by the type of source utilised. Past research (Beatty and Smith, 1987) demonstrates that consumers with little knowledge of the product are more likely to rely on friends and relatives for information because they are regarded as being more credible than a salesperson. Consumers under time pressure are less likely to consult friends as they regard the process as time consuming (Assael, 1992). Moreover, market-controlled sources tend to be more important in the early stages of decision-making when consumers are obtaining information on the product alternatives (Robertson, 1971). The higher the level of risk, the greater the tendency for consumers to use more neutral and personal sources (Midgley, 1983). All of these variables are discussed further below.

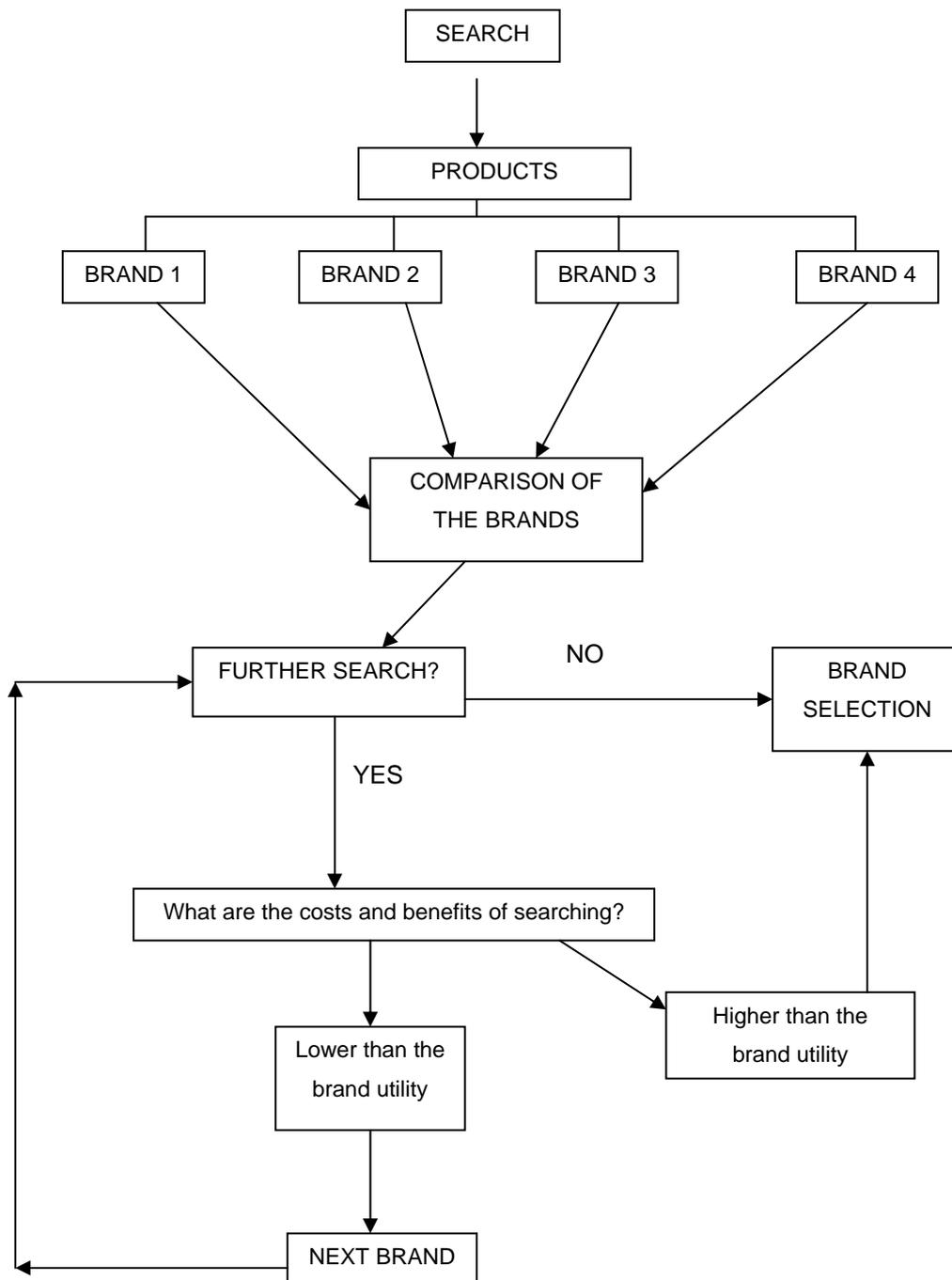
2.2.2. The process of information acquisition

Moorthy, et al. (1997) outlined the consumer's optimal search strategy in a market structure in which information is available brand by brand. The search is sequential and the cost incurred in the search for information about a brand provides all the attributes of the brand, removing uncertainty and revealing true utility value. After the search is complete for each brand, the consumer must decide whether or not to continue searching. If in turn the search is terminated, the consumer chooses the brand with the maximum utility value so far. In cases where the consumer decides to continue searching, the following stages arise: select the next brand to be searched, pay the unit cost of searching it, and wait for the outcome. Figure 2.2 outlines this process.

The optimal sequential rule (that is, the optimal stopping rule) should tell the consumer at each stage whether or not to continue searching and, if the decision is to continue, which brand to search next (that is, the optimal selection rule). The key concept of the optimal selection and stopping rules is one of "reservation utility". Each brand has a reservation utility, which is a summary measure of the value of getting information about the specific brand, considering the costs and the benefits of searching. The reservation utility of a brand is the utility that is available from earlier searches on other brands in order for this brand not to be searched. Moorthy, et al. (1997) explain the concept as follows: "If an earlier brand provided utility is at least as large as the new brand reservation utility, then there would be no point in searching for the new brand.

Figure 2.2. Optimal sequential rule / optimal stopping rule in information search.

Source: Moorthy, et al. (1997).



In cases where the consumer has not found a brand that guarantees a utility at least as large as the reservation utility of an unsearched brand, the expected gain from

searching this brand would exceed its cost, and another search would be necessary. To summarise, the optimal search strategy is when the brand which is investigated next is the brand with the highest reservation utility among all unsearched brands, and the search is stopped whenever the maximum of the revealed utilities of searched brands exceeds the reservation utility of every unsearched brand. This means; search the more promising alternatives before the less promising alternatives.

The problem arising with the stopping and selection rule is that information about one product does not affect the consumer perceptions of the utility of other brands. This may not be true in every case. As Moorthy, et al. (1997) explained, if there is no relative uncertainty between the top-ranked brands (based on the reservation utilities) and the one next to it, then no matter how large the reservation utility of the second ranked brand, there will be no search. As long as the consumer perceives that one of the brands is superior to the others, there will not be any search and the top-ranked brand will be chosen.

Four types of brand-specific uncertainty have been identified in the literature Moorthy, et al. (1997):

1. Totally differentiated independent products;
2. Partially differentiated independent products;
3. Homogeneous independent products;
4. Homogeneous products and brands.

The main difference lies between the first three cases and the fourth. In the first three cases, knowing the utility of any brand does not alter the consumer's perceptions of the other brands. In the fourth case it is the opposite. Once the utility of one brand is revealed, the utilities of all other brands are revealed to be the same.

Therefore:

1. Totally differentiated, independent brands:
 - the consumer perceives the brand to be superior to all other brands. This is a case of no relative brand uncertainty and the consumer will choose the brand with no further search.

2. Partially differentiated, independent brands:
 - no brand is perceived as clearly superior to all other brands. The consumer will order the brands on the basis of their utility values, and will search according to this order. The consumer will stop only when a brand with utility is at least as high as the reservation utility of the highest unsearched brand.

3. Homogeneous independent brands:
 - is an extreme case of relative brand uncertainty. The consumer considers at least two top brands to have identical utility values. The amount of relative uncertainty is higher than in the case of partially differentiated priors and the expected amount of search is therefore higher. The choice of which brand to search first is random among the top brands.

4. Homogeneous products and brands:

- the consumer has identical perceptions for the two top brands and perceives these brands to be identical. The similarity between the brands makes the search decrease, as a search for one brand reveals information about the other brand. Identical brands are an extreme case of correlation, which results in no search. The consumer simply selects one of the top brands at random.

From the analysis of the four different brand uncertainty rules it becomes clear that there are three main reasons for not performing an information search (Moorthy, et al. 1997). This occurs in the following cases:

1. If the consumer perceives that a brand is the best among the various choices available; even though there is no knowledge on what the brand offers, the brand is selected. The scope of searching is to identify the best brand. As the search is not going to change that identification, then there is no reason to search.
2. If the consumer perceives all brands to be identical or strongly correlated, similar to above, there is no point in searching for the best brand.
3. If the consumer has enough knowledge and expertise about the product category, then they do not need to perform the search. In this case, individual and relative brand uncertainty is equal to zero. With regard to knowledge and expertise, it is important to mention the subjectivity of the two. It is not important what the consumer believes is true in that it is the perceived knowledge that matters. The perceived knowledge is related to

expertise about the product category and records stored in memory.

2.2.3. Determinants in an information search

Two of the most insightful models in consumer behaviour on information acquisition have been developed by Assael (1992) and Beatty and Smith (1987).

The work of both Assael (1992) and Beatty and Smith (1987) identifies how different variables determine the effort and amount of an external information search. In Beatty and Smith's work, information search has been identified as "the degree of attention, perception and effort directed toward obtaining environmental data or information related to the specific purchase under consideration". According to their theory, the information source used, the number of types of information sought, the number of alternatives considered and the time spent on the purchase decision are all affected by motivating variables that determine a consumer's behaviour. Furthermore, their study examined the relationship between various antecedent motivators and an external search using an involvement perspective. According to Assael (1992) and Beatty and Smith (1987) the information search is determined by the following motivators:

- *Product involvement*: the higher the level of involvement with the product, the greater the amount of information acquired. If the consumer has ongoing interest in the product or is emotionally drawn to it, the information search has been recognised to be important.

- *Risk perception*: the amount of information searched is also greater in cases where the risk in purchasing is perceived to be high. It has also been noted that when risk is high, consumers tend to use more neutral and personal sources.
- *Product class knowledge*: is the individual's perception of their own knowledge and understanding of products within a particular product class, including experience with that particular class. Consumers with less information on the product are more inclined towards information search. It has also been noted that past experiences with the product reduce the need for information; as long as the consumer has a positive experience with it. Negative past experience may increase the search for information.
- *Time availability*: is the perceived amount of time available for making the purchase under consideration. If more time is available the information search will increase. Especially in the case of high involvement products, the time available determines the amount of information searched.
- *Product price*: the price also determines the information search to be conducted. The higher the price, the greater the information required. As discussed in section 2.2, the amount of information search is strictly related to the economic benefit in doing so. The economic benefits in information search are greater when the price of the product involved is higher, therefore more effort is put into the information search.
- *Product differentiation*: the greater the difference between the products available to select from, the higher the payoff in searching for information.

- *Ego involvement*: is the importance of the product to the individual, and the individual's self-concept, values and ego, and is positively correlated to information search.
- *Purchase involvement*: is the degree of care or concern felt towards the purchase decision or choice.
- *Attitude towards shopping*: is a strong predisposition motivating shopping for the specific product, because there are benefits and values that are believed to be related to the shopping activity.

The above list indicates that besides the most commonly studied and discussed determinants in information search of *product involvement*, *risk perception* (the two topics are analysed in-depth in the following subchapters) and *product class knowledge*, there are other determinants in the information search – the cost of searching, the time spent and psychological attitude. Information search frequently involves the cost of travelling to various retail stores. It also involves cost in terms of time spent for travelling to the retail stores, shopping, reading advertisements, asking the advice of friends and relating to other sources. The last determinant is psychological attitude: information search may not be desirable for consumers who dislike shopping. The amount of information sought is a trade-off between the costs of the search and the benefits arising from it. It has been suggested that consumers operate at the margin: consumers continue to collect information until the incremental benefits arising from the additional information collected are no longer exceeding the costs of the search. Also in the selection of the information source, consumers operate (even if unconsciously) with some cost-benefit principles in mind.

We may summarise the above concept with reference to the statement of Moorthy, et al. (1997):

“The optimality of a consumer’s search strategy is reflected in the trade-off between the perceived benefit and the cost of search. The benefit of search is driven by how a consumer perceives the uncertainty in the choice environment (problem framing), the importance given to the product category (what is traditionally referred to in the behavioural literature as “involvement”), and the risk aversion” (Moorthy, et al., 1997, p.264).

Recording the number of, and effort level of external information searches is a task related to methodology. The measures used to determine external search effort in Beatty and Smith's 1987 work were:

- Media search: the number of television, radio, magazine and newspaper ads viewed, heard or seen during the search;
- Retailer search: the number of hours spent in retail stores searching, the number of phone-calls and visits made to retailers while searching, the number of models or brands examined;
- Interpersonal search: the number of friends, relatives and neighbours consulted while searching;
- Neutral sources: consumer reports or similar publications consulted while searching.

Utilising such measures, Beatty and Smith (1987) determined that involvement is not associated with the total search effort, while product class knowledge, time availability, purchase involvement and attitude towards shopping are all positively associated with total search effort across product categories. In particular, purchase involvement, attitude towards shopping, time availability and product class knowledge influence both the retail search and the media search, as they have an influence on the total search. However, product class knowledge is determined to have a heavier influence on the interpersonal search; while time availability is not related to the interpersonal search, but together with ego involvement, is related to neutral sources. Neutral sources are perceived as time consuming and are sought only in cases where the product is recognised as important to a person's ego. Once again, different types of involvement determine different information search behaviour. This statement, given by Beatty and Smith (1987), clashes with other research findings, which recognise reference groups (classified as neutral sources) to be considered more credible than others, and therefore preferred.

2.2.4. Processing information

The processing of information is divided into three stages: firstly the information is filtered through short-term memory; secondly it is stored in long-term memory and thirdly, it is retrieved for the purpose of product evaluation.

Therefore, the first stage of processing information is the evaluation of short-term memory to determine whether the information is to be stored in long-term memory or filtered out as unimportant or undesirable information.

“Most of the information is not retained for a variety of reasons: it might not be important enough; it might be confusing information that is difficult to interpret, or it might be undesirable information that the consumer chooses to ignore” (Assael, 1992, p. 174).

However, it is up to other information stored in memory to determine whether the piece of information has to be retained or discharged. Short-term memory processes a limited amount of information. Short-term memory is usually capable of storing around seven pieces, for no longer than one minute. As a consequence, in the case of information overload, pieces of information end up being discharged. If information is considered to be important it will be transferred to long-term memory. In long-term memory, pieces of information are stored in a semantic way (words, events, objects, symbols and sentences that stimulate the recall of facts and concepts are memorised) or in an episodic way (information is stored through visual, smell and touch senses, that stimulate our memory of past events) Assael (1992); Mowen, (1990); Mowen, (1995). Brands are normally memorised as both images and words. Tourist services such as hotel chains, airline companies, tour operators, as much as tourist destinations, are all trying to create brands from their own business. Tourist services and destinations are both processed similarly to brands, and memorised as words and images.

Once the information is filtered through short-term memory and stored in long-term memory, it is available for retrieval. Because information in long-term memory is

associated or linked with other concepts, the retrieval process involves the recall of all the interrelated information and concepts (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993). There are three steps involved in the retrieval process: activation, placement and transfer (Assael, 1992). Pieces of information and brands stored may be recalled through clues and linkages. After the brand retrieval is activated, consumers pass to the process of placement. This step determines which other links will be activated. For example, in retrieving information about Bangkok a young Australian traveller may retrieve other information such as friendly people, good shopping, excellent food. Finally, all the pieces of information will be transferred from long-term memory to short-term memory to be processed again.

In some cases, it is impossible to retrieve pieces of information. In the case of the young Australian traveller deciding on a holiday, Bangkok may not be retrieved, as the destination has not been recalled from long-term memory for a long time. In this case the name Bangkok has been simply forgotten. Alternatively, the destination Bangkok may not be retrieved because Singapore has recently advertised a campaign promoting itself as a destination for good shopping and good food. The connection between good shopping and food is now stronger with Singapore than with Bangkok: there has been an interference blocking the related information nodes. Finally, the exchange rate of the Thai Baht may increase and recent news of a chicken flu epidemic published. The name Bangkok may not be recalled anymore when searching for a destination with good food and good shopping. There has been an extinction of the linkages between the brand and the nodes.

The last step of information processing is brand evaluation. Consumers use strategies to evaluate brands. As for information search and other steps of information processing, evaluation rules depend on product involvement, knowledge

and the type of information: either new or old. There are two types of strategy involved in brand evaluation (Assael, 1992; Solomon, 1999): evaluative strategies and non-evaluative strategies. Evaluative strategies require information about the alternative brands to be organised either on the basis of categories, or on the basis of attributes. Non-evaluative strategies, on the contrary, involve the use of a simple decision rule, that would make consumers avoid the evaluation of the brands; an example is to decide on the most popular brand, the cheapest one, or the one that a friend or relative has tried before. In regard to evaluative strategies, category-based strategies involve the evaluation of the brand in its totality rather than on specific attributes. In this case a set of nodes and associations are linked to the brand (Solomon, 1999). In the case of attribute-specific strategies each brand alternative is compared on a specific attribute such as the taste of the food, friendliness of the people or price of the goods.

Similar to information search, consumer information processing is affected by the level of product involvement. In the case of high product involvement, information search and processing for the analysis and assessment of alternative brands is performed actively and carefully. In the case where consumers have a low involvement with the product, the information is more likely to be received passively, and its process will be performed more superficially and in less detail. The main difference between information processing in the case of high involvement and low involvement, lies in the fact that in the latter case information is processed passively. As a consequence:

- Information is stored in the memory with little attention to it;
- Brand evaluation is minimal and,

- Because of the low involvement with the product, financial, performance, or social risks will hardly play any role.

2.2.5. Product involvement in the information search and processing

Assael (1992) outlined three types of information acquisition based on the consumer's involvement with the product.

Ongoing search is typical of consumers with enduring product involvement. They continue to search for information even if they are not buying. Purchase-specific search is undertaken by consumers who have high product involvement because of the choice process prior to purchase. Passive information acquisition is typical of consumers who are not interested in buying the product, but do come across product information through television and magazine advertisements. Such information will still be processed, but the process will occur in an uninvolved state. The involvement is minimal, and is likely to be situational more than enduring.

The optimal choice of a product relies on a deep evaluation of every piece of information on all the alternatives available. However, while product involvement can have a positive effect on the amount of information sought, it is extremely hard for the consumer to search for information from all the available alternatives, as the cost of the search and the complexity of processing is too great. Therefore, more information is not necessarily better (Moorthy, et al., 1997). It has been demonstrated that excessive information can cause information overload turning the

consumer into a state of confusion and ineffective decision-making. This is discussed further in Section 2.2.7.

Once information is acquired, consumers proceed with the processing step. This step determines which information is memorised, which information is used for brand evaluation, how the information is used, and how product involvement will affect it.

When consumers are involved in the product, they actively search for information and analyse it in order to assess alternatives. In the case of low involvement products, information is more likely to be perceived passively, and it will not be processed in detail.

In the case of low involvement, as information is processed passively, it is also stored in memory, with little attention given to it. In addition, low involvement characterises a minimal brand evaluation.

2.2.6. Risk perception in the information search and processing

The perception that the purchase might be risky can lead the consumer to acquire additional information. The perception of risk in consumers is determined by uncertainty about the outcome of the decision and concerns about the consequences of the decision (Assael, 1992). Therefore, the consequences of the decision on whether to purchase the product or not are the components of the perceived risk.

Assael (1992) identified several factors increasing the perception of risk:

- there is little information about the product category,
- the product is new,
- the product is technologically complex,
- the consumer has little self-confidence in evaluating brands,
- there are variations in quality between brands,
- the price is high,
- the purchase is important to the consumer.

There are several types of risk that the consumer may encounter during the purchase:

Financial risk: this is a relationship between the price of the product, and the income of the consumer. The higher the price of the product to be purchased at a lower income, the higher the risk.

Social risk: the product purchased might not meet the standards of a specific social group. Items such as clothes, cars, household furnishing, cosmetics and also holidays are all subject to social risk.

Psychological risk: in purchasing a determined product rather than another, there is the chance that the product does not conform to the individual consumer's self-

image. For example, a car may not have the right feel in driving, or a holiday might not be as adventurous or as luxurious as expected.

Performance risk: this risk is connected to the possibility that the product will not work as anticipated or may even fail. Performance risk is higher in the case of technically complex products, or when ego-related needs are involved.

Physical risk: is the risk of harm to the physical person as a result of the purchase. For example, faulty brakes that could lead to a car crash, or an adverse reaction to a pharmaceutical product, or a visit to a dangerous destination.

Several strategies are available to avoid uncertainty. Some involve a deeper and longer information search and information processing (acquisition of additional information and more extensive information process), and some relate to brand loyalty and trust (purchase the same product repeatedly and trusting other consumer experiences).

The acquisition of additional information allows the consumer to better assess the risk, while more extensive information processing allows a better evaluation of the alternatives to choose from.

In order to reduce the uncertainty of the outcome of the purchase, consumers may buy the same product repeatedly, as they know what to expect from the product. In this instance, brand loyalty is a way to avoid dissatisfaction. Many tourists prefer to stick with the same holiday destination or tour organiser over years, as they prefer to stick with a reasonably acceptable alternative, rather than risking something new and unknown.

Trusting other consumer experiences is also a safe strategy. Buying the most popular brand, visiting the most popular destination, or undertaking the most popular on-site activities, can be used by consumers who lack information.

The various strategies consumers use to reduce risk suggest two types of consumers:

- The risk avoiders are people more likely to buy the lowest-priced brand, the same brand or the most popular brand. This type of consumer prefers to avoid riskier alternatives that might or might not provide better performance.
- Risk takers are people who will search for more information, and will process information in more detail in an attempt to find the best product. This type of consumer is more likely to buy new products, before they are well established, and visit unpopular destinations avoiding mass-tourism attractions. This type of traveller is more likely than others to travel independently.

2.2.7. Choosing information sources: the credibility of information

When consumers turn to information sources to assist in decision-making, they face the added responsibility of choosing which information source to use (Gershoff, et al., 2001). As was stated previously, a variety of types of information and a variety of information sources are available to consumers to decide about future purchases. However, all information sources are not equal in terms of reliability, extent and credibility, and thus, consumers must be selective when relying on information

sources. In many instances consumers have little information available to differentiate the sources and they must rely on the past performance of the same type of information, to evaluate suitability. Consumers face three particular tasks (Gershoff, et al., 2001): decide which source of information should be consulted for recommendation; determine which is the best source to provide an evaluation of an alternative under consideration; and finally, choose one piece of information in the case of conflicting information.

The ultimate goal for the consumer is to use the information from the most reliable source to make product choices. Past research has demonstrated that consumers seek out relatively little pre-purchase information, especially consumers with low involvement in the product. Therefore, many consumers may simply rely on the opinion of a single information source. In this instance, it is important to choose the right source. Consumers use information sources to reduce risk in decision-making but, because each information source differs in content, consumers face the new task of choosing the best information; or in case of several information sources, taking a decision based on conflicting opinions. Therefore, consumers (in addition to considering the cost of obtaining the information and the expected gain or loss associated with the choice outcome) also have to assess the reliability of the information sources consulted.

The topic of information credibility in tourism has been recently addressed by Cho and Kerstetter (2003). Starting with the work of Sternthal, et al. (1978) and Harmon and Coney (1982) on the persuasive effect of source credibility, with their study Cho and Kerstetter (2003) give an insight to credibility and the information search in tourism. The credibility of a source has been identified as the perception and interpretation of the stimuli in the process of searching for information (Cho and

Kerstetter, 2003; Gotlieb, et al., 1992; Harmon and Coney, 1982; Sternthal, et al., 1978). Source credibility is important for persuasion and it influences whether consumers accept or reject pieces of information. A number of past studies have shown that the perception of credibility by the consumer affects the use of information. Gitelson and Kerstetter (1994) and Myers (2002) reported that reference groups, considered to be credible and trusted information sources, are used more than other sources in the information search process. However, McGinnies (1973) (cited in Sternthal, et al., 1978) indicates that highly credible sources are more persuasive than a less credible communicator, when the initial opinion of the consumer towards the advocacy is very negative; but the message does not have a credibility effect in the case of less negative opinion. Similarly, Dean, et al. (1971), Bochner and Insko (1966), and Bock and Sanie (1975) cited in Sternthal, et al. (1978) found that a highly credible source is more persuasive than a moderately credible source when the advocacy is highly divergent, but the moderately or less credible source, is more persuasive when the consumer favours the advocacy. Therefore, highly credible sources are more likely to inhibit persuasion, when message recipients have a negative predisposition towards the advocacy, while less credible sources are more persuasive for issues where each individual has a favourable predisposition.

Cho and Kerstetter (2003) applied the theories of source credibility to tourism. They found that other sources of information, rather than reference groups, are also considered as credible, and therefore have a strong influence on travellers in their information search behaviour. Alternatively, Cho and Kerstetter (2003) reveal that the number of sources used and the amount of time spent searching for information, is not influenced by source credibility. The researchers assume that in the case of

information searched for tourism purposes, quality rather than quantity of information is the critical factor, which means that travellers refer to a small number of credible sources of information, rather than searching all available sources.

2.2.8. Information flow control

It is evident that the critical point in information search is the retrieval of contributory, credible and relevant information. The number of sources and the pieces of information are related to credibility and relevance. On the one hand, a vast amount of information could be relevant; on the other hand, an overload of information might lead the consumer to a status of confusion and complexity in distinguishing useful from superfluous information, and therefore difficulty in making the right decision (Ariely, 2000).

The challenge faced by consumers is to gather appropriate information for their specific needs. As for the problem addressed in this study, information providers and information source editors cannot always know what information is needed for any individual consumer.

“Without knowing what information is relevant, the amount of information that is potentially relevant can be very large. In order to solve this difficulty, marketers can provide the consumers with interactive information systems that allow consumers to be appropriately selective in their own information search” (Ariely, 2000, p. 233).

As a result of new technology including computers and computerised networks, consumers have the ability to control the flow of information required by controlling the information to be presented, for how long it will be presented, and what information will follow. Traditional information sources such as print, television and radio advertisements do not differ as much from each other in terms of control over the information to be delivered; whereas electronic information sources have the potential for extremely high levels of information control. Consumers in the tourism industry have the potential to control the flow of information needed. Consequently, travel guidebook editors have activated interactive and dynamic electronic information sources as websites, CD, WAP (wireless application protocol), and satellite as adjuncts to their products.

However, electronic information sources allowing for control over the information flow, have both advantages and disadvantages. Ariely (2000) identifies the advantages and disadvantages in benefits and costs. “In terms of benefits, information control allows consumers to deal with information systems that better fit their individual informational needs and are more flexible. In terms of costs, information control requires the user to invest processing resources in managing the information flow” (Ariely, 2000, p. 234).

Additionally, the tourism product is somewhat unique in that it requires an ongoing information search after purchase (during the travel experience) and modern technology tends to be stationary and less mobile than traditional written products. However, information control is beneficial because it is possible to integrate the information available, within the heterogeneous and dynamic needs of the consumer.

There are two types of heterogeneity – heterogeneity between consumers and heterogeneity within consumers over time. Heterogeneity can be defined as the difference that exists among consumers in their needs and preferences in the presentation and processing of information. For example, one consumer may prefer to view information by attributes, while another might prefer to view the same information by products. The second type of heterogeneity can be defined as the changing needs for information during the information acquisition process itself. It has been stated in the above paragraphs that through electronic information, consumers are able to control number, type and sequence of information. By doing that, consumers are able to test and update hypotheses based on their mental model. In this instance, having control over the stimuli allows consumers to generate and test the hypothesis in which they are interested. As Ariely (2000) states:

“High levels of information control allow consumers to have an overall strategy for the information presentation, while at the same time enabling them to pick specific characteristics of the information itself” (Ariely, 2000, p. 235).

The disadvantages of controlling the information flow lie mainly in consumers facing the added task of controlling the information. Therefore, consumers are required to perform two tasks: 1. to understand the information; 2. to manage the information flow in terms of choosing the right piece of information they need, for how long the information has to be presented, and what other information will follow. For consumers in highly interactive environments, this dual task can reduce the resources available to process the information.

“The main task of understanding the information is dependent on the secondary task of managing it. In other words, in order to perform well on the main task

(understand and judge the information), subjects have to be able to perform well on the secondary task (manage the information system)” (Ariely, 2000, p. 235).

Therefore, we can summarise the concept, by referring to Ariely (2000):

“The positive effect is due to the value of the information itself combined with the user’s ability to select and process the specific information that is most relevant to the user (heterogeneity). The negative effect is due to the additional resources demanded by the task of managing the information flow coupled with limited processing capacity. In addition, considering information control as a task by itself with its own demands brings to mind notions regarding learning and automaticity over time. As consumers continuously engage in such tasks, the cognitive effort required for controlling the information flow can be reduced, which can free some of the cognitive resources for processing the information itself” (Ariely, 2000, p. 235).

From the experiments conducted by Ariely (2000), it has been identified that the environment in which consumers encounter information has a substantial impact on the way this information is evaluated and integrated. Specifically, interactive communication that gives consumers control over the content order and duration of information, causes the information to have higher value and to become increasingly usable over time. Furthermore, it gives consumers the ability to integrate, remember and understand inputs to their judgements.

2.3. The information needs of independent travellers

The tourism industry is characterised by the delivery of services. As such, its consumers differ in behaviour from consumers of goods. In the above paragraphs

we have focused on the theoretical background of consumer behaviour in the information search for goods purchased, referring only partially (and mainly for examples) to the tourism industry. There is less literature concerning service consumers and so elaboration from a theoretical background on goods purchase is required. However, the work of Murray (1991), and Gabbott and Hogg (1994) concentrated on the behaviour of service consumers. As tourism is related to the provision of a service, its consumer behaviour and information search are also related to service consumer behaviour. Before proceeding with information needs in independent travel, it is appropriate to carefully analyse the information acquisition process used by service consumers.

2.3.1. Information search by service consumers

As was stated earlier, the greater the perceived risk, the higher the information need and search. Existing literature has focused on the role of risk in the consumption of services, reporting that services are perceived as riskier than goods. However, no focus has been given to the need for information in a riskier environment. Services are characterised by being not directly perceptible, frequently experimental and often unpredictable in their outcomes. As such, their performance evaluation is normally possible only after purchase and consumption. This characteristic of services, such as tourism services, increases the degree of uncertainty. Therefore, consumers may be forced to rely on different sources of information, and use different processes to evaluate services in a more complex and distinctive way

(Davis, et al., 1979; Bateson, 1977; Booms and Nyquist, 1981; Zeithaml, 1981, cited in Murray, 1991).

In regard to the sources of information utilised, the literature shows that in a riskier environment, word of mouth is the most important source of risk reduction, and has a greater impact than mass media communications, as it gives the opportunity to clarify and receive feedback (Lutz and Reilly, 1974; Arndt, 1967, cited in Murray, 1991). Similar to decision-making in the purchase of products related to social aspects, the decision-making on service consumption (and specifically tourism service consumption) arises from the preference for information from other individuals, rather than from objective and impersonal sources. In fact, it has been demonstrated that the types and sources of information used, differ according to the degree of perceived risk, making personal sources the second preferred source of information after direct observation and personal trials (Locander and Hermann, 1979; Lutz and Reilly, 1974, cited in Murray 1991).

Murray (1991) noticed that as services are associated with greater perceived risk, it follows that service consumers would use more information sources as a strategy to handle risk, than consumers dealing with less risky products. Therefore, service consumers are more likely to undertake an extended information acquisition process. As a consequence, service consumers are more likely to defer a service purchase because a satisfactory information search is more difficult and time-consuming. The main characteristic of services is that they are conceptualised as experiences, and therefore difficult to specify or evaluate precisely before the purchase. This is the main reason why consumers who are willing to reduce pre-choice uncertainty are more inclined to search for information from other individuals, who have experienced the service before, directly or indirectly. Furthermore, for the same

reason that services, compared with goods, are more difficult to evaluate prior to initial purchase, service consumers may utilise fewer information sources. However, as discussed previously, the absolute number of information sources the consumer uses, may not be the absolute measure of the extent of information acquisition. Source credibility, relevance and consequently effectiveness is more relevant in the analysis of source search and usage. The two source characteristics “credibility” and “relevance” determine “effectiveness” and reflect the decisive influence of a source and its importance in relation to exposure. Therefore, some sources provide more meaningful information than others. The differences identified by Murray (1991) between product purchase and service consumers are as follows:

- In the case of services, mass media are not expected to have a decisive influence, while non-marketer-dominated information sources are expected to play a particularly important role in the consumer decision process for services. Similarly, in tourism consumption, travellers prefer the opinions and experiences of other comparable individuals in making travel purchase decisions.
- As services are characterised by limited opportunities for direct experience or product observation and it is problematic to test in advance, service consumers will be more likely to make a service purchase decision on some basis other than observation and trial.
- As there is little information available for services, the cost of an extended search will be elevated and, as the cost of acquiring information increases, less information will be sought and acquired. As a consequence, the internal information search made possible by prior learning from past purchases is

particularly instrumental in providing useful product information, in the case of services.

From the above concepts, Murray (1991) identified several hypotheses:

1. The incidence of outright purchase as a consumer information strategy is lower for services than for goods,
2. Consumers choose more personal sources of information for services than for goods,
3. Personal independent sources of information are more effective for services than for goods,
4. Consumers have greater confidence in personal sources of information for services than for goods,
5. Service consumers use direct observation and/or trial as a source of pre-purchase information less often than consumers of goods,
6. Consumers with prior experience have a greater preference for internal sources of information for evaluating services, than for evaluating goods.

As tourism is based on the provision of services, the above considerations have to be taken into account when focusing on the information search and needs of independent travellers.

2.3.2. Tourism information search

The individual's primary motive for undertaking an information search while travelling is to enhance the quality of the trip. Specifically, potential tourists have a need for information for the purpose of becoming aware of what opportunities are available, where they are to be found, and at what cost (Raitz and Dakhil, 1989; cited in Fodness and Murray, 1997). Information is necessary for choosing a destination and for making on-site decisions such as travel mode, attractions, location activities, and lodging (Perdue, 1985; Snepenger, et al., 1990). Through information search, travellers seek to enhance the quality of their trip by decreasing the level of associated uncertainty and risk (Fodness and Murray, 1997). However, the types and purposes of travel may influence the levels and types of information needed and therefore, may impact on the levels and types of information search employed. Routine trips may require little or no information search, whereas overseas vacations may require considerable information search (Snepenger and Snepenger, 1993).

A number of typologies of tourism information sources exist. One fundamental classification proposed in the existing literature (Fodness and Murray, 1997; Fodness and Murray, 1998; Gursoy and Chen, 2000) is internal versus external search. Initially the search starts with internal sources such as past experiences, which are used as the basis for planning the vacation. If the contents of memory are not sufficient for decision-making, search activities extend out into the external environment. Therefore, we can classify the type of information as internal that includes personal experiences with the destination, or with similar destinations, and information acquired in the past; and external, which includes a wide range of

sources such as brochures, guidebooks, local tourist offices, state travel guides, magazines, newspapers, auto clubs, travel agents, friends and relatives, Internet, television/radio, and national tourist boards. In the case of vacation travel the search is predominantly external, involving considerable effort and a variety of information sources. Fodness and Murray (1998) further classified tourism information sources as contributory and decisive. The first is perceived as necessary or useful – although not sufficient – for decision-making; the latter is perceived as both necessary and sufficient. Further classification of tourism information sources imply commercial versus non-commercial sources, and personal and impersonal. The classification of travel information sources does not differ from other information sources; reference can be made to section 2.2.1 Types and definition of information sources.

The type of travel may influence the information search. Leisure travellers typically use more than one information source (Fodness and Murray, 1997). On the other hand the business traveller may refer to colleagues and the official company information sources, while VFR tourists are most likely to refer to friends and relatives for information.

Referring to the literature on consumer behaviour, and the existing research on tourism information search, and to a study by Crofts (1992), the following can be stated:

- The level of information search determines the number of destination alternatives considered in the vacation decision,

- The greater the time dedicated to travel planning, the greater is the use of information and vice versa, the higher the level of information search, the greater the time spent making a decision,
- The amount and type of information search is related to the number of times the attraction/destination has been previously visited. The more the tourist is familiar with the attraction/destination, the lower the level of information search,
- Similar to the above point, the more the destination is unknown and considered distant and “different”, the higher the level of information search. A destination, attraction or holiday can be considered distant and “different” in the case where it is distant, culturally different or where something similar has never been experienced before.

The last two points clearly identify the importance of uncertainty and risk, and holidays clearly involve a high level of risk. Therefore, information search increases in the anticipation of risk and uncertainty. As for other products, holidays provide physical risk (health), financial risk (high costs), functional risk (service failure), psychological risk (loss of self esteem), social risk (embarrassment of the selection of a particular service), and temporal risk (loss of time).

2.4. Culture

2.4.1. Definition and characteristics

Culture is a complex phenomenon and has been defined as a concept which includes almost everything that influences an individual's thought processes and behaviour (Hawkins, et al., 1994). Several definitions have been given to culture. Some are given by psychologists and refer to culture as nonmaterial and include all man-made intangible cultural traits, such as technical skills, norms, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and language, that are passed from generation to generation; some are given by anthropologists and identify the way of life of a social group: the group's total man-made environment including all the material and nonmaterial products of group life that are transmitted from one generation to the next. As Reisinger and Turner (2003) stated, culture is a complex multidimensional phenomenon that is difficult to define. Besides psychology and anthropology, other scientific fields such as sociology and intercultural communication have their own definitions and views about what constitutes the meaning of culture. However, "despite the vast range of definitions of culture, it has been generally agreed in the literature that culture is a 'theory', an 'abstraction' or a 'name' for a very large category of phenomena" (Reisinger and Turner, 2003, p.4).

Different definitions have been given to culture. To understand its complexity, the following list is provided of the definitions encompassing the diverse facets of the phenomenon.

“Culture is a set of socially acquired behaviour patterns transmitted symbolically through language and other means to the members of a particular society” (Wallendorf and Reilly, 1983 in Mowen, 1990, p. 581);

“Culture is the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a group’s response to its environments” (Hofstede, 1980 in Mowen, 1990, p. 581);

Cultures are characterised by “the degree of regulation of behaviour, the attitudes of the people, the value of the people, the lifestyle of the people, and the degree of tolerance of other cultures” (Tse, et al., 1988 in Mowen, 1990, p. 582);

“Culture has been conceived as affecting motivation at the level of the total personality, of attitudes and of specific motives; it has been conceived as affecting cognition at the level of the broad structure of intellect and of specific processes such as reasoning, communication and perception” (Serpell, 1976, p.17);

“The culture of the individual is dependent upon the culture of a group or class, and the culture of a group or class is dependent upon the culture of the whole society to which the group or class belongs” (Eliot, 1962, p. 21);

“Culture is the way of life of a social group; the group’s total man-made environment, including all the material and nonmaterial products of group life that are transmitted from one generation to the next” (Theodorson, 1969, p. 95);

Culture may be viewed as the knowledge that is acquired by members of a society, generation after generation. Some of the knowledge is conscious and structured in coded or traditional forms, such as myths and rules; some is unconscious and automatic, such as the rules and structures that allow language speakers to understand each other. This knowledge is learned both formally and unconsciously within human groups and is shared between generations, and within generations. People, as individuals and as members of groups, use cultural assumptions to make

sense of the world around them, and use culture to create strategies with respect to their group and individual interactions. Therefore, our ideas, values, acts and emotions are cultural products. As Redman (1979) states, humans are individuals under the guidance of cultural patterns. The essential feature of culture is that it is learned. Many qualities of human life are transmitted genetically or are physiological needs, as for example the desire for food. However, the desire for milk and cereal in the morning rather than coffee and croissant is a learned (cultural) response to morning hunger. Culture is therefore a set of learned behaviours common to a society. It acts as a template, shaping behaviours under predictable forms and contents (Redman, 1979).

From the work of Eliot (1962), Rokeach (1968), and Hofstede (1991) culture may be viewed as exhibiting six major characteristics:

1. Symbolic composition,
2. Systematic pattern,
3. Is learned and transmitted,
4. A societal grounding,
5. As satisfying needs,
6. As dynamic.

1. Culture is a symbolic composition.

The fundamental symbolic element of culture is its traits. Traits assume many forms varying from material artefacts such as tools, house structures, art works, to behavioural rules, such as family interrelationships, economic exchanges, legal sanctions, to abstract concepts and beliefs. All these diverse

manifestations share a common feature: they are symbols and as such they express meaning.

Hofstede (1991) categorises cultural traits in four manifestations: symbols, heroes, rituals, and values. Symbols, heroes, rituals and values are considered expressions of culture and are visible to an outside observer. However, the meaning these expressions carry is attributed by the cultural group adopting them.

- Symbols include words, gestures, pictures and objects and as such they carry a particular meaning recognised only by the members of the group sharing the culture. Symbols are an expression that stands for, or represents, something else. They usually represent a real world condition. Art and ceremonial objects for example have symbolic meaning and are intentionally created to represent them. Tools and technologies are less obvious symbols, but also involve representations. Words are the most common and used symbols. They differ from the objects they represent and their meaning is established by the culture adopting it. For example, the word *cow* in the English dictionary is defined as a large female animal that is kept on farms for its milk. In this research, language is used as a symbol of culture.

This cross-culture study is performed on travellers from different regions with differing languages (such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean and English). The purchase of a travel guidebook is based also on the language of edition of the book. Therefore, in the use of travel guidebooks, language is a factor of commonality among cultures. In

this research, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and North American travellers will be grouped based on the country of origin and the language spoken.

- Heroes are persons who are highly prized inside the cultural group and have a role as models in addressing certain behaviour. Heroes can be dead or alive, and can be real or imaginary. Most heroes are part of imaginary stories or fairy-tales based on the values of the society and created to carry wisdom among the members of the group. Heroes represent the behaviour to adopt, based on the values of the respective culture.
- Rituals are activities expressing and symbolising the behaviours sanctioned by the cultural group. They are fixed and episodic and tend to be repeated over time. They are part of everyday life and can be as common and simple as ways of greeting, ways of paying respect to others, or more sophisticated and acted out as religious ceremonies. Rituals do not have to be mistaken for habits, which are also repetitive, and engaged over time. Rituals are prescribed by society and not by the individuals themselves. Members of specific cultural groups are more aware of what takes place in a ritual, and for that reason they attribute to rituals a greater symbolic meaning.
- Values are the core of a culture, and central to an individual's cognitive structure. They are standards and patterns of choice that guide persons and groups to prefer certain situations and behaviours to others. They are learned by the members of a society very early in age

and are acquired in an unconscious and implicit way. Values are guiding principles in everyday life. Rokeach (1968) defines values as “enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state” (Rokeach, 1968, p. 160). Therefore, values can be summarised as social cognitions that provide a base for attitudes and behaviours (Kahle, et al., 2000). Values affect attitudes, opinions and lifestyles. They are enduring and when realized or actualised within a specific cultural context, provide a basis for more specific attitudes and behaviour. Theodorson (1969) states that members of societies use values for judging concrete rules, goals, or actions (Theodorson, 1969). Therefore, values are often regarded as absolute, although their formation and apprehension evolve in the normal process of social interaction.

2. The second major characteristic of culture is its systematic pattern.

The definition of a cultural trait involves cultural elements as symbols that assume their meaning in relationship to other symbols. To interpret a symbol, it is therefore necessary to investigate the connection and effect of elements, and the presence of unifying principles, that connect symbols to form a systematic pattern. Hall (1981) argues that cultural traits and patterns must be initially understood in terms of the logic of the culture, and the integration of cultural elements according to internally consistent themes and principles. He further discusses that cultural traits cannot be understood in isolation, but under a holistic perspective, considering the entire matrix of meaning and behaviour.

3. Culture is learned and transmitted.

A culture is not present in our genes, and is not a biological characteristic; culture is learned. All humans have the biological capacity to acquire culture, such as language learning abilities. However, biological factors do not determine specific cultural traits, such as the ability to speak a language. All children are programmed by genetics to learn languages through a fixed series of stages, but they will acquire a specific language only through what is transmitted to them. Therefore, biology is the base for acquiring culture. However, cultural variations among peoples are due to learned and transmitted traditions, and not to innate or genetic propensities. Three different forms of cultural learning exist: formal learning, which includes adults or older members of society teaching young members how to behave; informal learning is the process by which new members learn primarily by imitating the behaviour of others such as family members, friends, or heroes; the last form of learning is technical learning, by which the instruction of teachers in an educational environment is defined. By technical learning children acquire what should be done, how it should be done and why it should be done. Therefore, culture is learned both formally and informally within cultural groups, and is heavily dependent upon language as a medium of transmission.

Besides being learned, culture is acquired. Culture can be acquired by enculturation and acculturation. Theodorson (1969) refers to enculturation as the process of learning one's own or native culture; it is the adoption of the behaviour patterns of the surrounding culture, the socialisation of children to the norms of their culture. Acculturation is the acquisition of values and

norms of an outside culture. Due to the increase in travelling and a rise in the exchange of people, acculturation is becoming easier.

4. Culture has a societal grounding and as such is shared.

To be considered a cultural characteristic, a particular belief, value, ritual or symbol must be shared by a significant portion of a society (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1987). Culture is collective, and within a community, consensus exists about meaning, and that consensus produces acceptance across individuals (Sherry, 1986). Despite culture being observable only in the form of personal behaviour, it is abstracted from individual actions and attributed to the social groups to which they belong. Therefore, cultural traits are the common dominator of collective identity and symbols for a certain society or cultural group. As a consequence, society defines and constrains the behaviour of its members in many unperceived ways. Referring to Hawkins, et al. (1994) values are accepted in a collective way by the members of the society, turning them into norms. A norm can be defined as a standard of behaviour defined by the shared expectation of people regarding what behaviour is to be considered socially acceptable. Social norms provide guidelines to the range of behaviour appropriate and applicable to particular social situations. “Thus, one’s role obligations in a social group are defined by that group’s social norms” (Theodorson, 1969, p. 277). Societal background is needed for the creation of norms and for the definitions of sanctions or penalties in case of violation. Sanctions and penalties range from mild social disapproval to banishment from the group. In normal situations conformity to norms is expected without question (Hawkins, et al., 1994).

5. Culture satisfies needs and it exists for this reason (Herbig, 1998; Schiffman and Kanuk, 1987).

It offers order, direction and guidance in all phases of human life, and provides methods to satisfy physical, personal and social needs.

6. Culture is dynamic.

Cultural beliefs, values and customs continue to be followed as long as they provide satisfaction. When a specific standard, norm or value no longer satisfies the needs of the members of the society, it is modified or replaced, introducing new standards, norms, values, rituals, that are more in line with current needs and desires. A typical example is language. New words are constantly created, while old words assume new meanings. Grammar is evolving and what was considered a mistake in the past is now accepted, and what was considered correct in the past may no longer be in use. Languages evolve as members of a society need to express new concepts, new technologies and new inventions.

Culture is dynamic and is always in a state of change as members of society interact with each other, and react to their environment. Culture is not static. The rules of a culture change with each generation and within a single generation. What is considered acceptable at one point in time, may become unpleasant at another point in time. There are two reasons for the dynamic side of culture: 1) each generation forms its own opinion about what is right and what is wrong; and 2) culture adapts to meet environmental or social pressures, and to provide solutions for the problems facing members of the culture. Cultures that cannot or will not adapt to environmental pressures tend to fall apart and reshape themselves in another form.

From the explanation provided by Elliot, (1962); Rokeach, (1968); Hofstede, (1991) of the characteristics of culture, several principles follow:

- If the process of learning is an essential characteristic of culture, then teaching is also a crucial characteristic. The way culture is taught and reproduced is itself an important component of culture;
- Because the relationship between what is taught and what is learned is not absolute, and some of what is taught can get lost while new discoveries are constantly being made and transmitted, culture exists in a constant state of change;
- Meaning systems consist of agreements by the members of a society on the significance or meaning of words, behaviours or symbols. Therefore, if culture consists of meaning systems, it also consists of negotiated agreements and processes of negotiation;
- Because meaning systems involve relationships which are not essential and universal for every society, inevitably different cultures will agree upon different relationships and meanings for different words, symbols and behaviour. Therefore, culture is relativistic and has to be analysed under a holistic perspective;
- Because cultural values give rise to norms and associated sanctions, they affect behaviour patterns even if in an unconscious way.

2.4.2. Cross-cultural analysis determinants and measurement

Values have a deep influence on attitudes and behaviour and as such determine consumer behaviour in information search and decision-making; contemporarily in the previous section, it has been stated that culture influences values. In cross-cultural studies, there are three main determinants of cultural influence on consumer behaviour (Hawkins, et al., 1994; Usunier, 2000):

1. Culture based values, which influence purchasing behaviour and buying decisions;
2. Hierarchy of needs, which shapes demand across product categories;
3. Factors influencing non-verbal communication.

2.4.2.1. Culture-based values and their measurement

In the definition of values it has been stated that values are central to the individual's cognitive structure and are a trait of each cultural group. For that reason, values and value systems are an effective means to predict human behaviour. In the literature there have been several studies done on the identification of the values characterising culture and consumer behaviour. Hofstede (1991) identified five dimensions distinguishing cultural values: Power Distance, Collectivism versus Individualism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Long

Term Orientation. Kahle and Goff Timmer (1983) (cited in De Mooij, 1998) based on work by Rokeach's distinction between terminal and instrumental values, created a list of values (LOV) that over the years has been elaborated, adapted to different cultures and expanded. LOV has been used over the years by several researchers to assess cultural differences in consumer behaviour. In general, researchers have linked values to a number of behaviours, including cigarette smoking (Grube, et al., 1984), religious behaviour (Feather, 1984), consumer behaviour in general (Henry, 1976; Homer and Kahle, 1988; Kahle, et al., 1986; Kamakura and Mazzon, 1991; Kamakura and Novak, 1992; Novak and MacEvoy, 1990; Vinson, et al., 1977), charitable giving (Manzner and Miller, 1978), political behaviour (Feather, 1973; Rokeach, 1973; Tetlock, 1986), leisure and travel (Backman and Crompton, 1989; Backman and Crompton, 1990; Beatty, et al., 1985; Madrigal and Kahle, 1994; Madrigal, 1995; Muller, 1991; Pottick, 1983), and cross-cultural studies (Munson and McIntyre, 1978; Munson and McIntyre, 1979; Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990; Grunert and Scherhorn, 1990; Grunert, et al., 1989; Soutar, et al., 1999).

2.4.2.2. Hofstede's Theory

In order to predict human behaviour and cultural traits, Hofstede's (1991) based his theory on the distinction of values in five dimensions: Power Distance, Collectivism versus Individualism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Long Term Orientation.

- The power distance dimension has been defined by Hofstede (1991) as the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect power to be distributed unequally. It is related to the way people accept and give authority. At the extreme ends of the scale there are two different cultures: in the large power distance cultures it is perceived as natural to accept and give power and everyone has his or her rightful place in the social hierarchy; in the small power distance cultures, on the other side, authority has a negative connotation and there is a focus on equality of rights and opportunities. In larger power distance cultures status is significant, power is displayed and older people are important and respected because of their age. On the contrary, in lower power distance cultures powerful people try to look less powerful, and older people try to look younger.
- The contrast of individualism and collectivism can be defined as “people looking after themselves and their immediate family only, versus people belonging to in-groups that look after them in exchange for loyalty” (De Mooij, 1998, p. 75). Therefore, in collectivist societies the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual, while in individualist societies the interest of the individual prevails over the interest of the group. In collectivist societies the family is an extended nucleus comprising not only the mother, father and the children, but also grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, housemates and so on. Children are brought up thinking of themselves as part of a “we” group, which becomes the major source of one’s identity (Hofstede, 1991). In individualist societies the type of family is the nuclear family comprising two parents and possibly other children. Children

from these families learn to think for themselves as “I” as their personal identity and distinct from other persons’ “I”. As Hofstede (1991) states:

“Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite belongs to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.” (Hofstede, 1991, p. 51)

Table 2.1 shows the main differences between collectivist and individualist societies.

Table 2.1. Differences between collectivist and individualist societies.

Collectivist	Individualist
People are born into extended families or other groups which continue to protect them in exchange for loyalty	Everyone grows up to look after him/herself and his/her immediate (nuclear) family only
Identity is based in the social network	Identity is based in the individual
Children learn to think in terms of “we”	Children learn to think in terms of “I”
Harmony should always be maintained and direct confrontations avoided	Speaking one’s mind is a characteristic of an honest person
High-context communication	Low context-communication
Trespassing leads to shame and loss of face for self and group	Trespassing leads to guilt and loss of self-respect
Purpose of education is learning how to do	Purpose of education is learning how to learn
Diplomas provide entry to higher status groups	Diplomas increase economic worth and/or self respect
Relationship employer-employee is perceived in normal terms, like a family link	Relationship employer-employee is a contract supposed to be based on mutual advantage
Hiring and promotion decisions take employee’s in-group into account	Hiring and promotion decisions are supposed to be based on skills and rules only
Management is management of group	Management is management of individuals

Relationship prevails over task	Task prevails over relationship
Private life is invaded by group(s)	Everyone has a right to privacy
Opinions are predetermined by group membership	Everyone is expected to have a private opinion
Laws and rights differ by group	Laws and rights are supposed to be the same for all
Press controlled by the state	Press freedom
Ideologies of equality prevail over ideologies of individual freedom	Ideologies of individual freedom prevail over ideologies of equality
Harmony and consensus in society are ultimate goals	Self-actualisation by every individual is an ultimate goal

Source: (adapted from Hofstede, 1991).

- Masculine societies have been defined by De Mooij (1998) as those where achievement and success are the dominant values. By way of contrast, feminine societies prefer to care for others and the quality of life. In masculine societies performance and achievement is important and status is essential to show success. As a consequence, big and fast is beautiful and children learn to admire the strong. Femininity is a dimension where there is a tendency to avoid disagreement; quality of life and harmony is more important than winning; status and success are less demonstrated; and small is beautiful. In feminine societies children learn to have sympathy for the loser. Hofstede (1991) further described masculinity as an aspect of society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. Femininity, on the contrary, stands for societies in which social gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with quality of life.

- Uncertainty avoidance is a particularly relevant factor in the analysis of information needs, and information search is widely influenced by risk and uncertainty avoidance. Uncertainty avoidance is the degree people feel endangered by uncertain, ambiguous and unknown situations and circumstances. Cultures of weak uncertainty avoidance do not mind unpredictability or uncertainty, while strong uncertainty avoiders hate whatever is ambiguous and uncertain and try to cope with it by establishing rules and prescribing behaviours. This need for rules and formality in the structure of life leads to a search for truth and belief and trust in experts. Communication is more formal and conflicts and competition are intimidating. People belonging to this culture have a higher level of anxiety and tend to show their emotions. On the contrary, people of weak uncertainty avoidance cultures are more comfortable with competition and conflicts. They feel that there should be as few rules as possible. They believe more in generalists and common sense and they adopt a less ritual behaviour.

It is clear that the level of uncertainty avoidance determines not only the depth and broadness of information required, but also the level of trust in the different types of information sources. Cultures with stronger uncertainty avoidance would probably be more inclined than other cultures to require in-depth information given by experts. Therefore, in the context of this thesis, analysis of credibility of reference groups would be particularly relevant to cross-cultural differences.

- Long-term orientation is the last cultural factor identified by Hofstede (1991). Long term-orientation is the encouragement of virtues oriented towards future rewards, in particular perseverance and thrift (Hofstede, 1991).

Long-term orientation has also been explained as the extent to which a society exhibits a pragmatic future-oriented perspective rather than a conventional historic or short-term point of view.

The characteristics of people with a long-term orientation can be summarised as follows:

- persistence (perseverance),
- ordering relationships by status and observing this order,
- thrift,
- having a sense of shame.

Alternatively, short-term orientation is characterised by:

- personal steadiness and stability,
- protecting one's face,
- respect for tradition,
- reciprocation of greeting, favour and gifts,
- pursuit of happiness rather than pursuit of peace of mind.

2.4.2.3. Rokeach's Values Survey

Another commonly used instrument for the measurement of values is Rokeach's Values Survey (RVS) (Kamakura and Novak, 1992). This consists of 18 terminal values and 18 instrumental values. Terminal values refer to desirable end-states of existence (that is, personal goals), while instrumental values refer to desirable modes of conduct; they are therefore, motivators to reach end-states of existence. Rokeach's technique (Rokeach, 1973) implies a rank ordering of the 18 terminal and instrumental values in order of importance as guiding principles in their lives. The theoretical concept for the ranking principle is based on value systems, for which individuals assign priorities to each value held and use these priorities as standards for conflict resolution and decision-making. A list of the 18 terminal and instrumental values ranked in alphabetical order is given in table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Terminal and instrumental values.

Terminal Values	Instrumental Values
A comfortable life	Ambitious
An exciting life	Broad-minded
A sense of accomplishment	Capable
A world at peace	Cheerful
A world of beauty	Clean
Equality	Courageous
Family security	Forgiving
Freedom	Helpful
Happiness	Honest
Inner harmony	Imaginative
Mature love	Independent
National security	Intellectual
Pleasure	Logical
Salvation	Loving
Self-respect	Obedient

Social recognition	Polite
True friendship	Responsible
Wisdom	Self-controlled

In using the technique, it has been recognised that ranking 18 values is both difficult and time consuming. As an alternative means of data collection rating scales have been applied to the 18 values of the two different levels (Kamakura and Novak, 1992; Miethe, 1985).

A further development of RVS is Kahle's list of values (LOV) (Kahle and Goff Timmer, 1983). The LOV scale is based on Rokeach's terminal values, but the list has been reduced from 18 to nine items. This has simplified the original procedure of RVS, focusing respondents' attention on those items providing generality across all of life's major roles and assessing adaptation to various roles through value fulfilment (Kahle, et al., 2000; Soutar, et al., 1999). Two of the items in the LOV are identical to RVS terminal items: accomplishment and self-respect; the remaining LOV items either combine several RVS items or generalise a specific RVS item. The RVS items that did not provide generality across all of life's major roles are eliminated (Beatty, et al., 1985). LOV has been used in different ways: asking subjects to identify their two most important values or to rank the values (Kahle, et al., 1986). The values have also been evaluated through paired comparison or rating approaches (Kahle, et al., 1986).

Another classification measuring variation in cultural values has been developed by Hawkins, et al. (1994). Hawkins, et al.'s theory asserts that cultural values having most impact on consumer behaviour can be classified in one of the following three categories: other-oriented values, environment-oriented values and self-oriented values. Individual values can affect more than one area, but their primary impact is

generally in one of the three categories. Following this theory, cultural values of relevance to consumer behaviour can be summarised as follows:

- Other-oriented values reflect a society's view of the appropriate relationships between individuals and groups within that society. Six main traits characterise this category: *individual/collective* (are individual initiatives rewarded or is cooperation with and conformity to a group more highly valued? Rewards are given to individuals or to groups? Are individual differences appreciated or condemned?); *romantic orientation* (does the culture believe that "love conquers all"? Is there freedom of choice in the selection of mates?); *adult/child* (to what extent do the primary family activities focus on the needs of the children instead of those of the adults? Is family life organised to meet the needs of the children or the adults?); *masculine/feminine* (to what extent does social power automatically go to males? What role does the husband or the wife play in important family decisions?); *competition/cooperation* (is success achieved by outdoing other individuals or groups, or by forming alliances with other individuals or groups? Are winners admired in society?); *youth/age* (are prestige, rank and important social roles assigned to the younger or older members of a culture?).

- Environment-oriented values reflect the relationship of a society with its economic, technical and physical environment. The different approaches to environment-oriented values are: *risk taking/security* (is the person that risks status, position and wealth to overcome obstacles or in a new venture admired, or is he/she considered a fool?); *problem solving/fatalistic* (are people encouraged to overcome all problems or to accept things as they

happen?); *tradition/change* (are change and progress welcome or is value placed on tradition, with a resistance towards change? Are existing patterns of behaviour considered superior to new ones?); *performance/status* (are opportunities, rewards and prestige based on achievement and performance or on status factors such as family, class, or position?); *nature* (is nature viewed as something to overcome, conquer, or tame or is nature regarded as something to be admired?); *cleanliness* (to what extent is one expected to be clean? Is cleanliness expected beyond reasonable health requirements, or is cleanliness a minor matter?).

- Self-oriented values identify the objectives and approaches to life that are considered desirable by the members of the society. The different approaches to be considered are: *active/passive* (how important is a physically active approach to life? Are physical skills and feats valued more highly than less physical performances? How much performance is placed on doing?); *material/nonmaterial* (how important is the acquisition of material wealth? Does material wealth bring more status than family ties, knowledge or other activities?); *hard work/leisure* (do individuals work harder than required, to satisfy economic needs, or do they opt for more leisure time?); *postponed gratification/ immediate gratification* (are individuals encouraged to suffer in the short term for benefits in the future and for future generations, or are individuals encouraged to secure immediate benefits and pleasure?); *sensual gratification/abstinence* (how accepted is the enjoyment and satisfaction of sensual desires such as food, drink, sex, drugs?); *humour/serious* (is life considered as something serious and frequently a sad affair, or is life taken lightly and laughed at when possible).

Most of the values described above are treated as dichotomies. However, this does not mean that one item excludes the other one and a continuum exists between the two extremes. A lower value on cleanliness does not mean a high value on dirtiness: there are only cultures that are closer to the cleanliness end of the scale.

2.4.3. Hierarchy of needs

In page 65 it has been discussed that culture satisfies needs and exists for this reason (Herbi, 1998; Schiffman and Kanuk, 1987). Therefore, similar to values, the hierarchy of needs is influenced by culture. There are two points of influence of culture on the hierarchy of needs: for each culture, needs at a specific level must be satisfied, in order for higher order needs to appear; similar kinds of needs may be satisfied by very different products and consumption types. Although the level of economic development naturally has some influence (in a less developed economy individuals usually have more basic survival needs) some cultures encourage the needs of self-actualisation, the satisfaction of which does not imply material consumption; as is the case of the Hindu culture. In addition, the need for safety is satisfied in different ways across different cultures. This means that the needs themselves are fairly consistent across cultures, but their ranking order varies across cultures. Furthermore, the degree of emphasis on specific needs and the link between satisfaction at different need levels is also culturally based. With this assumption in mind, the present research work focuses on cultural differences. Specifically one of the hypotheses (see Section 3.5) tests the difference between

cultures on the level of importance and satisfaction with information obtained from travel guidebooks.

2.4.4. Factors influencing non-verbal communication

Differences in verbal communication systems are immediately obvious to anyone encountering a foreign culture with a different language. What is often not recognised is that each culture, besides having its own language, also has a nonverbal communication system or language that, like a verbal language, is culture bound. Usunier (2000) explains nonverbal communication as constituted by a large part of what is called “context”, which is used in the decoding of implicit messages. There are four elements of “context”:

1. The analogical components of verbal messages, which are words or phrases used with a different meaning from their direct meaning because of excess use;
2. Body language such as gestures, gesticulations, and eye contacts;
3. Messages transmitted by speakers due to their personal characteristics of age, size, weight, sex, dress. All these characteristics are encoded by the listeners using their own cultural programme;
4. Elements of interpretation created by circumstances of the conversation such as type of place, atmosphere, organization of the space, time and so forth.

Therefore, nonverbal communication or nonverbal behaviour is any behaviour, intentional or unintentional, beyond words that can be interpreted by a receiver as having a meaning (Herbig, 1998). Nonverbal behaviour can be both used as reinforcement of verbal messages and independently to words. It is mainly used unconsciously as habitual or routine behaviour. Nine characteristics can be considered to be nonverbal communication: gestures, body language and eye contact, symbols, friendship, etiquette, possession/things, agreement, time, and space.

2.4.5. Approaches to cross-cultural research

Cross-cultural consumer analysis is meant to determine to what extent the consumers of two or more cultures/nations are similar or different (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1987). Therefore, it is an attempt to understand the similarities and the differences that exist between nations and cultures. In analysing consumer behaviour across cultures, two approaches can be seen. The first approach points to the commonalities in the behaviour that warrant generalisations regarding global consumer trends. The other approach emphasises the peculiarities of each culture with a reminder that there are deep-seated differences in the way consumer trends are unfolding and, therefore, that superficial similarities may hide real cultural differences (Venkatesh, 1995). Both approaches can be successfully used and a truthful analysis can be carried out in the context of both similarities and differences. The final scope of cross-cultural research is the generalisation of traits and constructs across cultures with the scope to identify a theory or “behavioural

law” as culture-specific (Van Raaij, 1978). As Poortinga (1975) stated, cross-cultural research leads to a better insight into the commonalities and specificities of consumer behaviour in different cultural settings, and identifies universalities of behavioural law, and concepts across cultures.

Cross-cultural research generally involves a comparative approach (Venkatesh, 1995). As such it is not unique and is used in most behavioural studies as it involves a comparison between an experimental group and a control group as for example house owners and tenants, married and singles, service users and non-users. The uniqueness of cross-cultural research lies in the fact that its factor of comparison is the different cultural settings. These shape consumer behaviour while being shaped by consumer attitudes and behaviours (Van Raaij, 1978). Therefore, there is no control over the distributing factor, which could create unwanted differences, while the same research instrument most of the time cannot be used for samples belonging to different cultures (Brislin, et al., 1973). Furthermore, consumer research has been mainly developed in western countries utilising western concepts and instruments. This may introduce ethnocentrism in the types of questions and in the concepts employed, and in the explanations given to the results (Berry, et al., 1992).

From the above statements it becomes clear that the challenges of cross-cultural research lie in sampling, formal equivalence of the research instruments, conceptual validity, theoretical structure of the measuring indicators, and ethnocentrism. Sampling is a problem for all research studies; however, cross-cultural research faces the extra problem of finding comparable representative subjects (Segall, 1979). Van Raaij (1978) and Segall (1979) give an indication of which type of sampling to employ for each type of research.

2.4.6. Tourism information search and cultural differences

Understanding travellers' information search behaviour and needs is critical for strategy development and service delivery. However, in the tourism literature, there are few studies that specifically focus on cross-cultural information search behaviour and need. Information acquisition is necessary for selecting a destination and for on-site decisions such as selecting accommodation, transportation and tours. However, values, beliefs and attitudes may influence the levels and types of information needed, and therefore may impact on the levels and types of information search employed.

In past literature, Uysal, et al. (1990) studied the information search behaviour of German, French, British and Japanese travellers to the United States. They found that travellers from different countries were more inclined to utilise different types of information with varying frequency. For example, Japanese travellers are more likely to use books and other library materials first, then brochures and pamphlets, family and friends and travel agents. Similarly, Gursoy and Chen (2000) discovered some differences among French, British, and German travellers' information search behaviour.

Past literature has shown that there is a cultural difference in the way travellers have the need for and search for information, before and during their travels. However no research has been focused specifically on the Asia Pacific intra-regional market and in particular on information needs in travel guidebooks.

2.5. Conclusions

This chapter has focused on the review of the literature on issues related to package and independent tourism, information search behaviour, culture, and cross-cultural research.

The discussion has started with an analysis of the recent shift in tourism from a form of mass package tourism to a more sustainable form of independent tourism. It is argued that independent tourism is more sustainable than package tourism as it provides a higher economic legacy at the visited country, and a more genuine interest in experiencing the culture of the destination visited in an authentic way.

However, to be able to travel independently, travellers have a higher need for information. It is argued that the purchase of tourism services is associated with different risks including physical risks, financial risks, temporal risks, psychological risks, and social risks. Information search is conducted in order to reduce these risks and enhance quality in the trip. The literature provides little discussion on information search behaviour and needs by consumers of tourism services. As a consequence of this lack of discussion on tourism behaviour, and in order to set a strong theoretical base for the development of the forthcoming conceptual framework of this thesis, Section 2.2 focuses primarily on the general consumer behaviour literature.

This thesis aims to investigate tourism consumer behaviour in the search for information within a cross-cultural context. For this reason Section 2.4 focuses on the definition and identification of cultural characteristics, the measurements and determinants of cultural differences, and the existing approaches to cross-cultural

research. Culture is characterised by symbols, heroes, and rituals, and it affects values and needs. As such, culture is expected to affect information search and needs of independent travellers in the Asia Pacific region.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction to the conceptual framework

Following an examination of package travel and independent tourism (Chapter 2.1.), the relevant literature review focused on consumer behaviour theories, information searching (Chapter 2.2.), and cultural difference (Chapter 2.4.). Chapter 2.1. identified and explained different consumer behaviour models within the information search process. The literature review also examined the behavioural patterns of consumer behaviour in the case of product purchasing. This was followed by an analysis of consumer behaviour in the case of service purchasing in Chapter 2.3.1. Chapter 2.3.2. discussed information search theories in tourism. The present chapter develops a consumer behaviour model of the information search for independent travellers taking into consideration the previous literature review.

From the review of the literature presented in Chapter 2, it is possible to draw some overall conclusions:

1. Different consumer behaviour models are related to the information search, depending on the product purchased;
2. There are several factors that influence the level of information search required, and type of information sources used for different products;

3. Culture affects consumer behaviour;
4. There is a difference in consumer behaviour between independent travellers, and those on package tours;
5. Travel information is sought to reduce uncertainty and risk about the trip and the destination, and therefore to provide assurance about the quality of the vacation;
6. The more risk perceived to be involved in the product purchase or service consumption, the more searching required;
7. The Asian travel market and in particular the Asian independent travel market is an emerging market. Therefore, it is important to investigate its behavioural patterns.

3.2. Research questions

On the basis of the above conclusions and the objective of the research (Chapter 1), the following research questions are proposed:

- To what degree does culture affect on-site information search behaviour amongst Asian markets?
- To what degree does the type of travel, travel experience and knowledge of the destination affect on-site information search behaviour?

- To what degree does type of travel, travel experience and knowledge of the destination vary between Asian cultures?
- What types of on-site information are sourced through travel guidebooks?
- Are there any differences in the information type sought from travel guidebooks by travellers from different cultures?

3.3. Key concepts of the framework

In the introduction to the present thesis it was stated that when deciding to take a holiday, travellers select a destination and how they will travel: either on a package tour or independently. Those opting for independent travel face the challenge of gathering the necessary information to make the arrangements, including daily on-site activities.

In the first instance, it is necessary to distinguish between pre-travel information search and on-site information search. The information search can take place before and during travel. Indeed, information is necessary both for choosing the destination, for planning the trip and arranging travel services, such as travel mode, attractions to visit, location activities, and lodging, and for making on-site decisions about activities and services that have not been booked or arranged in the planning phase. The type of information required, and the sources of information used vary in accordance to the type of search: decision-making, pre-travel, or on-site search.

The model outlined in Figure 3.1. encompasses the broad paradigm of information search in every stage of travel.

Secondly, it is necessary to distinguish between independent travellers and package tour travellers. As was stated in Chapter 1.1.1., independent travellers organise all of their travel arrangements by themselves, making personal decisions about how to travel to the destination and what to do after they have arrived. In contrast, package tourists use pre-arranged tourist services. In those circumstances, package tour travellers have fewer arrangements to organise during the planning phase, and by definition have less free time available for independent activities during the course of the holiday. In this sense, independent travellers are more dependent upon travel information about the destination while travelling. For this reason the model developed for this study and outlined in Figure 3.1 distinguishes between independent travellers and package tourists.

3.4. Key stages of the model

As outlined in the model below (Figure 3.1.), the first stage of the information search takes place in the phase of destination and travel choice. Normally, this is a limited search that involves the use of memory and few other information sources (Gitelson and Crompton, 1983). There is little difference between independent travellers and package tour travellers, since both undertake this preliminary search.

The following stage is the planning phase. Planning a trip requires knowledge of the destination; therefore, it usually involves the need for information. For package tour travellers this phase does not exist. Tour operators and travel agencies organise the necessary arrangements within a small range of pre-packaged options, and provide their customers with the required information about the destination. For the independent traveller the planning phase is a crucial stage of the holiday as it provides structure to a trip.

The final stage of the model is the actual travel. During the trip, travellers have to organise on-site activities and services that have not been arranged or booked in the planning phase. In the case of independent tourism, travellers experience a significant further need for information. In the case of package tours, the tour operator arranges on-site activities, and the accompanying staff provide information and suggestions for the limited free time available to the tourists. It seems likely that travel guidebooks will be used more extensively by independent travellers than by package tour travellers for the gathering of on-site information.

As outlined in the conceptual framework (Figure 3.2), the need for information by independent travellers while travelling is satisfied through an information search that is directed towards risk reduction and quality assurance. Travel guidebooks are a heavily used source of information for travellers planning their holiday and deciding about on-site activities with the scope of reducing risk and enhancing quality. Risk perception in the information search has been extensively examined in Chapter 2.2.6. As regards quality, it has been stated in Chapter 2.6 that travellers undertake an information search with the primary aim of enhancing the quality of their trip. It is perceived that a better quality trip can be gained by decreasing the level of uncertainty and lack of knowledge about the destination (Fodness and

Murray, 1997). For this reason the information search takes place with the focused scope of reducing risk and consequently increasing quality.

The type of information sought and the selection of the information sources used by each tourist to plan the vacation are not made randomly. The type of information needed and the source of information will vary according to cultural background, personal travel experience and knowledge of the destination. In this study we assume that Japanese, Chinese, Korean and North American travellers represent a degree of cultural diversity that is representative of significant behavioural variation. From the literature it may be anticipated that different cultures have different information needs and search behaviour and that the items of information sought in a travel guidebook and the use of information sources by one of these cultural groups will differ from items of information sought by another group. Similarly, we expect from the literature that the items of information and information sources vary depending on the personal travel experience. Sorensen (2003) states that in certain backpacker circles “guidebooks are seen as a symbol of the lesser traveller” (Sorensen, 2003, pp. 860). Therefore, a traveller with lots of travel experience would require different information items than a traveller with little or no travel experience. It is clear also that knowledge of the destination would influence information search and information source. A repeat visit to the destination would require less or different information items and possibly different information sources.

The type of information needed and the sources of information consulted will vary according to cultural background, personal travel experience, and knowledge about the destination. The outcome of the three stages (destination / travel choice, planning and travel) is the experience. The experience will affect the search for

information in future travel arrangements. The experience will also affect the satisfaction with the sources of information used.

The initial model (Figure 3.1) was developed to determine information search and needs in the three stages (destination / travel choice, planning and travel), and the conceptual framework (Figure 3.2) developed to determine the hypotheses to test in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are outlined.

From this conceptual framework a list of six general hypotheses (outlined in Section 3.5) has been created.

Figure 3.1. Initial model

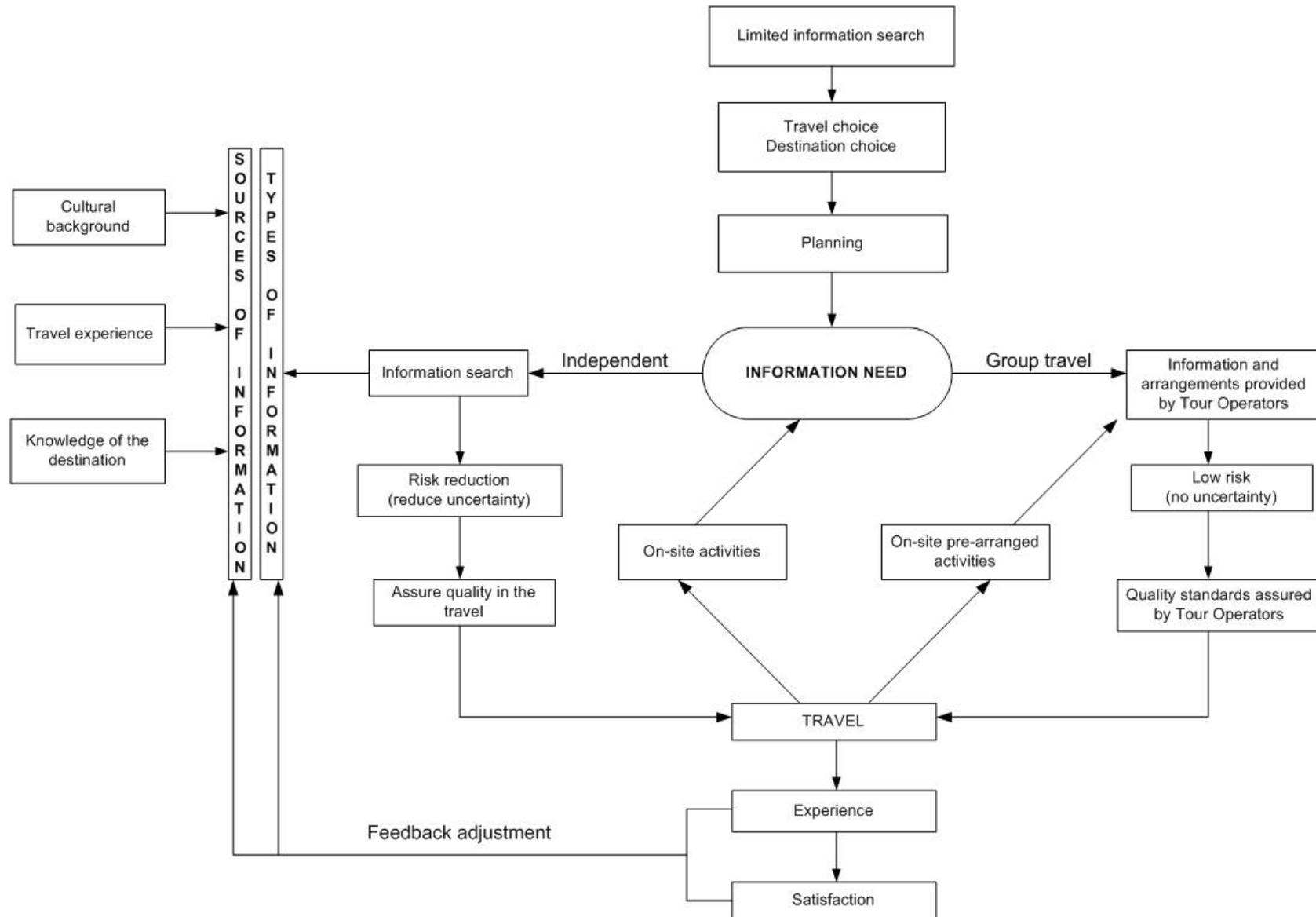
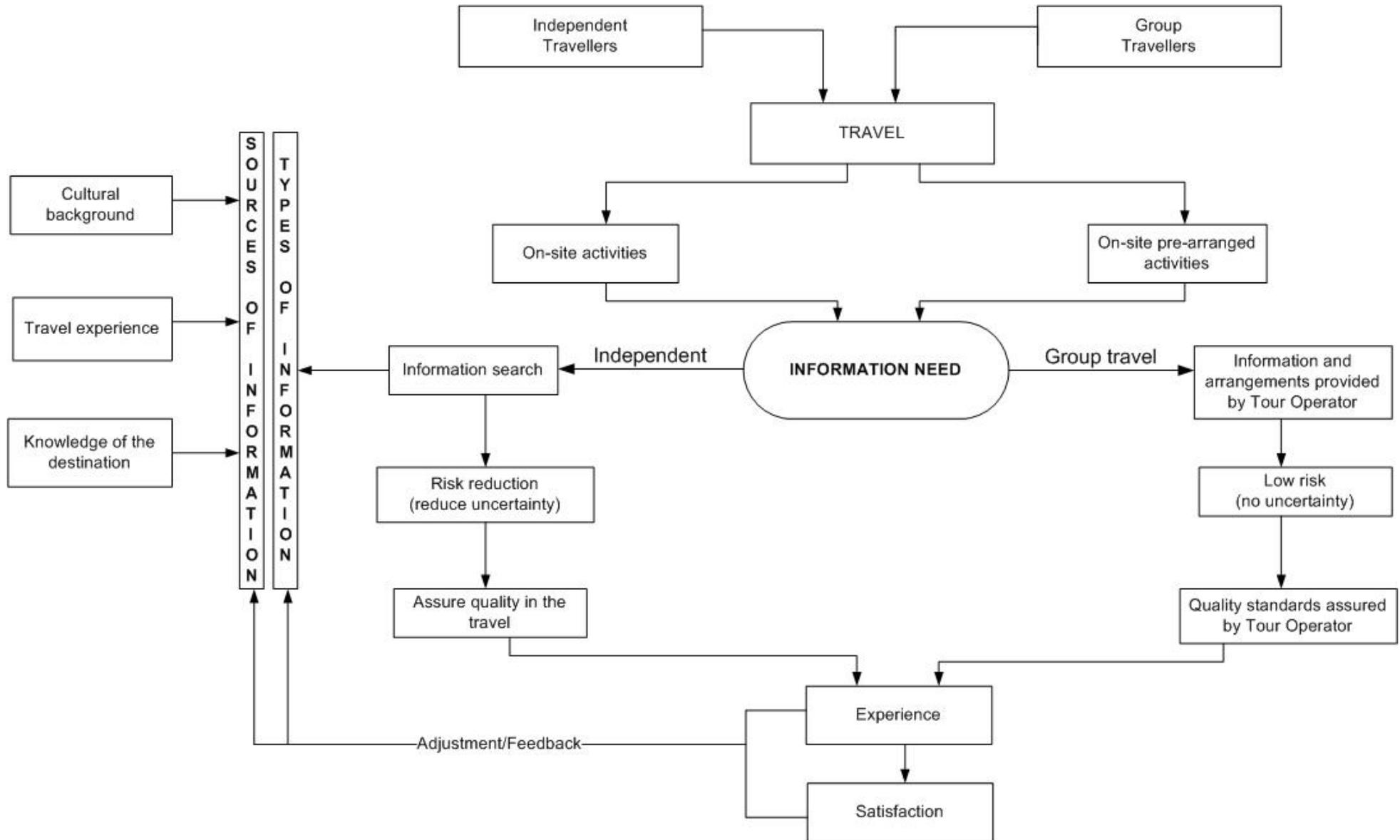


Figure 3.2. Conceptual Framework



3.5. General research hypotheses

From the literature review and the conceptual framework (Figure 3.2), the following general hypotheses regarding the type and use of information in travel guidebooks have been developed:

1. Travel guidebooks are used more by independent travellers than by package tourists;
2. The source of travel information used by independent travellers differs according to cultural background, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination;
3. The types of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differ according to cultural background of the tourists, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination;
4. The use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality is perceived differently according to cultural background and travel experience of the tourists.
5. The physical characteristics of travel guidebooks preferred by independent travellers differs according to cultural background and travel experience.
6. Information obtained from travel guidebooks by independent travellers has different levels of importance for each cultural group, and these different

importance levels impact upon the level of satisfaction with the travel guidebook.

3.6. Thesis structure

The research requires data collection covering on-site information needs of independent travellers from different cultural groups and focusing on travel guidebooks as a source of information. The study requires the analysis of the type of information required by independent travellers in travel guidebooks during the trip. To test the first hypothesis, it is considered to be important that a small sample of package-tour travellers is included in the survey.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 will test the six general hypotheses and the analysis has been divided as follows:

After an initial overview of the travel behaviour and demographic profile of the respondents, the use of travel guidebooks will be analysed according to type of travel. If the null hypothesis in hypothesis one (travel guidebooks are used more by independent travellers than package tourists) is rejected, then only the independent sample is used to test hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Specifically through Chi-Square tests, Mann-Whitney U tests and Kruskal-Wallis tests, Chapter 5 will test hypotheses one and two.

Hypothesis one:

- 1.1. Independent travellers use travel guidebooks more than package tourists;

Hypothesis two:

- 2.1. The source of travel information used by independent travellers varies according to cultural background;
- 2.2. The source of travel information used by independent travellers varies according to travel experience;
- 2.3. The source of travel information used by independent travellers varies according to knowledge of the destination.

Through factor analysis, Mann-Witney U tests and Kruskal-Wallis tests, Chapter 6 will test hypotheses three, four and five.

Hypothesis three:

- 3.1. The type of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differs according to the cultural background of the tourists;
- 3.2. The type of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differs according to travel experience;
- 3.3. The type of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differs according to knowledge of the destination;

Hypothesis four:

- 4.1. Different cultural groups perceive the use of travel guidebook to enhance travel quality differently;

- 4.2 Travellers with different travel experience perceive the use of travel guidebook to enhance travel quality differently.

Hypothesis five:

- 5.1. The physical attributes of travel guidebooks preferred by independent travellers differ according to cultural background;
- 5.2. The publication edition attributes of travel guidebook preferred by independent travellers differ according to travel experience.

Through structural equation models Chapter 7 will test hypothesis 6.

Hypothesis six:

6. Information obtained from travel guidebooks by independent travellers has different levels of importance for the traveller, and these different importance levels impact upon the level of satisfaction with the guidebook.

The next chapter (Chapter 4) will discuss the research methodology used to test the general hypotheses, and to collect the data for data analysis.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Cross-cultural research is comparative research (Venkatesh, 1995), and cross-cultural comparisons and analyses are used in many behavioural studies. Cross-cultural research involves a comparison between groups or cultures and the uniqueness of such research lies in the fact that its factor of comparison is different cultures. These cultures affect consumer behaviour while at the same time being affected by consumer beliefs and attitudes (Van Raaij, 1978).

One characteristic of cross-cultural research is that it is common to use convenience sampling with little control exercised over the distribution of the sample. In some cases a single research instrument cannot be used for samples drawing upon different cultures because of the need to research varying aspects of cultural diversity (Brislin, et al., 1973). Another challenge for the conduct of cross-cultural research in consumer behaviour is that it has been mainly developed in western countries, utilising western concepts and instruments. This may introduce ethnocentrism to the types of questions and concepts employed, and in the explanation given to the results (Berry, et al., 1992).

The present research involves a cross-cultural research based on consumer behaviour. More specifically, it aims to investigate the different information needs and search requirements between Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and North American travellers. It becomes clear that the challenges of this research lie in sampling,

formal equivalence of the research instruments, conceptual validity, theoretical structure of the measuring instruments, and ethnocentrism.

4.1. The research field

Data collection was undertaken in Australia and in Thailand. In Australia, 546 questionnaires were collected in Sydney outside the Opera House, at the Rocks, and at Darling Harbour. In Thailand the data collection took place in Bangkok at the Bangkok Grand Palace, Kao San Road, Week-end Market, and China Town; in Pattaya on the beach and in the main entertainment street; and in Phuket on the beach. Bangkok has no single tourist attraction and tourists visit the city for many different reasons. Some use its infrastructure as a starting and finishing point for travel within South East Asia. In addition, different cultures are attracted to different parts of Bangkok and Thailand, making it difficult to collect data from the four samples in a single spot. Therefore, data were collected in different parts of Bangkok and elsewhere in Thailand, with 550 questionnaires completed making an overall total of 1,096 questionnaires.

The choice of the two destinations of Sydney and Thailand was based upon two criteria:

1. The destination had to be part of the Asia Pacific region;
2. The destination had to be located outside the countries sampled for the survey (China, Japan, Korea, North America).

Table 4.1 shows the arrivals in the Asia-Pacific region for the year 2003. It is clear that without China and Hong Kong (Chinese people from mainland China and Hong Kong are part of the sample) the next largest destinations are Malaysia with 10,577,000 arrivals and Thailand with 10,004,000 arrivals. In selecting between Malaysia and Thailand, the researcher noted that Thailand has more suitable destinations (such as Bangkok, Pattaya, and Phuket) to reach respondents from China, Japan, Korea and North America.

Australia is the most obvious choice for a western destination in Asia Pacific, and Sydney, as the most important international destination in Australia, was chosen as the best location to reach the relevant respondents.

Table 4.1 Tourist arrivals in 2003 and 2004.

Major destinations	International Tourist Arrivals				
	1000		Change (%)		Share (%)
	2003	2004	2003/02	2004/03	2004
Asia Pacific	119,225	152,543	-9.0	27.9	100
Australia	4,354	-	-1.5	-	-
China	32,970	41,761	-10.4	26.7	27.4
Guam	910	1,160	-14.1	27.5	0.8
Hong Kong	15,537	21,811	-6.2	40.4	14.3
India	2,762	3,371	14.4	23.6	44.9
Indonesia	4,467	5,321	-11.3	19.1	3.5
Iran	1,546	1,659	-2.5	7.3	22.1
Japan	5,212	6,138	-0.5	17.8	4.0
Korea Republic of	4,753	5,818	-11.1	22.4	3.8
Macao	6,309	8,324	-3.9	31.9	5.5
Malaysia	10,557	15,703	-20.4	48.5	10.3
New Zealand	2,104	2,348	2.9	11.6	1.5
Philippines	1,907	2,291	-1.3	20.2	1.5
Singapore	5,705	-	-18.5	-	-
Taiwan	2,248	2,950	-24.5	31.2	1.9
Thailand	10,004	11,651	-8.0	16.5	7.6

Source: WTO (2005)

4.2. The timing of the research

Data collection took place between the end of February 2003 and the beginning of January 2004. The data collection in Sydney started on 23 February and finished on 20 March 2003. Questionnaires were collected every day in Sydney during this four week period.

The data collection in Thailand took place between 15 November 2003 and 10 January 2004. During this time there was a break between 20 December 2003, and 5 January 2004.

The initial research plan was to collect the data in Thailand soon after the data collection in Sydney. It was planned to start the data collection in Thailand towards the end of April 2003. However, SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) occurred in East Asia around that time and three factors caused a postponement:

1. One of the samples consisted of Chinese travellers who, due to SARS, were not allowed abroad at that time. Therefore, it would have been impossible to collect questionnaires from that sample.
2. Thailand was on the list of countries at risk of SARS and therefore at that time not many leisure travellers were visiting the area. In addition, part of the questionnaire was focused on the importance of travel guidebooks to reduce risk. Due to the fact that East Asia was a place of high risk at that time, the survey would probably have produced biased results.

3. The Victoria University policy did not allow any of its staff or research members to travel to Thailand during SARS. Therefore, it was impossible for the researcher to travel to Thailand in the capacity of University researcher until the SARS alert was over.

The data collection was postponed until mid November, when more tourists were visiting the country.

4.3. Sampling

The present research comprises four different samples: Japanese, Chinese, Korean and North American. The samples were based on the culture of the following countries: Japan, Korea, China (including Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan), and USA and Canada. Given that a convenience sampling method was required in the field, a large sample frame was defined in order to avoid sampling bias. For each sample it was decided to collect around 200 questionnaires to give a total of 1,000 questionnaires. At the end of the survey 1,096 valid questionnaires were processed comprising 305 Japanese, 282 Korean, 267 Chinese and 242 North American. Ninety-eight percent of the Japanese travellers interviewed live in Japan and only 2% live abroad; the Chinese sample is the most diversified with 31% from Mainland China, 32% from Hong Kong, 12% from Taiwan, 3% living in other countries, while 21% did not state the country of origin. In the Korean sample 99% of the respondents live in Korea and 1% live abroad; among the North American

sample, 68% were travellers from the USA and 29% from Canada, 2% did not state the country of origin, while 1% live abroad.

Sampling is a problem for all research studies. However, cross-cultural research faces the extra problem of finding comparable representative subjects (Segall, 1979). Van Raali, 1978 and Segall, 1979 give an indication of what type of sampling is best to employ for each type of cross-cultural research. Random sampling is best used for the comparison of fixed variables such as income, age, education distribution. Random sampling is particularly suitable for carrying out statistical tests for the significance of difference.

Sample representativeness is suitable for descriptive studies where the focus of the research is the relationship between variables in different cultures. In this case it is essential that the sample is representative of each culture it is collected to represent. Functional equivalence in sampling is needed when only subgroups of each culture are studied; for example comparing students in an American and a Japanese university. In the case of causal studies across cultures, matched samples with matching variables as age, income, education and so on can be used. In this case it is important to distinguish in the early stage of the research design if matching variables or independent variables will be used.

The purpose of this research is both to compare fixed variables and analyse the relationship between variables across the four cultures. The sample technique used is convenience random sampling, however a control variable for independent travellers versus group travellers has been used.

During the design stage of the research it was decided to collect half of the sample in Sydney and half in Thailand, as illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Sample design.

100% = 1,000 questionnaires							
25% = 250 quest. North American		25% = 250 quest. Japanese		25% = 250 quest. Chinese		25% = 250 quest. Korean	
80% independent	20% group travellers	80% independent	20% group travellers	80% independent	20% group travellers	80% independent	20% group travellers

Altogether 1,096 questionnaires were collected, subdivided as illustrated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Sample frame.

100% = 1,096 questionnaires							
22% = 242 quest. North American		28% = 305 quest. Japanese		24% = 267 quest. Chinese		26% = 282 quest. Korean	
88% independent	12% group travellers	77% independent	23% group travellers	69% independent	31% group travellers	79% independent	21% group travellers

The questionnaires collected in Sydney are described as follows (Table 4.4.):

Table 4.4. Questionnaires collected in Sydney.

100% = 546 questionnaires							
25% = 138 quest. North American		31% = 168 quest. Japanese		18% = 99 quest. Chinese		26% = 141 quest. Korean	
80% independent	20% group travellers	71% independent	29% group travellers	84% independent	16% group travellers	71% independent	29% group travellers

The questionnaires collected in Thailand are described as follows (Table 4.5.):

Table 4.5. Questionnaires collected in Thailand.

100% = 550 questionnaires							
19% = 104 quest. North American		25% = 137 quest. Japanese		30% = 168 quest. Chinese		26% = 141 quest. Korean	
99% independent	1% group travellers	82% independent	18% group travellers	67% independent	33% group travellers	75% independent	26% group travellers

From Table 4.5 it can be seen that in Thailand only one group traveller from North America was surveyed. During data collection, as well as SARS, the war in Iraq also disturbed travel patterns. The war in Iraq started in March 2003. Additionally, in June 2003 there was an investigation in Thailand of a terrorist attack planned for September/October 2003 at the American, British and Israeli embassies and at the night market (The Age, 2003; The Review, 2003). During the time of data collection some North American tourists were still reluctant to travel to Thailand. It is expected that for these reasons it was difficult to find group travellers from North America.

4.4. Survey method

The technique employed was to intercept the next person to pass the interviewer (Brunt, 1997). Standing every day in the determined spots, the researcher stopped the first tourist crossing the area. After the first tourist completed the questionnaire, the next tourist crossing the area was intercepted. If a tourist refused to complete the questionnaire, the researcher would intercept the next tourist to pass.

After introducing herself, the researcher introduced the research and stated that she was looking for Chinese, Japanese, Korean and North American tourists. If the tourists were not from one of the above cultures the researcher did not deliver the questionnaire. Additionally, age was asked, to avoid tourists aged under 18 years completing the questionnaire. At the end of every day, the researcher counted the questionnaires collected, so that there was a control over the number of questionnaires collected from each culture, and from each group (independent travellers and group travellers) and towards the end of the survey only the missing subjects were targeted.

One of the major problems in a survey is non-response. Mail survey can receive response rates as low as 10% (Bailey, 1994). Using the convenience sampling method it has been possible to collect the number of questionnaires considered necessary for the research. On average, the number of tourists agreeing to complete the questionnaire exceeded 70%. Time of day, collection location and tourist type affected the willingness of prospective respondents to cooperate in the study, and complete the questionnaire. During late afternoon and evening tourists were more willing to complete the questionnaire. This was mainly due to the fact that tourists were somewhat more relaxed, and were more inclined to sit down or stop for about 10 to 20 minutes. Moreover, towards the end of the day tourists were less rushed to visit tourist attractions. Also, as both the surveys in Sydney and Thailand were conducted during hot months, after sunset, tourists experienced less discomfort stopping in the street.

For the Asian sample, older tourists were more likely to refuse to complete the questionnaire. For the Chinese, Japanese and Korean tourists this was mainly due to language barriers. Although the questionnaire was translated into the language of

each culture, the interviewer approached the interviewees with English, and had limited knowledge of the three languages to explain the significance of the survey to the potential respondents. Older tourists were mainly the ones with whom there was a language barrier at the approach stage, especially in Thailand, where Chinese, Japanese and Korean tourists did not expect to be stopped by a western researcher.

Because the researcher was delivering the questionnaire to the interviewees, and waiting for it to be completed on the spot, the problem of invalid questionnaires was avoided. First of all, the researcher was available for any questions on the completion of the questionnaire, secondly, when the questionnaire was returned, the researcher briefly looked at the questionnaire to make sure every section was completed correctly. Where sections were missing or completed incorrectly, the researcher asked respondents to finish the survey correctly. Very few respondents refused to finish correctly. If a questionnaire was only partially completed or completed in the wrong way, it was immediately considered invalid and put aside.

4.5. Research instrument

In cross-cultural research, the development of the research instrument faces the issue of formal and functional equivalence (Van Raaij, 1978). According to Van Raaij (1978) formal equivalence means that identical questionnaires, completion instructions and data collection methods are used for each cultural sample. Formal equivalence is the ideal approach, however it is impossible in most cross-cultural studies. Questionnaires need to be translated and different methods of collecting

data (personal interviews rather than mail surveys) may be more appropriate in one culture than in others.

For the present study, problems of translation were solved by back translating the questionnaire. However, it remains a further issue to verify how reliable the instrument is in measuring the variables in different cultural settings. If the objective of the instrument is to measure and compare quantitative data such as the number of visits to the destination, number of days at the destination, or satisfaction with service, the instrument can more easily obtain formal equivalence just by translation. However, if the instrument makes use of behavioural variables as indicators of a hypothetical construct (measuring number of visits to a church to identify religious belief, or measuring type of holidays taken to identify wealth) translation of the questionnaire may not be enough. Furthermore, variables that motivate individuals for certain behaviour in one culture may differ from those motivating the same behaviour in other cultures. The instrument must be functionally rather than formally equivalent, and validity is based on the use of different measurements to evaluate the same construct. Therefore, it can be summarised that conceptual equivalence requires indicators to be changed in case they are not valid in one of the cultures included in the study.

According to Van Raaij (1978) there are four different methods to achieve validity in functional equivalence:

1. Culturally universal measurements (identical stimulus materials are used in each culture except for translation and records and quality of responses are identical);

2. Culturally ipsatised measurements (identical measurements are used, but the recording and/or interpretation of the responses is made in relation to the culture);
3. Culturally modified measurements (the indicators are modified in order to make them culturally appropriate, to measure the same hypothetical construct across cultures; the original scoring is maintained);
4. Culturally specific measurements (the scope is to achieve, from a minimum formal equivalence, the maximal functional equivalence).

The issue of construct validity relates to the issue of formal and functional validity. According to Costa and Bamossey (1995), the problem of construct validity arises because quite often cross-cultural studies have a perspective, which focuses on the values that are characteristic of the country/culture in which the research is designed. In such cases, the researcher tends to make use of measures that have been studied, operationalised and validated in only one of the countries/cultures involved in the study. Often, researchers look at behaviour and decision processes from a view that reflects norms and values of the researcher's culture, instead of attempting to understand these values and processes in the context of the societal framework or cultural system under study (Costa, Bamossey, 1995). This phenomenon is called ethnocentrism and it has implications not only on the creation of instruments and measures. It also influences the data interpretation. Similar findings tend to be considered as similarities across cultures, and therefore the hypotheses are considered culturally independent rather than being analysed under a specific cultural context. Therefore, research that aims to identify cultural differences needs to pay particular attention to the design of the research

instruments and to their translation, and sometimes cultural changes and adjustments might be needed to assure construct validity. In the creation of the conceptual framework it is necessary to consider all the plausible rival hypotheses in the sample framework and questionnaire design. Furthermore, it is important to be non ethnocentric for the creation and the translation of the research instruments and indicators and also for the analysis of the data (Venkatesh, 1995).

For the present study the questionnaire has been constructed in English and translated into Chinese, Japanese and Korean by professional translators. A back translation has been conducted to check the accuracy of the translation. For the Chinese version, the questionnaire has been translated with traditional characters for travellers from Hong Kong and Taiwan, and in simplified characters for travellers from Mainland China.

In the creation of the questionnaire, the principle of Good Question Writing as suggested by Neumann (1997) has been followed:

1. Jargon, slang and abbreviations have been avoided. No technical terms have been included, and no abbreviations have been included;
2. To avoid ambiguity, confusion and vagueness, the researcher has provided as much information as possible in the question of what was expected by the respondent. For example, it has been stated that the length of stay at the destination has to be recorded in the number of days. Moreover, to avoid ambiguity, words that can have different meanings for different interviewees have been avoided.

3. In the questionnaire the researcher has used a neutral language. Words with an emotional linkage or prestige association have been avoided, to avoid emotional reactions and answers.
4. Only one concept or issue or meaning has been used for each question. Only question 8 (see attached questionnaire in Appendix 1) includes two issues. However, they were separated into two sections and the question was clearly stated to make it clear to respondents.
5. The questions have been carefully worded to avoid leading questions. The respondents could assess that every response was legitimate.
6. Questions were simple and related to travel behaviour. All the respondents were able to answer all questions.
7. No questions were related to hypothetical situations.
8. No questions were related to future intentions.
9. Double negatives were avoided.
10. Every response was:
 - a. mutually exclusive and there were no overlapping categories;
 - b. exhaustive, there was a choice for every respondent, and at the end of every response there was a blank section for the respondent to add comments;

- c. balanced with a Likert scale from 1 to 6 where 1 was unimportant or unsatisfied and 6 was important or satisfied (a discussion on why the researcher decided to use a scale from 1 to 6 is reported in page 116).

Because of the quantitative character of the research, 12 of the 17 questions were closed-ended (see questionnaire in Appendix 1). The decision to adopt structured, fixed responses was based on the fact that they are quicker and easier for respondents to answer; the answers from different respondents are easier for the researcher to compare; there is less chance that a respondent will misunderstand the question; and the answers are more easily coded and therefore capable of statistical analysis. The main disadvantage of closed-ended questions is that they can lose important information about a respondent's beliefs and feelings. To avoid this, a blank space was left for the respondents at the end of every question to add their own response or comment. The mixture of open and closed-ended questions and the adoption of partially open questions has helped to create an exhaustive quantitative questionnaire.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) includes 17 questions and is structured in three sections: the first section aims at collecting data related to general information about the trip, the second section is the core of the questionnaire and includes questions about information needs and search, the third section includes demographic questions.

The first section includes seven questions about the type of trip, trip purpose, travel companion, length of the trip, destination knowledge and travel guidebook use. The data collected in this section are not only used for the description of the types of traveller interviewed; these variables are also used for grouping the travellers,

analysing their behaviour on the basis of the type of trip, purpose of the trip, travel companion, length of the trip, knowledge about the destination and use of a travel guidebook. Cross-tabulations, ANOVA, and non-parametric tests control the relationship between information needs and search using these variables.

The present investigation involves the conduct of cross-cultural research. However, before considering different information needs and search due to culture, it is important to consider the relationship between information needs and search and other variables. The questions in Section One are intended as grouping variables allowing for analysis of the traveller prior to testing specific hypothesis. As suggested by Brislin, Lonner and Thorndike (1973), every difference and similarity has first of all to be attributed to differences in the sample qualities, rather than to cross-cultural differences and similarities. If for example travellers staying longer at the destination have a significant difference in information needs (Japanese travellers tended to stay significantly longer at the destination than the other samples), it is possible to attribute information needs and search to the length of stay and not to culture.

The second section of the questionnaire includes questions about what information travel guidebooks should contain, which sources of information are most useful when travelling, the characteristics travel guidebooks should have, and quality characteristics of travel guidebooks. The core of the section is question 8, which contains 58 variables. Each variable represents one piece of information, and the interviewee was asked to state how important each piece of information is in a travel guidebook. This question is intended to provide data for analysing the different information needs of each type of traveller in each culture. Moreover, for travellers

using a travel guidebook during the trip, questions were asked regarding how satisfied they are with the information provided in the travel guidebook.

The selection of the 58 variables has been based on the analysis of information provided in existing travel guidebooks. The travel guidebooks analysed have been: Lonely Planet, Eyewitness, and Let's Go. Additionally, the researcher completed the list with the feedback of participants in the pilot survey.

The questionnaire consisted of three A4 pages. The respondents took from 10 to 20 minutes to complete. Although the questionnaire appeared to be long for some respondents, the researcher required a significant volume of information to obtain the study goals. Overall, 1,096 valid questionnaires were collected, exceeding the pre-defined sample range by 9.6%. The length of the questionnaire allowed the researcher to collect all the necessary information for a comprehensive study on information needs and search, of independent travellers, while keeping the number of respondents high enough to carry out extensive statistical analysis and provide reasonably extensive representative samples under convergence sampling.

Dividing the questionnaire into three sections and providing a logical flow avoided discomfort for the respondents. To make the respondent feel comfortable and maintain their interest in the questionnaire, the opening questions were easy to answer and interesting. The second section was organised logically around topic groupings. The third and conclusive section addressed more personal and demographic questions. By the end of the questionnaire collection process respondents were more at ease in answering personal questions.

4.6. Pilot survey

A pilot survey was conducted in two parts prior to the data collection. After the pilot survey a few changes were made to the questionnaire.

The first part of the pilot survey involved a first draft of the questionnaire being distributed among university friends and colleagues. Fifteen questionnaires were collected and personal or written feedback was obtained. The questionnaire was edited according to the feedback received and the final pilot survey took place in Melbourne at the beginning of January 2003, one and a half months before the start of data collection. Twenty questionnaires were delivered and collected from travellers visiting South Bank in Melbourne. Travellers came from different countries including Japan and Korea. The final pilot survey was used to finalise the questionnaire and to test the arrangements on how to go about stopping travellers in a public space, to design the equipment needed, and to assess the likely average completion time.

The survey was translated separately into each language, and back translated for consistency between questions in different languages.

4.7. Validity and reliability of the research instrument

As stated in the previous section, the main questions were in closed format and used Likert scales for the response.

In addressing the use of Likert scales, the literature debates the appropriate number of scales and the inclusion of an additional neutral category for 'don't know', 'undecided', or 'no opinion'. Likert scales need a minimum of two categories (Neuman, 2006) which in the case of this research is 'unimportant' and 'important' for questions 8a, 9, 11, 12 and 'unsatisfied' and 'satisfied' for question 8b. Neuman (2006) further argues on the need for a larger number of categories as limiting the choice to two choices creates, "a crude measure and forces distinction in only two categories" (Neuman, 2006 p. 207). However, as Neuman (2006), Nunnally (1994) and Bailey (1995) have argued, it is recommended to keep the number of categories up to eight or nine at most as a high number of choices may confuse the respondents and cause frustration when searching for the right answer. To this point, Nunnally (1994) argues that when increasing the choices from 2 to 20 there is a rapid increase in the reliability to about 6; the increase tends to level off at about 7 and any increase in the level of reliability is very low after about 11.

In regard to the prospect of offering a neutral scale for the benefit of respondents who feel that they don't know the answer or don't have any opinion on the matter, Bailey (1995) suggests that it is important to offer a neutral point at the centre of the scale. In the present case, respondents had already chosen to undertake a trip. They were already at their destination when being interviewed. On this basis, a neutral or 'don't know' response in the Likert scale was not included and respondents were expected to choose between the response categories.

As a consequence the scale used is from 1 to 6, where 1 corresponds to unimportant / unsatisfied and 6 corresponds to important / satisfied.

Reliability is another important issue in the construction of the research instrument. Variables derived from test instruments are only considered to be reliable when they provide stable and reliable responses over the course of repeated administration of the test. Two techniques are used to determine reliability: 1. Internal consistency: the estimation is based on the correlation among the variables comprising the set (typically, Cronbach's alpha); and 2. Split-half reliability: the estimation is based on the correlation of two equivalent forms of the scale (Schumacker and Lomas, 2004; Neuman, 2006). As this study is focused on four variable sets (importance of items of information, satisfaction with items of information, characteristics of travel guidebooks and quality attributes of travel guidebooks), four separate Cronbach alphas and split-halves were computed. Table 4.6 shows the results of both tests. The higher Cronbach coefficient of the four sets is importance of the items of information, with a coefficient of .95. This suggests that the instrument has a 95% accuracy in measuring the overall true score of the 58 items and a 5% random error. The lowest Cronbach coefficient is the characteristics of a travel guidebook, with a coefficient of .67. For exploratory research it is suggested that an acceptable level of reliability is between 50% and 60%. These coefficients are considered to be acceptable.

Table 4.6 Coefficient alpha and Split-half reliability of the survey instrument.

Set of variables	Number of items	Coefficient alpha	Split-half reliability			
			Half 1		Half 2	
			Nr	Value	Nr	Value
Importance of items of information	58	0.9485	29	0.9036	29	0.9184
Satisfaction with items of information	58	0.9718	29	0.9495	29	0.9524
Characteristics of travel guidebooks	7	0.677	4	0.6439	3	0.3519

Quality attributes of travel guidebooks	12	0.875	6	0.7828	6	0.8082
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The split-half reliability results are slightly lower than the Cronbach coefficient alpha, however still at an acceptable level. They vary from .95 for the second half of the satisfaction set to .64 for the first half for the characteristics of the travel book. However, the second half of the characteristics of the travel book scored a coefficient of .35. The low coefficient of this half is caused by the low number of items (3) comprising the half.

4.8. Data Analysis

After the data collection was undertaken, the questionnaires have been ordered according to culture and place of data collection. Each questionnaire was numbered for data entry into SPSS so that entry errors could be corrected. The results of the data analysis are shown in Chapter 5 (descriptive analysis) and Chapter 6 (hypothesis testing). All questions were tested using a frequency table approach for incorrect ranges and unusual responses, and the source questionnaires were double checked for accuracy of data entry.

Because of the large number of variables collected in the data set, it is unlikely that all measures will be normally distributed. For this reason the methodology and data collection instrument was designed with the intention of using non-parametric statistical testing models. In Appendix 2 it can be seen that some thirty odd variables have a skewness measure greater than or less than one, and these variables

can be considered as not normally distributed. The data analysis therefore uses the Mann-Whitney U test as the most powerful non-parametric alternative to the t test and the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance is used for multiple independent sample testing.

CHAPTER 5

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter presents a descriptive analysis of the sample. The analysis aims to provide an overview of the respondents and an insight into their behavioural patterns. An analysis of the differences between group and independent travellers is also included.

The first section of this chapter provides a description of the travel behaviour of independent and group travellers, and their demographic profiles.

Section two will analyse the four cultural groups (Japanese, Korean, Chinese and North American).

Section three will focus on testing hypothesis one:

1. Travel guidebooks are used more by independent travellers than by package tourists.

Section four will analyse the information needs of independent travellers, the edition and quality attributes required by independent travellers in travel guidebooks, and the suitable cost for travel guidebooks.

Section five will test hypothesis two:

- 2.1. The source of travel information used by independent travellers differs according to cultural background;
- 2.2. The source of travel information used by independent travellers differs according to travel experience;
- 2.3. The source of travel information used by independent travellers differs according to knowledge of the destination.

The results will be explained and represented through the use of tables and graphs.

The statistical analysis that tests general hypothesis 3 (*The types of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differ according to cultural background of the tourists, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination.*), hypothesis 4 (*Travel guidebooks are used by independent travellers to improve travel quality. Different cultural groups perceive the use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality differently; travellers with different travel experience perceive the use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality differently.*) and hypothesis 5 (*The physical characteristic of travel guidebooks preferred by independent travellers differs according to cultural background and travel experience.*) is conducted in Chapter 6. Hypothesis 6 (*Information obtained from travel guidebooks by independent travellers has different levels of importance for the traveller, and these different importance levels impact upon the level of satisfaction with the guidebook.*) is tested in chapter 7.

5.1. Travel behaviour

In total, 1,096 travellers were interviewed. Of these 77.8% (853) are independent travellers and 22.2% (243) are travelling on a package tour. In terms of travel purpose, 74.8% of the entire sample is on holiday, 7.5% travelling on business, 5.9% visiting friends and relatives, and 11.8% travelling for other purposes. There is a statistically significant difference (Pearson Chi Square = 10.362; $df = 3$; $p = .016$) between independent travellers and package travellers in terms of travel purpose. The majority of both groups are travelling for holiday purposes (73.7% of independent travellers and 78.6% of package tour travellers), but 7.2% of independent travellers are travelling to visit friends and relatives, while only 1.6% of group tourists are doing so.

A greater proportion of the respondents are travelling with friends or colleagues (39.6%), than are travelling alone (27.2%) or with a partner (20.5%). There is a significant difference (the two sample test for proportions resulted in Z equals to 8.790 which is higher than the critical value 1.645, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected) between independent and group travellers: only 5% of group travellers are travelling within the group without a partner, friends, or family members, while 33.5% of independent travellers are travelling alone.

The length of trip varies from less than 5 days to over 150 days: 20% are travelling from 1 to 5 days, 24.3% from 6 to 10 days, 11.9% from 11 to 15 days and the remaining 44.3% for at least 16 days, including 9.6% travelling for more than 151 days. Independent travellers tend to take longer trips with 46.9% travelling for more than 20 days; only 13.7% of group travellers are on a trip longer than 20 days. The Pearson Chi-square test (Pearson Chi-Square=109.381; $df=5$, $p=.000$) shows a

statistically significant difference in the length of trip between group travellers and independent travellers.

More than half of the respondents (59%) are first-time visitors to the destination, 25.9% have visited the destination once or twice before, 7.3% three or four times before, and 7.8% at least five times before. There is a significant difference (Pearson Chi-Square=15.757; df=1, p=.000) between independent travellers and package tour travellers, with independent travellers having visited the destination before in 44.2% of cases and package tour travellers in 29.8% of cases. Therefore it might be inferred that independent travellers tend to have a better knowledge of the destination than group travellers, as they are more likely to have visited the destination before.

In summary, 853 respondents are travelling independently and 243 on a package tour. Both samples travelled mainly for holiday purposes, but there is a significant difference between independent travellers and group travellers in travel purpose (independent travellers have a higher tendency than group travellers to undertake the trip to visit friends and relatives), in travel companionship (independent travellers have a higher tendency to travel alone), in the length of the trip (independent travellers tend to take longer trips) and in the knowledge of the destination (independent travellers have a better knowledge of the destination, having visited it before). Table 5.1 summarises the travel behaviour of the respondents.

Table 5.1. Travel behaviour of the respondents.

	Independent		Package Tour		
	Nr	%	Nr	%	
Purpose of the trip	627	73.7%	191	78.6%	holiday
	63	7.4%	19	7.8%	business
	61	7.2%	4	1.6%	VFR
	100	11.8%	29	11.9%	other
On this trip are you travelling with:	285	33.5%	12	5.0%	alone
	163	19.2%	61	25.2%	with the partner
	57	6.7%	26	10.7%	with the family
	323	38.0%	109	45.0%	with friends/ coll.
	22	2.6%	34	14.0%	other
Length of the trip	129	15.4%	87	36%	1-5 days
	184	22.0%	78	32.2%	6-10 days
	131	15.7%	44	18.2%	11-20 days
	136	16.3%	23	9.5%	21-30 days
	121	14.4%	10	4.1%	31-60 days
	136	16.3%	0	0%	61 + days
Number of visits to the destination	473	55.8%	167	70.2%	first-time visitor
	225	26.6%	56	23.5%	1-2 visits before
	73	8.6%	6	2.5%	3-4 visits before
	76	9%	9	3.8%	5 visits or more

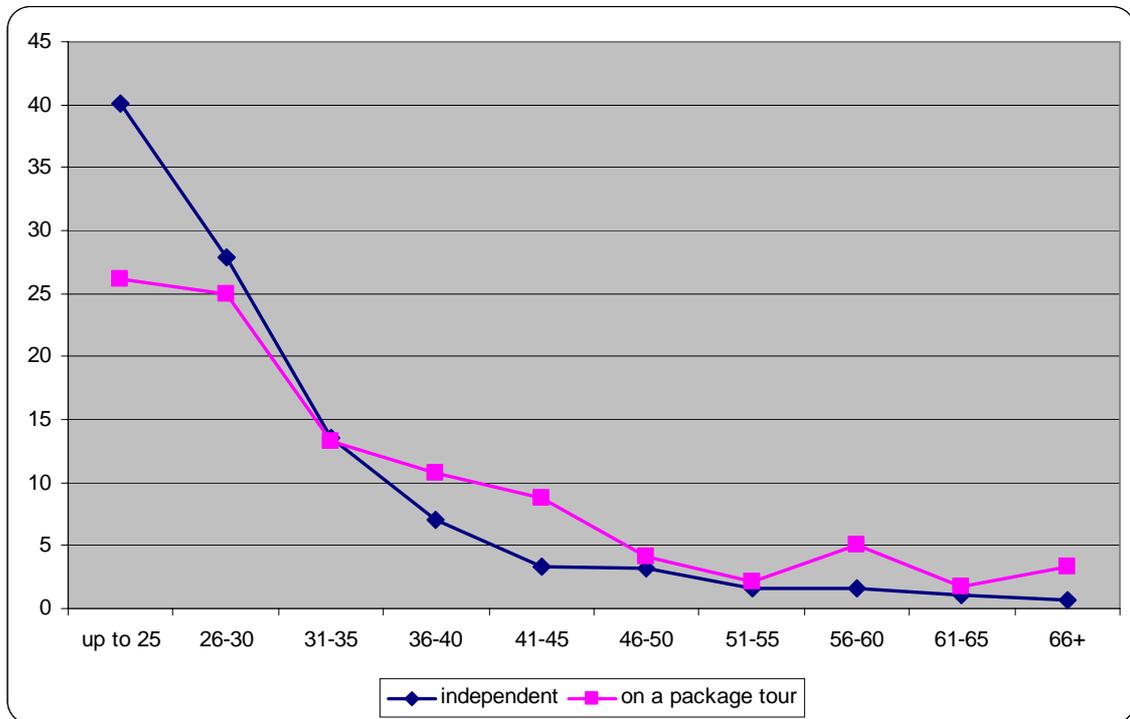
In terms of demographic profile, there is a significant difference (see results of the statistical analysis in the next paragraphs) between independent and group travellers in age, but no difference in terms of gender and social standing. The next paragraphs will provide an insight into the demographic profile of the respondents.

During the data collection there was an attempt to collect an equal number of questionnaires from males and females. However, the entire sample (both independent and group travellers) comprises a higher percentage of males (56%).

This results mainly from males answering when people were in couples; however the views expressed in those cases represent both sexes. Consequently, 56% of the respondents are male and 44% female. In this respect, there is little difference between independent and group travellers, with 55% males and 45% females for independent travellers and 57% males and 43% females for group travellers (Pearson Chi-Square = .246, df = 1; p = .659).

Most of the respondents are young, with 37% of the respondents less than 25 years old, 27% between 26 and 30, 21% between 31 and 40, and 14% 41 years old and over. There is a statistically significant difference between the type of traveller and age (Pearson Chi-Square = 36.132; df = 3; p = .000), with independent travellers being younger than package travellers. Figure 5.1 shows the age breakdown of independent and group travellers. Although no exact statistics are available with a specific focus on independent travellers, to some extent the age breakdown of the respondents is reflective of the young age of travellers generally. In 2003 (year of data collection) the age breakdown of travellers to Australia from Japan, Korea, China, USA and Canada was as follows: up to 24 years 19%, 25 to 34 years 26%, 35 to 44 years 19%, with the balance in age groups 45 years and over (Tourism Australia, 2005). Similarly, travellers to Thailand from Japan, Korea, China, USA and Canada in 2004 (the data collection in Thailand started in 2003 and extended to 2004) were divided as follows: up to 24 years 14%, 25 to 34 years 25%, 35 to 44 years 24%, with the balance in age groups 45 years and over (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2005).

Figure 5.1. Age breakdown of the respondents.



In order to keep the questionnaire manageable, only one variable – income – has been used to define social standing. To limit questionnaire size, details of education and employment were not sought. The respondents were asked to choose among three ranges of income. Of the total number of 1096 respondents, 127 (12%) chose not to answer. However, 969 valid answers were recorded. The majority (53%) of the respondents indicated a net annual household income up to \$US 30,000. It is noticeable that a large percentage of the respondents are young and some were travelling for a long period in Australia or South East Asia and working casually, therefore limiting their income. There is no significant difference between independent and group travellers (Pearson Chi-Square = .300; df = 2; p = .861). Table 5.2 shows the net annual household income of the respondents.

Table 5.2. Net annual household income.

Income	Independent		Group travellers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0-30,000 US\$	406	52.9%	103	51.0%
31,000-60,000 US\$	238	31.0%	64	31.7%
60,000 + US\$	123	16.0%	35	17.3%
Total	767	100%	202	100%

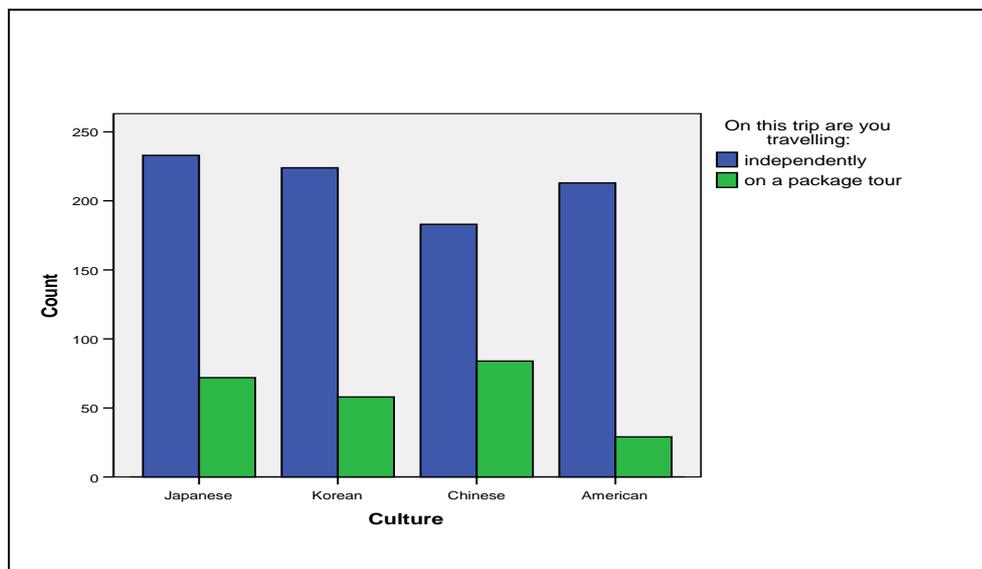
The initial objective was to collect an equal number of questionnaires from each cultural group, with a base requirement of at least 200 questionnaires (including both independent and group travellers) per culture, for a total of 1,000 questionnaires, of which 20% were to be group travellers. Altogether the researcher collected 1,096 valid questionnaires, of which 28% are of Japanese culture, 24% of Chinese culture, 26% of Korean culture, and 22% of North American culture. In terms of independent travellers, 853 questionnaires were collected, of which 27% (233) are of Japanese culture, 26% (224) of Korean culture, 21% (183) of Chinese culture, and 25% (213) of North American culture. For more detail on the issue of sample size see Chapter 4 (methodology), page 104.

5.2. The cultural groups

In 99% of the Japanese sample, the interviewees came from Japan. Similarly, 99% of the Korean sample came from Korea. For the Chinese sample, the country of origin is divided with most (86%) coming from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and 14% from Singapore, Malaysia and other countries. Of the North American sample, 68% of the interviewees came from the USA, 29% from Canada, and 1% from other countries, while 2% did not state their country of origin.

The percentage of respondents travelling independently varies from 88% for the North American sample to 68% for the Chinese sample. Figure 5.2 shows the cross tabulation between type of travel and cultural group. The chi-square test (Pearson Chi-square 28.693; df 3; $p=.000$) shows that there is a significant difference between type of travel for each cultural group. The figure shows a propensity for Chinese respondents to travel in groups, while there is a propensity for North American travellers to travel independently.

Figure 5.2. Type of travel by culture



In terms of travel purpose (refer to Table 5.3), the Japanese sample was the most likely to travel on holiday (71%), stating business in 2% of cases, visiting friends and relatives in 6%, and other purpose in 21%. The most common other reasons given are learning another language and a working holiday. The North American tourists were the most likely to be at the destination for holiday purposes (78%), while the Chinese were the most likely to be on business (14%). The difference in travel purpose among the cultural groups is statistically significant (Pearson Chi-square = 87.957, df = 9, $p = .000$).

Table 5.3. Purpose of the trip by cultural groups.

			Culture				Total
			Japanese	Korean	Chinese	North American	
Purpose of the trip	holiday	Nr cases	218	214	197	189	818
		% Culture	71.5%	76.4%	73.8%	78.1%	74.8%
	business	Nr cases	6	11	37	28	82
		% Culture	2.0%	3.9%	13.9%	11.6%	7.5%
	VFR	Nr cases	18	12	22	13	65
		% Culture	5.9%	4.3%	8.2%	5.4%	5.9%
	other	Nr cases	63	43	11	12	129
		% Culture	20.7%	15.4%	4.1%	5.0%	11.8%
	Total	Nr cases	305	280	267	242	1094
		% Culture	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Also in regard to travel grouping, there is a statistically significant difference between the four cultures (Pearson Chi-square = 124.971, df = 12, p = .000). Koreans mostly travelled alone (42%), while the Chinese were the least likely to travel alone (9%), travelling mostly with friends (54%). The Japanese are least likely to travel with a partner or with the family: only 3% travelled with the family and 16% with a partner, while 33% travelled alone and 41% with friends. North American travellers are most likely to travel with a partner (32%).

In terms of holiday length, the Chinese travellers tend to have a shorter holiday with 37% indicating a journey up to 5 days and 34% a journey between 6 and 10 days, while the North American travellers tend to take longer holidays, with only 1% travelling up to 5 days, and 10% up to 10 days. The Korean sample is second to the North American sample in holiday length: 20% took a holiday up to 5 days and 22% up to 10 days. In the case of Japanese travellers 20% travelled for at least 5 days, while 30% travelled between 6 and 10 days. The Pearson Chi-square test shows a significant difference among the cultural groups in terms of holiday length (Pearson

Chi-square = 244.184; df = 15, p = .000). The results of the cross tabulation are shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4. Length of trip by cultural groups.

			Culture				Total
			Japanese	Korean	Chinese	North American	
Days	1-5	Nr cases	59	55	99	3	216
		% Culture	19.8%	20.0%	37.2%	1.3%	20.0%
	6-10	Nr cases	87	60	90	25	262
		% Culture	29.2%	21.8%	33.8%	10.4%	24.3%
	11-20	Nr cases	34	43	51	47	175
		% Culture	11.4%	15.6%	19.2%	19.6%	16.2%
	21-30	Nr cases	54	36	11	58	159
		% Culture	18.1%	13.1%	4.1%	24.2%	14.7%
	31-60	Nr cases	20	21	2	38	81
		% Culture	6.7%	7.6%	.8%	15.8%	7.5%
	61+	Nr cases	44	60	13	69	186
		% Culture	14.8%	21.8%	4.9%	28.8%	17.2%
	Total	Nr cases	298	275	266	240	1079
		% Culture	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

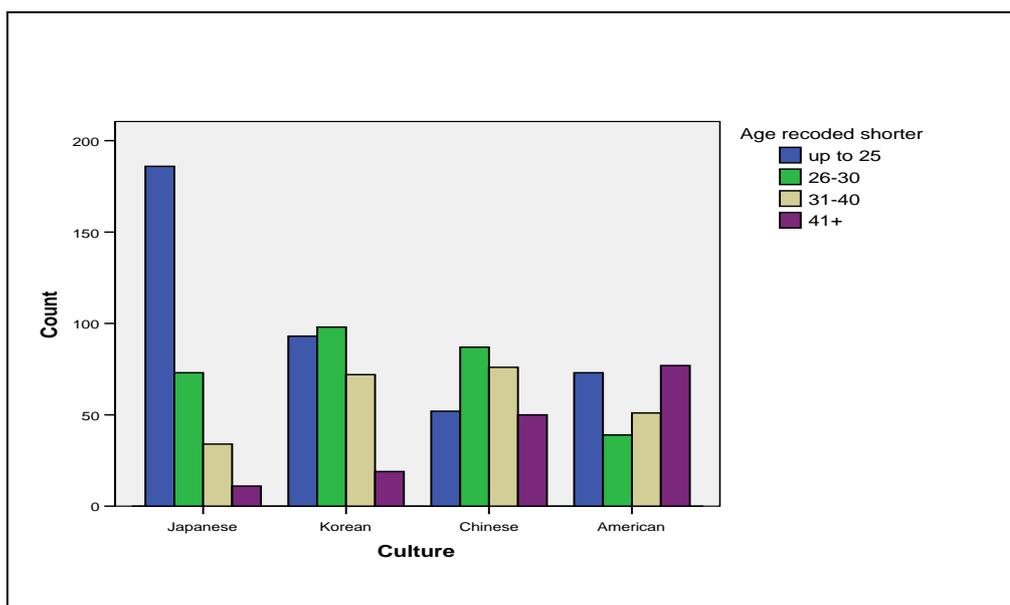
For more than half of the respondents in the Japanese, Korean and North American samples, this was the first visit to the destination. The North American sample accounts for most of the first-time visitors (77%), followed by the Koreans (64%), and the Japanese group (60%). For the majority of the remaining respondents this was the second or third visit to the destination. For the Chinese this was the first visit to the destination for only 36% of travellers.

Of the travellers who had visited the destination before, this was the second or third visit for 58% of the Chinese, 63% of the Koreans, 68% of the Japanese, and 71% of the North Americans. Notably, 13% of the Chinese sample was visiting the destination for the fourth or fifth time. This was more common in Thailand than Australia. Chinese travellers tend to take shorter breaks for travelling into

Thailand, dedicating most of their time to shopping. The difference in previous visits to the destination is statistically significant among the cultural groups (Pearson Chi-square = 106.349, $df = 9$, $p = .000$) and the difference is also significant between the two data collection locations (Pearson Chi-square = 110.945, $df = 3$, $p = .000$), with Sydney being visited for the first time by 73% of the respondents and Thailand by 45%.

The youngest cultural group is the Japanese, with 85% of the respondents being 30 years old or younger, followed by the Korean sample (68%), the Chinese (52%), and the North Americans, who are the oldest with only 47% of the respondents aged 30 or below, 21% between 31 and 40, and 23% over 41. The Pearson Chi-Square (Pearson Chi-Square = 209.939, $df = 9$, $p = .000$) shows a significant relationship between age and cultural group. Figure 5.3 shows the propensity of Japanese respondents to be young and the propensity of American and Chinese respondents to be relatively older than the other two groups.

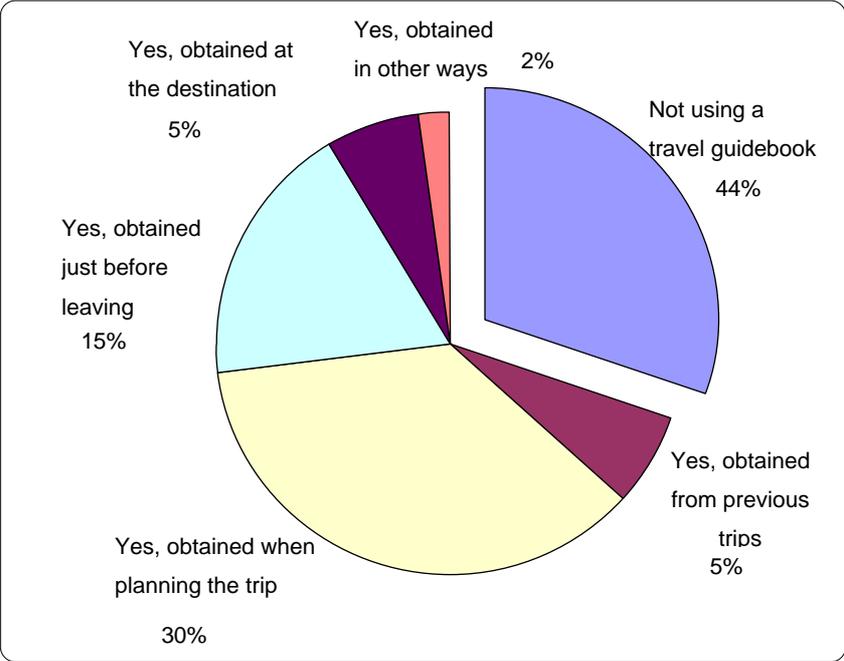
Figure 5.3. Age and cultural groups.



5.3. The use of travel guidebooks by independent travellers and package travellers (Hypothesis one)

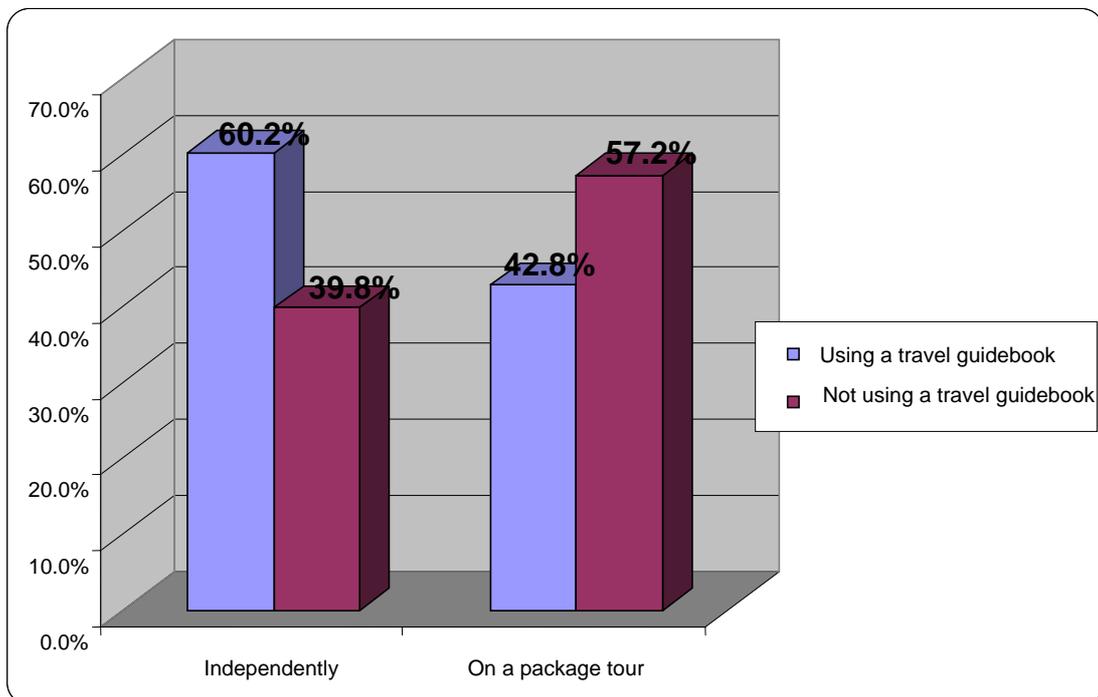
Over half (56.3%) of the respondents were using a travel guidebook during the trip, while 43.7% were not. Of the 56.3% that were using a travel guidebook, 52.5% obtained the guidebook when planning the trip, 26.3% just before leaving, 9.2% at the destination and 8.8% from previous trips. The remaining 3.2% stated that they had obtained the travel guidebook at other times, and although some of the respondents indicated more specifically how they obtained the guidebook (for example as a present, or borrowed from friends), for those 3.2% the question remains on when they obtained the guidebook. Figure 5.4 shows the percentage of the respondents not using a travel guidebook and for those using a travel guidebook, when it was obtained.

Figure 5.4. Are you using a travel guidebook? If yes, when did you obtain the book?



Hypothesis one states that travel guidebooks are used more by independent travellers than package travellers. The cross tabulation shows that 60.2% of independent travellers use a travel guidebook, but only 42.8% of package travellers. The Chi-Square test shows a statistically significant difference between independent travellers and package travellers in the use of travel guidebooks (Pearson Chi-Square = 23.307, df = 1, p = .000). Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected and hypothesis one accepted: travel guidebooks are used more by independent travellers than package travellers. The use of travel guidebooks by independent and group travellers is represented graphically in Figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5. The use of travel guidebooks by independent travellers and package travellers.



Despite the difference in the propensity to use a travel guidebook during the trip, the time of purchase of the guidebook by independent and package travellers does not

statistically differ (Pearson Chi-Square = 3; df = 4; p = .533). Both samples prefer to obtain the book when planning the trip (independent travellers in 53% of cases, and package travellers in 50% of cases), or just before leaving (25% of independent travellers and 31% of package travellers).

Hypotheses two, three, four, five and six relate to the importance of travel guidebooks in relation to other sources of information, the types of information sought in travel guidebooks, and the preferred characteristics and attributes of travel guidebooks by independent travellers. Due to the differences between independent travellers and group travellers in the use of travel guidebooks (see previous paragraph), travel behaviour, and demographic profile (see section 5.1), from this point on the two samples will be treated separately, and only independent travellers will be used in the analysis of sources of information used, and in the analysis of types of information, characteristics and attributes sought in a travel guidebook. Therefore the analyses below are based on 853 cases (representing independent travellers only).

This decision is consistent with the conceptual framework (Chapter 3), whereby independent and group travellers are considered to behave differently. It was identified in Chapter 3 that, during their trip group travellers need substantially less information as on-site accommodation, activities and transfers are organised by tour operators or travel agencies. Furthermore, for the free time available, tour guides would be at hand to give advice. In the case of independent travellers the use of information sources and the need for information are both higher, as information sources and items of information are a tool to reduce risk and increase the quality of the trip, substituting the work done by tour operators and travel agencies.

5.4. Information, characteristics and attributes sought in a travel guidebook by independent travellers

5.4.1. Information sought in a travel guidebook

The second section of the questionnaire (See Appendix 1,) focuses on the items of information sought in a travel guidebook. Given a list of 58 variables, each indicating a single piece of information, the respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each item. The scale of importance has been measured from one to six, with one as of no importance and six as very important. An analysis of the means allows for the identification of the items of information recognised as most important. Of the 58 variables, the ten that were attributed the highest importance were: maps, places to stay, bus and train timetables (fares and routes), places to eat, dangerous places to visit, local public transport, personal risks, exchange rates, emergency numbers, and festival and social events. The ten items of information and their means are listed in Figure 5.6.

The 58 variables cover the broad range of reasons why a travel guidebook may be essential to some people, including information on how to find their way around, security, accommodation and food, tourist attractions and practical hints. The list of 58 variables includes issues related to travel planning, product availability and overall conditions at the destination. Not surprisingly, the top ten pieces of information indicated by the respondents tend to be fundamental travel issues.

Figure 5.6. The 10 most important items of information.

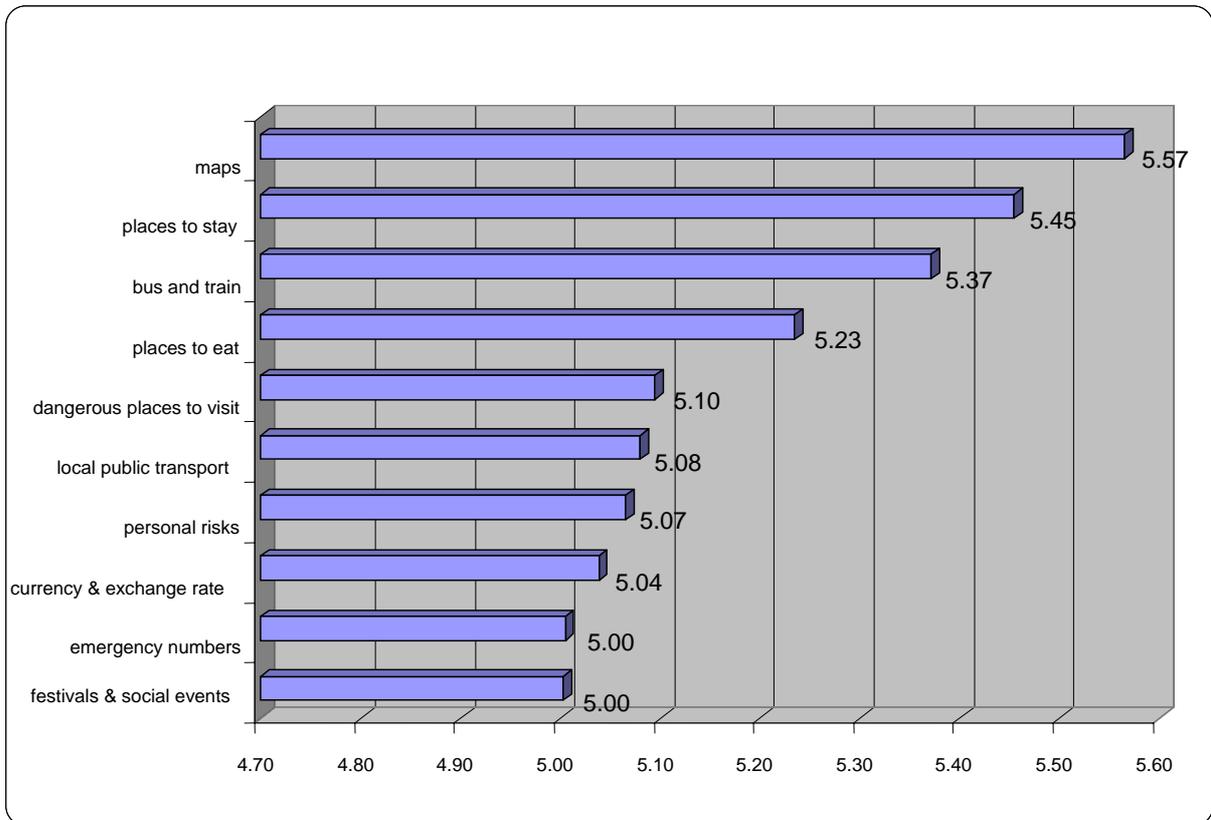


Table 1 in Appendix 3 ranks the 58 variables in order of importance, showing the number of valid cases, missing cases, the mean (which has been used for the ranking) the standard deviation and the variance. The table shows that the standard deviation of all 58 variables lies between 0.939 and 1.716 and given the *Likert* scale from 1 to 6 a higher variation might not be expected. Additionally, 88% of the variables have a standard deviation below 1.5.

Apart from the importance of each item of information, the respondents using a travel guidebook during the trip were also asked about their satisfaction with each item of information in the travel guidebook. The number of respondents decreases from an average of 834 (98% of the independent travellers) to an average of 411 (48% of the sample), due to the fact that only 60% of the respondents were using a

travel guidebook in the first place. Additionally, some respondents encountered problems in answering the question as they were using more than one guidebook. Others stated that some of the information items were not in the book they were using, while others stated that so far they had read only a small part of the book, and therefore did not know if they were satisfied or not with the information it provided. For these reasons the following data contain fewer cases. The number of cases ranges from the highest response of 426 to the lowest response of 393.

Of 58 information items, the ten that provide highest satisfaction are: museums; historic sites; time differences; churches/temples; places to shop; places to stay; how to reach the destination; short trips/itineraries; climate; and places to eat. Figure 5.7 lists the ten most satisfying items of information and their means.

Figure 5.7. Top ten items of information providing the most satisfaction.

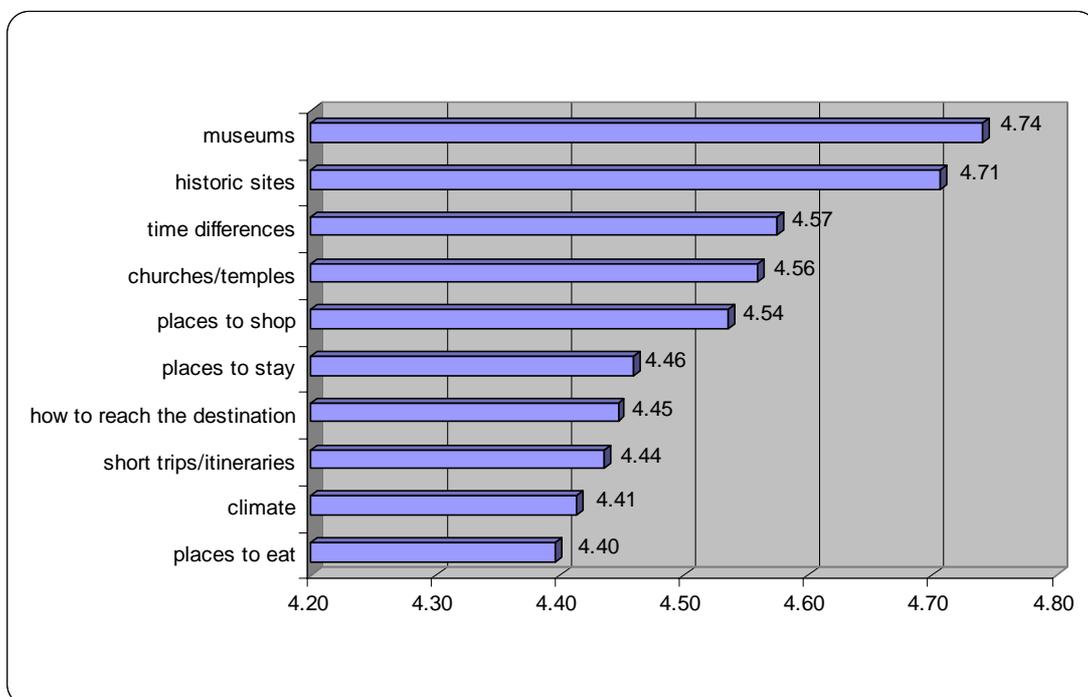


Table 2 in Appendix 3 ranks the 58 variables in order of satisfaction, reporting the number of valid cases, missing cases, the mean (which has been used for the ranking), the standard deviation and skew. The table shows that the standard deviation of all 58 variables lies between 1.153 and 1.620 and given the *Likert* range from 1 to 6 a higher variation might not be expected, with 81% of the variables having a standard deviation below 1.5.

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is no importance/no satisfaction and 6 is importance/satisfaction, importance recorded a higher mean score (overall mean 4.45) than satisfaction (overall mean 4.04). Maps, the most important item of information, scored a mean of 5.57 (compared to the overall importance mean of 4.45), while museums, the most satisfying piece of information, scored a mean of 4.74 (compared to the overall satisfaction mean of 4.04). Real estate market prices, the least important piece of information, scored a mean of 2.42 (compared to the overall importance mean of 4.45), while employment availability, the least satisfying piece of information, scored a mean of 3.32 (compared to the overall satisfaction mean of 4.023). Importance scored a higher distribution not only among the top ten items of information but also, on average, within each piece of information. The highest standard deviation recorded in importance is 1.72 by mobile phone coverage, while the lowest is 0.94 by maps. In regard to satisfaction, the highest standard deviation was also recorded by mobile phone coverage, which scored 1.62 and the lowest by museums with a score equal to 1.15.

Table 5.5 shows how satisfied respondents were with the pieces of information they considered most important.

Table 5.5. Importance and satisfaction of the top ten pieces of information.

Top 10 items in order of importance	Importance		Satisfaction		Difference		
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mann-Whitney	Z	Sig. Two-tailed
Maps	5.57	6	4.32	5	78696	-17.108	.000
Places to stay	5.45	6	4.46	5	92937.5	-14.842	.000
Bus and train	5.37	6	4.07	4	80935.5	-17.142	.000
Places to eat	5.23	6	4.40	5	105947	-11.786	.000
Dangerous places to visit	5.10	6	4.00	4	180157	-13.379	.000
Local public transport	5.08	5	4.07	4	99277.5	-12.841	.000
Personal risks	5.07	5	4.11	4	130428	-11.815	.000
Currency & exchange rates	5.04	6	4.30	4	115340	-9.833	.000
Emergency numbers	5.00	5	4.18	4	106728	-10.591	.000
Festivals and social events	5.00	5	4.28	4	111920.5	-9.960	.000

Table 5.5 displays the degree of satisfaction for the top ten items of information, and the Mann-Whitney U test shows the mean rank comparison between importance and satisfaction. Through the Mann-Whitney U test, it has been possible to determine if there is a relationship between the mean importance and mean satisfaction of each item of information, and if the items of information that are considered most important are the ones that provide most satisfaction. Of the top ten most important items of information, all of the items are statistically different in terms of importance and satisfaction. An extension of the analysis needs to be made to test whether there is a relationship between importance and satisfaction. The means of all 58 variables can be compared between the means of importance and the means of satisfaction, using the nonparametric Mann Whitney U tests. The result is that $U = 809$ and $Z = -4.820$. The sign of Z is unimportant and simply defines the order of the comparison importance of satisfaction and the test is 2-tail.

Consequently at .01 probability ($Z = -1.64$) there is a statistically significant difference between importance and satisfaction across the 58 variables.

Therefore, it can be stated that there is no relationship between importance and satisfaction. Appendix 3, Table 3 lists all 58 items of information. Of the 58 items, history, local arts, local economy, politics, car hire, information on hitchhiking, post offices, museums, churches and temples, places of entertainment, sport activities, electricity supply, and time difference indicate a relationship between importance and satisfaction. In Chapter 7 the relationship between importance and satisfaction is further analysed, and hypothesis 6 on how importance levels impact upon satisfaction tested.

5.4.2. Publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks

Question 11 of the questionnaire relates to the characteristics of travel guidebooks. Respondents were asked to rate seven statements in terms of their importance. Each of these statements describes an edition attribute of a guidebook. Not surprisingly, respondents were most concerned that the information provided in the book is recent and up to date. As the first and second most important attributes, respondents nominated: “travel guidebooks have the latest information” and “travel guidebooks should be less than one year old”. For travellers the date of edition is secondary to update information. This introduces a new challenge for printed travel guidebooks. Travellers are aware of and use electronic information sources such as the Internet, GPS, palms and mobile phones. They now appear to request the same

characteristics – on the spot, easy to get, and up to date – in printed information sources.

Respondents appear to be concerned with the size of the guidebook as well. Their third most important attribute was “Travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket”. However, their concern for conciseness is related only to physical size, as the attribute “travel guidebooks should be short” was regarded as fifth most important. The only listed attribute considered to be negative, was “Travel guidebooks should provide private advertising”, which has been attributed a mean of 2.099 (where 1 is unimportant and 6 is important). Table 5.6 shows each attribute in order of importance. The table shows valid cases, missing cases, mean, by which the attributes have been ordered, and the standard deviation.

Table 5.6. Characteristics of a travel guidebook.

	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Std. Deviation
Travel guidebooks have the latest information	844	9	5.366	1.033
Travel guidebooks should be less than one year old	842	11	5.253	1.163
Travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket	839	14	4.359	1.535
Travel guidebooks should provide lots of pictures	841	12	4.339	1.504
Travel guidebooks should be short	844	9	3.541	1.604
Quality of paper is essential in a travel guidebook	836	17	3.024	1.606
Travel guidebooks should provide private advertising	841	12	2.099	1.368
Overall	841	12	3.997	1.402

5.4.3. Quality attributes sought in a travel guidebook

In regard to quality attributes, the statements in the questionnaire focus on the use of travel guidebooks as an aid to reduce risk while travelling. In Chapter 2 (pages 40-43) the literature on the use of information sources to reduce risk has been discussed. In the case of travel and tourism services the following risks have been identified: physical risks, financial risks, temporal risks, psychological risks, and social risks (refer to Chapter 2, page 41). The following statements are designed to measure different types of risk:

- psychological risk: ‘Travel guidebooks help me to do things by myself’;
- financial risk: ‘Travel guidebooks help me save money’;
- temporal risk: ‘Travel guidebooks help me best use the time available’;
- social risk: ‘Travel guidebooks help me to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition’;
- performance risk: ‘Travel guidebooks help me to experience a comfortable holiday’, ‘Travel guidebooks suggest which tourist attractions are the best to visit’, ‘Travel guidebooks help me to experience an exciting holiday’, ‘Information on the standard to expect from a local service’, ‘Information on the standard to expect from local transport’, ‘Information on the standard to expect from the accommodation named’, ‘Information on the standard to expect from the restaurants named’ to determine performance risk reduction; ‘Travel guidebooks reduce the degree of unexpected risk’.

A mean comparison of the risk variables indicates that respondents use travel guidebooks as an aid to travel more independently, to reduce the risk of losing time, and to reduce financial risks. Therefore, the main purpose of using a travel guidebook appears to be in organising the holiday independently, deciding on how to best use the time available, and in selecting facilities and services to meet a personal budget. While respondents identified travel guidebooks as a means of reducing psychological risks, temporal risks and financial risks, the issue of physical risk reduction appears to be secondary, scoring a value of 4.729 (where 1 was no importance and 6 was importance). Table 5.7 shows the quality attributes in order of importance. The table shows valid cases, missing cases, the mean by which the attributes have been ordered, and the standard deviation.

Table 5.7. Quality attributes of travel guidebooks.

	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Std. Deviation
Travel guidebooks help me to do things by myself	838	15	5.204	1.104
Travel guidebooks help me best use the time available	830	23	5.100	1.111
Travel guidebooks help me save money	824	29	4.953	1.233
Travel guidebooks help me to experience a comfortable holiday	830	23	4.854	1.212
Travel guidebooks suggest which tourist attractions are the best to visit	839	14	4.810	1.302
Information on the standard to expect from local transport	836	17	4.797	1.146
Information on the standard to expect from the accommodation named	835	18	4.783	1.203
Travel guidebooks help me to experience an exciting holiday	828	25	4.743	1.259
Travel guidebooks reduce the degree of unexpected risk	841	12	4.729	1.255
Information on the standard to expect from a local service	835	18	4.541	1.221
Information on the standard to expect from the restaurants named	835	18	4.502	1.281

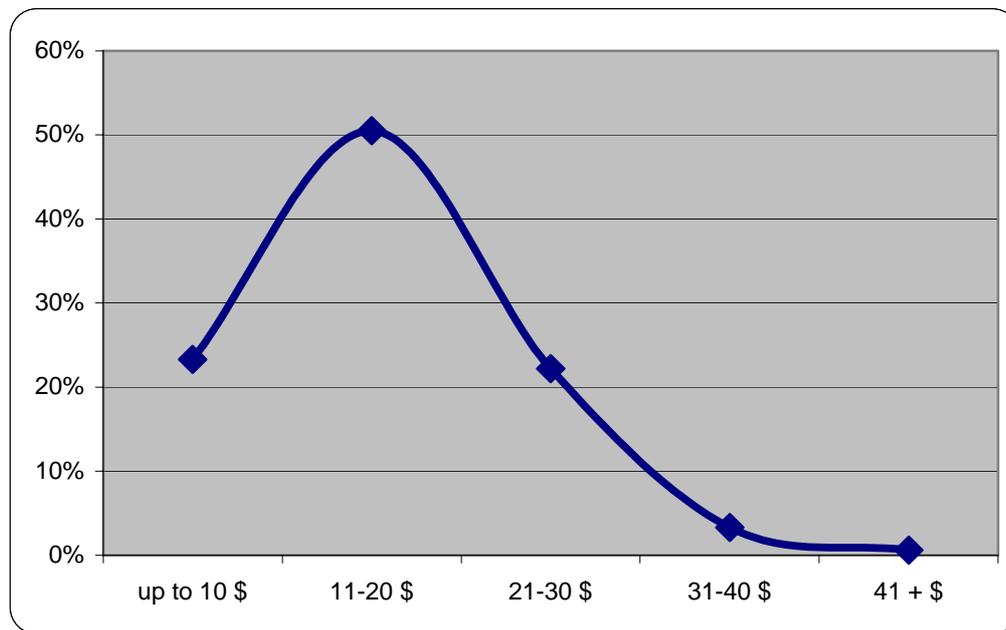
Travel guidebooks help me to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition	830	23	3.876	1.677
Overall	833	20	4.741	1.250

Therefore, travel guidebooks increase the quality of a trip firstly by reducing the psychological risk of not being able to organise things independently, secondly by reducing temporal risks, thirdly by reducing financial risks, and only lastly by reducing performance risks.

5.4.4. Price of travel guidebooks

Besides the type of information sought in a travel guidebook and the use of travel guidebooks by travellers, the research aimed at investigating the possible market for the books. A question related to the price of travel guidebooks was therefore included in the questionnaire. Half of the respondents (51%) stated they would be prepared to pay between US\$11 and US\$20 for a travel guidebook. Twenty three percent stated they are ready to pay up to US\$10, 22% between US\$21 and US\$30, 3% between US\$31 and US\$40, and 1% over US\$41 (refer to figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8. Price respondents are prepared to pay for a travel guidebook.



Twenty six percent of the respondents are prepared to pay between US\$21 and US\$30 or more for a travel guidebook. To reach a considerable size of the market, travel guidebook publishers should consider keeping their prices below US\$30 with about US\$25 as the optimal price for market demand at the time of the survey (2003). This is particularly important if publishers are interested in reaching new customers. The Pearson Chi-Square test shows that respondents who are not using a travel guidebook during the trip are not prepared to pay as much as respondents who are using a travel guidebook (Pearson Chi Square=35.233; df=4; p=.000). Only 21% of the respondents who are not using a travel guidebook during the trip would be ready to pay more than US\$20 for the book, with 40% prepared to pay only up to US\$10.

5.5. The use of information sources by independent travellers (Hypothesis two)

The use of travel guidebooks as a source of information is compared with other sources of information. A list of seven sources of information was surveyed in the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to state which sources of information were most useful when travelling, on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 was unimportant and 6 important. Table 5.8 ranks the seven sources of information in order of importance, reporting the number of valid cases, missing cases, the mean (which has been used for the ranking) and the standard deviation.

Table 5.8. Importance of information sources while travelling.

	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Std. Deviation
Travel guidebooks	826	27	5.151	1.112
Word of mouth	817	36	4.856	1.285
Info at the accommodation	826	27	4.841	1.226
Internet	828	25	4.758	1.399
Tourist information centres	826	27	4.521	1.471
Tour guides	819	34	3.697	1.558
Media	824	29	3.573	1.563
Overall	824	29	4.485	1.373

Independent travellers rated travel guidebooks as the most important source of information while travelling. On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 was unimportant and 6 was important, 51% of the respondents attributed the score 6 to travel guidebooks. With a mean of 5.15, travel guidebooks are followed by word of mouth (4.86) and information at the place of accommodation (4.84). It is interesting to note that although only 60% of the respondents were using a travel guidebook, travel guidebooks are considered the most important sources of information when travelling. The comfort of having reliable, independent information on hand,

whenever needed, becomes more important than the comfort of receiving information through other travellers, who are undergoing or have just completed similar experiences, or from accommodation places.

As might be expected, the Pearson Chi-square test shows (refer to Table 5.9) that there is a significant relationship between the use of travel guidebooks and their importance as sources of information.

Table 5.9. Cross tabulation – Are you using a travel guidebook for the trip? * Importance of sources of information.

Are you using a travel guidebook for the trip? Importance of sources of information		Unimportant				Important		P. Chi-Square	Sig.
		1	2	3	4	5	6		
yes	media	65	74	114	101	74	69	3.639	.603
no		32	44	83	63	50	54		
yes	tourist information centers	21	34	53	86	113	191	12.578	.028
no		16	23	57	57	80	94		
yes	Internet	18	21	50	73	130	206	2.798	.731
no		15	16	34	57	73	134		
yes	travel guidebooks	1	3	14	44	122	317	103.389	.000
no		9	14	35	64	98	104		
yes	word of mouth	8	11	46	65	118	245	32.643	.000
no		10	14	45	73	77	104		
yes	info at the accommodation	4	25	28	93	129	220	30.295	.000
no		9	11	36	65	111	94		
yes	tour guides	52	64	104	109	76	86	9.207	..101
no		40	37	68	70	72	40		

Although the relationship between the use of travel guidebooks and their importance as sources of information might be expected (Pearson Chi-Square = 103.389, $df = 5$, $p = .000$), the Pearson Chi-Square test revealed a further correlation between the use of travel guidebooks and the other two most important sources of information: information at the accommodation (Pearson Chi-Square = 30.295; $df = 5$, $p = .000$) and word of mouth (Pearson Chi-Square = 32.643; $df = 5$; $p = .000$). Therefore, it can be concluded that for independent travellers using travel guidebooks, word of

mouth and information at the destination are the other two most important sources of information, potentially competing with each other or complementing each other during the trip.

5.5.1. The impact of cultural background on the use of information sources

Hypothesis 2.1 states that the source of travel information used by independent travellers differs according to cultural background.

By ordering the sources of information in order of importance for each cultural group (refer to table 5.10.), it can be seen that the sources of information considered most important by different cultural groups differ somewhat. Travel guidebooks are identified by all the cultural groups as either the most important or second most important source of information, and word of mouth is identified by the North American and the Japanese groups respectively as the most important and second most important source of information. Japanese and North American travellers are very similar in their ranking of the sources and differ only in the order of the first two sources. Table 5.10. shows a list of the sources of information in order of importance for each cultural group.

Table 5.10. Importance attributed to information sources by cultural groups.

	Japanese		Korean		Chinese		North American			
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean	R.	Mean	R.	Mean	X ²	P

Travel guidebooks	1	5.04	2	5.15	1	5.24	2	5.20	2.258	.521
Word of mouth	2	5.00	5	4.50	5	4.58	1	5.29	53.447	.000
Info at the accommodation	3	4.80	4	4.81	2	5.00	3	4.78	6.437	.092
Internet	4	4.40	1	5.17	3	4.81	4	4.68	35.297	.000
Tourist information centres	5	4.18	3	4.82	4	4.70	5	4.42	19.836	.000
Tour guides	6	3.59	6	3.79	7	4.01	6	3.46	12.938	.005
Media	7	3.27	7	3.57	6	4.33	7	3.26	58.633	.000

A Kruskal-Wallis test of the difference between cultures for each of the sources of information indicates that the null hypothesis for hypothesis 2.1 can be rejected for five of the sources of information: word of mouth, Internet, tourist information centres, tour guides and media. However, for the travel guidebooks and information at the accommodation sites the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and there is likely to be no difference between the cultures for these two sources of information.

A nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance by ranks test is also used to avoid the assumptions of normally distributed variables and homogeneity of variances, to test whether there is a difference between the means for each culture for all seven sources of information. The Chi-Square test result is Chi-Square = 1.292 and the significant at 3 degrees of freedom = .731. Therefore, the Kruskal-Wallis test for hypothesis 2.1 does not reject the null hypothesis and it is concluded that there is no overall difference between cultures on the source of information used.

On the basis of the cultural differences with each source of information, the null hypothesis can be rejected for five of the sources of information (word of mouth, Internet, tourist information centres, tour guides and media). However, the Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis shows that there is no difference in the overall importance attributed to sources of information. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and it can be stated that the use of sources of information does not differ according to cultural background.

5.5.2. The impact of travel experience on the use of information sources

Hypothesis 2.2 states that the source of information used by independent travellers differs by travel experience. To measure travel experience, respondents were asked to indicate the number of international trips they had undertaken and the destinations visited in the five year period prior to the data collection. Their answers have been recoded into two groups: travellers with no or little experience (those who undertook zero, one, or two international trips in the five years prior to data collection), and experienced travellers (those who undertook at least three international trips in the five years previous the data collection).

Thirty four percent (295) of the independent travellers have no or little travel experience, while 60% (510) are experienced travellers. In 6% of cases the question was not answered or an invalid answer was given.

Although travellers with no or little travel experience are using travel guidebooks more than experienced travellers, when asked if they are using a travel guidebook during the trip at the time of the interview (63% of travellers with no or little experience use travel guidebooks, and 59.4% of experienced travellers do so), the Pearson Chi-Square tests revealed that there is no significant relationship (Pearson Chi-Square = 1.162; df = 1; p = .158) between the use of a travel guidebook during the trip undertaken at the time of the interview and travel experience.

The Mann-Whitney U test revealed a relationship between travel experience and the importance travellers attribute to other sources of information. The perceived importance of word of mouth (Mann-Whitney U = 60347.000, z = -2.882, p=.004) and tour guides (Mann-Whitney U = 60272.500, z = -3.176, p=.001) are significantly related to travel experience. The mean comparison and the Mann-Whitney U test revealed that experienced travellers consider information acquired from other fellow travellers as most important, while less experienced travellers prefer professional help while travelling, relying on information provided by tour guides. Table 5.11 shows a mean comparison of the importance attributed to each source of information by independent travellers with no or little experience, and by experienced travellers.

Table 5.11. Importance of sources of information by travel experience.

	No or little experience		Experienced traveller		Mann-Whitney	Z	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean			
Travel guidebooks	1	5.13	1	5.16	68104.5	-.940	.344
Info at the accommodation	2	4.88	3	5.00	70204.0	-.113	.910
Word of mouth	3	4.75	2	4.87	60347.0	-2.882	.004
Internet	4	4.74	4	4.80	69946.0	-.374	.709

Tourist information centres	5	4.67	5	4.48	65712.5	-1.622	.105
Tour guides	6	3.96	6	3.58	60272.5	-3.176	.001
Media	7	3.71	7	3.53	65862.5	-1.510	.131

A Mann-Whitney U test is also used to test whether there is an overall difference between the means for travellers with little experience and experienced travellers for all seven sources of information. The Mann-Whitney U test result is Mann-Whitney = 24.000, $z = -.064$, $p = .949$ and does not reject the null hypothesis.

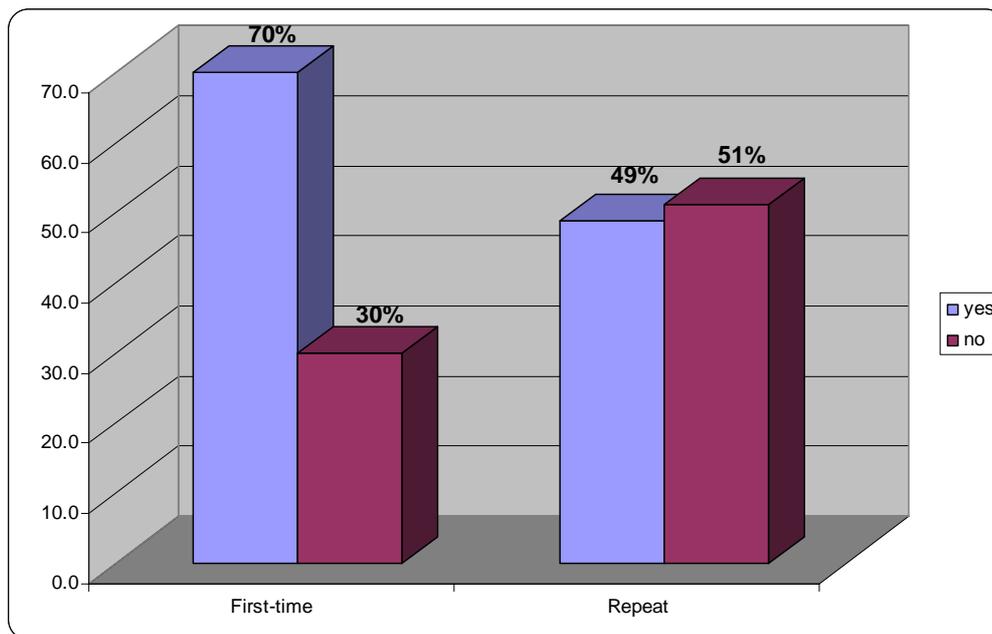
Therefore, although there is a difference between travellers with little or no experience and experienced travellers in the importance attributed to word of mouth and tour guides, the overall Mann Whitney U test for hypothesis 2.2 does not reject the null hypothesis and it is concluded that travel experience does not impact upon the use of information sources.

5.5.3. The impact of knowledge about the destination on the use of information sources

Hypothesis 2.3 states that the source of travel information used by independent travellers differs according to knowledge of the destination. Past visits to the destination can determine knowledge about the destination. Respondents were asked how many times they had previously visited the destination. The answers were recoded into two groups – first-time visitors and repeat visitors. The Pearson Chi-Square test (Pearson Chi-Square = 39.215; $df = 1$; $p = .000$) reveals a

significant relationship between knowledge about the destination and the use of travel guidebooks during the trip undertaken at the time of the interview. First-time visitors are more inclined to use a travel guidebook than repeat visitors. Figure 5.9 shows the percentage of the respondents using a travel guidebook during their trip.

Figure 5.9. Use of travel guidebooks by first-time and repeat visitors.



Similarly, knowledge about the destination determines the importance travellers attribute to other sources of information. Both first-time visitors and repeat visitors ranked travel guidebooks as the most important source of information, but the second most important source of information for first-time visitors is word of mouth, and for repeat visitors, the Internet. Word of mouth was ranked fourth by repeat visitors. The Mann-Whitney U test reveals that first-time visitors and repeat visitors attribute different importance to travel guidebooks (Mann-Whitney U = 72707.500, $z = -3.295$, $p = .001$, first-time visitors attribute more importance), word of mouth (Mann-Whitney U = 73376.000, $z = -2.481$, $p = .013$, repeat visitors attribute more importance), and media (Mann-Whitney U = 74915.00, $z = -2.322$,

$p=.020$, first-time visitors attribute more importance). Table 5.12 shows the results of the Mann-Whitney U test for all the sources of information.

Table 5.12. Importance of sources of information by knowledge about the destination.

	First-time visitors		Repeat visitors		Mann-Whitney	Z	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean			
Travel guidebooks	1	5.27	1	5.02	72707.5	-3.295	.001
Word of mouth	2	4.97	4	4.74	73376	-2.481	.013
Info at the accommodation	3	4.86	3	4.83	81855.5	-0.339	.735
Internet	4	4.71	2	4.83	79984.5	-1.045	.296
Tourist information centres	5	4.61	5	4.41	76982	-1.800	.072
Tour guides	6	3.77	7	3.61	76792	-1.451	.147
Media	7	3.44	6	3.72	74915	-2.322	.020

A Mann-Whitney U test is also used to test whether there is an overall difference between the means for first-time visitors and repeat visitors for all seven sources of information. The Mann-Whitney U test result is Mann-Whitney = 22.000, $z = -.320$, $p = .749$ and does not reject the null hypothesis.

Therefore, although there are significant differences in the importance attributed to travel guidebooks, word of mouth and media, the overall Mann-Whitney U test does not reject the null hypothesis and hypothesis 2.3 cannot be accepted: the use of travel information sources does not differ according to knowledge about the destination.

5.6. Concluding remarks

From the previous section it may be concluded that independent travellers use travel guidebooks more than group travellers, and that they use guidebooks to reduce psychological, temporal and financial risks. Independent travellers consider how recent and up to date information is in a travel guidebook as most important. They also prefer travel guidebooks of a reasonable size, that fit in a pocket.

The items of information considered most important in travel guidebooks by independent travellers relate to how to move around the destination (maps, bus and trains, local public transport), where to find accommodation and food (places to stay and places to eat), safety (dangerous places to visit, personal risks, emergency numbers), and attractions (festivals and social events).

Additionally, there is a statistically significant difference between the use of travel guidebooks during the trip undertaken at the time of the interview and cultural background and knowledge about the destination (guidebooks are used more by Japanese and North American travellers than by Korean and Chinese travellers; travel guidebooks are used more by first-time visitors to the destination than by repeat visitors). However, travel experience does not determine the use of travel guidebooks and there is no statistically significant difference in the overall use of information sources by different cultural groups, according to travel experience, and according to knowledge about the destination. Furthermore, there is no relationship between the importance attributed to each item of information included in the travel guidebook and the level of satisfaction afforded by that item. Finally, in order for travel guidebook publishers to reach a considerable size of the Asia-Pacific market,

they should consider keeping the price of travel guidebooks below US\$30 (at 2005 prices), especially if they are interested in reaching new customers.

CHAPTER 6

The impact of cultural background, travel experience, and previous visits to the destination on the use of travel guidebooks

The current chapter presents an analysis of the types of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers and their reasons for using a travel guidebook while travelling. The analysis will also investigate the preferred edition attributes of travel guidebooks.

The analysis investigates the differences according to cultural groups, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination, as outlined in hypotheses three, four, and five.

Section one will test hypothesis three:

- 3.1. The type of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differs according to cultural background of the tourists;
- 3.2. The type of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differs according to travel experience;
- 3.3. The type of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differs according to knowledge of the destination.

Section two will test general hypothesis four:

Travel guidebooks are used by independent travellers to improve travel quality.

- 4.1. Different cultural groups perceive the use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality differently;
- 4.2 Travellers with different travel experience perceive the use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality differently.

Section three will focus on the preferred publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks according to culture and travel experience.

Section three will test general hypothesis five which investigates the preferred publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks:

- 5.1. The physical attributes of travel guidebooks preferred by independent travellers differs according to cultural background;
- 5.2. The publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks preferred by independent travellers differs according to travel experience.

6.1. Types of information sought in travel guidebooks

The following discussion is focused upon the items of information sought in travel guidebooks. Through a factor analysis using the principal component technique, these variables will be grouped together to identify the main constructs that summarise the types of information sought.

6.1.1. Items of information sought by different cultural groups

Section 5 of Chapter 5 provides a list of the ten most important information items sought in a travel guidebook. The list refers to independent travellers and the analysis does not take into consideration any possible differences relating to cultural background, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination as identified in general hypothesis three.

The ten most important items of information for independent travellers are maps; places to stay; bus and train timetables (fares and routes); places to eat; dangerous places to visit; local public transport; personal risks; exchange rates; emergency numbers; and festival and social events. The first approach to determine if there is any difference between cultures is to rank the items of information in order of importance for each cultural group. Of the ten items of information, three seem to be the core items that appear within each cultural group - maps, bus and train timetables and places to stay. Table 6.1 shows the ten most important items of

information for independent travellers, divided by cultural groups. For the three Asian cultural groups (Japanese, Korean and Chinese), the situation doesn't change much, and the three cultures have in common only one further item: currency and exchange rate. Table 6.1 lists the most important items of information.

Table 6.1. Top ten items of information by cultural group.

Japanese	Mean	Korean	Mean
Maps*	5.65	Maps	5.55
Bus and train	5.48	Places to stay *	5.50
Places to stay *	5.48	Bus and train	5.46
How to reach the destination **	5.27	Short trips/itineraries **	5.28
Dangerous places to visit *	5.13	Dangerous places to visit *	5.21
Places to eat **	5.10	Local public transport	5.20
Emergency numbers	5.09	Tourist information centres **	5.15
Currency & exchange rate	5.07	How to reach the destination **	5.14
Local food / drinks **	5.05	Practical hints for women *	5.13
Personal risks	5.03	Currency & exchange rate	5.12
Chinese	Mean	North American	Mean
Maps*	5.39	Maps	5.63
Places to eat *	5.30	Places to stay **	5.61
Bus and train	5.22	Places to eat **	5.45
Personal risks *	5.21	Health hazards **	5.40
Places to stay **	5.20	Festival & social events **	5.31
Air routes and fares **	5.07	Historic sites **	5.30
Places to shop **	5.05	Bus and train	5.28
Currency & exchange rate	5.03	How to tip & how much **	5.27
Emergency numbers	4.99	Short trips/itineraries **	5.26
Local food / drinks **	4.96	Local customs and beliefs **	5.25

**Significance at $p \leq 0.005$ level

* Significance at $p \leq 0.05$ level

The Mann-Whitney U test has been used to determine if there are any significant differences in the order of the ranking of the top ten items of information, by each cultural group. Six Mann-Whitney U tests are carried out comparing the North American with the Japanese, Chinese and Korean groups, the Korean with the Chinese and Japanese groups, and the Chinese with the Japanese group. The Mann-

Whitney U tests do reveal significant differences between the cultural groups. Most of the differences lie between the North American group and the Asian groups; particularly between the North American and the Chinese group. Table 6.2 shows the items of information that are statistically significant for each Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 6.2. Differences in importance attributed to information items by each cultural group – Mann-Witney U Test.

Japanese and Korean travellers	Mann-Whitney	Z	Sig.
How to reach the destination	22770.5	-2.325	.020
Local food and drinks	20184.0	-3.948	.000
Short trip / itineraries	16131.5	-6.742	.000
Practical hints for women	21762.0	-2.350	.019
Japanese and Chinese travellers	Mann-Whitney	Z	Sig.
How to reach the destination	16886.5	-2.731	.006
Places to shop	16836.5	-3.227	.001
Places to stay	18163.0	-2.643	.008
Places to eat	18280.0	-2.181	.029
Dangerous places to visit	17186.0	-2.690	.007
Maps	17950.5	-2.541	.011
Japanese and North American travellers	Mann-Whitney	Z	Sig.
How to reach the destination	18302.0	-4.897	.000
Health hazards	17589.5	-5.295	.000
Historic sites	18681.5	-4.421	.000
Cultural events	15481.0	-5.905	.000
Short trips / itineraries	15568.0	-6.507	.000
Places to eat	20923.0	-3.025	.002
How to tip and how much	15472.0	-6.970	.000
Local customs and beliefs	19016.5	-4.125	.000
Korean and Chinese travellers	Mann-Whitney	Z	Sig.
Local food and drinks	16126.0	-2.924	.003
Places to shop	12134.0	-6.293	.000

Personal risks	16491.0	-2.486	.013
Dangerous places to visit	15810.5	-2.898	.004
Korean and North American travellers	Mann-Whitney	Z	Sig.
How to reach the destination	19649.5	-3.017	.003
Health hazards	15903.0	-5.852	.000
Historic sites	17615.5	-4.450	.000
Places to eat	19348.5	-3.163	.002
How to tip and how much	12853.0	-8361	.000
Local customs and beliefs	11220.5	-9.512	.000
Chinese and North American travellers	Mann-Whitney	Z	Sig.
Air routes and fares	15413.5	-3243	.001
Health hazards	12712.5	-5.617	.000
Historic sites	14973.0	-3.540	.000
Cultural events	13210.0	-4.600	.000
Places to shop	14522.0	-3.403	.001
Short trips / itineraries	15466.5	-2.571	.010
Places to stay	15643.5	-3.476	.001
How to tip and how much	13692.0	-4.835	.000
Local customs and beliefs	14156.5	-4.385	.000

Although this last analysis has focused on the ten most important items of information, the Mann-Whitney U tests were carried out on all 58 variables. A table for each of the tests has been included in Appendix 4. Among the 58 variables, the Mann-Whitney U test shows significant differences ($p = < .005$) in 11 of the 58 variables between the Japanese and Chinese travellers; in 14 variables between the Japanese and Korean travellers; in 15 variables between the Korean and Chinese travellers; in 25 variables between the Korean and North American travellers; in 25 variables between the North American and Japanese travellers; and in 26 variables between the Chinese and North American travellers.

A nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance by ranks test is also used to test whether there is a difference between the means for each culture for all 58 items of information. The Chi-Square test result is Chi-Square = 8.203 and the significant at 3 degrees of freedom = .042. Therefore, the Kruskal-Wallis test for hypothesis 3.1 does reject the null hypothesis and it is concluded that there is an overall difference between cultures on the items of information sought in a travel guidebook.

6.1.2. Types of information sought by different cultural groups – Principal Component Analysis

Although the above results show that the items of information sought in a travel guidebook differ according to cultural background – there is a more significant difference between the Asian and North American cultures, and a less significant difference among the Asian cultures. The analysis has not revealed what types of information are sought by the different cultural groups. For this purpose a principle component analysis was conducted.

The four cultural groups (Japanese, Korean, Chinese and North American) are treated separately, and four different principal component analyses are carried out with varimax rotation in order to maximise the derived independent differences. Because of the large number of variables (58) and because the research aims at determining the most important types of information, only the 30 most important items of information have been used. The smallest sample is the Chinese group with 183 cases. Limiting the analysis to the most important 30 variables maintains a

good ratio (6.1) between the numbers of variables and cases and provides a clearer description of the new grouped variables. There is a debate in the literature on the necessary sample size for factor analysis. Kline (1994) suggests that a minimum of two cases per variable and a minimum of 20 cases per component are needed. Brymen and Cramer (2005) argue that a minimum of four participants per variable and not less than 100 cases per analysis are needed.

For each cultural group the 58 variables have been ranked in order of importance according to the mean, and only the top 30 have been selected for the principal component analysis. The 30 most important items of information are very similar across the cultures and Table 6.3 shows the selected variables for each cultural group.

Table 6.3. Items of information used for the principal component analysis.

Japanese	Mean	Korean	Mean
Maps	5.65	Maps	5.55
Bus and train	5.48	Places to stay	5.5
Places to stay	5.48	Bus and train	5.46
How to reach the destination	5.27	Short trips/itineraries	5.28
Dangerous places to visit	5.13	Dangerous places to visit	5.21
Places to eat	5.1	Local public transport	5.2
Emergency numbers	5.09	Tourist information centres	5.15
Currency & exchange rates	5.07	How to reach the destination	5.14
Local food / drinks	5.05	Practical hints for women	5.13
Personal risks	5.03	Currency & exchange rates	5.12
Air routes and fares	4.97	Places to eat	5.12
Local public transport	4.93	Festivals & social events	5.1
Language phrases	4.92	Air routes and fares	5.09
Festivals & social events	4.91	Personal risks	4.95
Medical/hospital service	4.88	Emergency numbers	4.91
Climate	4.82	Historic sites	4.75
Health hazards	4.78	How to meet local people	4.73
Historic sites	4.78	Health hazards	4.7
Tourist information centres	4.77	Language phrases	4.7
Local customs and beliefs	4.76	Photos of attractions	4.66
Places to shop	4.71	Practical hints for children	4.65
Taxi tips and costs	4.71	Banks	4.64

Practical hints for women	4.67	Local food / drinks	4.59
How to meet local people	4.65	Internet cafes	4.58
Internet cafes	4.58	Climate	4.57
Short trips/itineraries	4.52	Taxi tips and costs	4.57
Churches/temples	4.49	Medical/hospital service	4.56
Banks	4.48	Telephone prefixes	4.52
Places of entertainment	4.42	Physical landscape	4.5
Time differences	4.42	Embassy and consulate	4.48
Chinese	Mean	North American	Mean
Maps	5.39	Maps	5.63
Places to eat	5.3	Places to stay	5.61
Bus and train	5.22	Places to eat	5.45
Personal risks	5.21	Health hazards	5.4
Places to stay	5.2	Festivals & social events	5.31
Air routes and fares	5.07	Historic sites	5.3
Places to shop	5.05	Bus and train	5.28
Currency & exchange rates	5.03	How to tip & how much	5.27
Emergency numbers	4.99	Short trips/itineraries	5.26
Local food / drinks	4.96	Local customs and beliefs	5.25
Local public transport	4.94	Local public transport	5.25
Short trips/itineraries	4.93	Dangerous places to visit	5.24
Practical hints for women	4.87	Museums	5.18
Tourist information centres	4.86	Language phrases	5.14
How to reach the destination	4.82	Personal risks	5.1
Health hazards	4.81	Tourist information centres	5.07
Photos of attractions	4.79	Medical/hospital service	5.05
Taxi tips and costs	4.76	Taxi tips and costs	5.04
Dangerous places to visit	4.73	Local food / drinks	5.03
Historic sites	4.73	Cultural events	5.02
Medical/hospital service	4.73	Emergency numbers	5.02
Local customs and beliefs	4.68	Climate	4.99
Festivals & social events	4.66	Currency & exchange rates	4.92
Climate	4.63	Places of entertainment	4.91
How to tip & how much	4.62	Practical hints for women	4.88
Practical hints for children	4.61	Environmental hazards	4.83
Avoiding arguments	4.6	Banks	4.8
Mobile phones coverage	4.6	How to meet local people	4.8
Info on hitchhiking	4.55	Avoiding arguments	4.73
Language phrases	4.53	Internet cafes	4.68

In each principal component analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is over .859, giving assurance that the analyses were significant for the sample given. In the Japanese sample seven components with an eigenvalue greater

than 1, comprising 64% of the explained variance, have been extracted; the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value is .874 and 233 cases were used for the analysis. In the Korean sample six components, representing 62% of the explained variance have been extracted; the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value is .913 and 224 cases were used for the analysis. In the Chinese case, seven components representing 67% of the explained variance have been extracted; the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value is .872 and 183 cases were used for the analysis. In the North American sample six components with an eigenvalue greater than 1, comprising 61% of the explained variance have been extracted; the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value is .859 and 213 cases were used for the analysis. Each component has been named on the basis of which variables load significantly, with a loading above 0.5. Altogether 11 different components have been generated. As can be seen in Tables 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7, most of the components are similar in each sample, but the sets of variables in each component differs. Additionally, the order of the components varies across the cultures. The components differ in ranking and partially differ in content. They are as follows: Health (health and hazard issues), Culture (historic sites and other cultural attractions), Communication (how to communicate with local people), Local living (local transport, and other information necessary while on the move), Basics (basic tourist information, such as maps, places to stay and places to eat), Entertainment (places of entertainment), Everyday hints (practical information for everyday tourist activities), Safety (general information for a safe trip), Destination overview (general information about climate, landscape and similar issues about the destination), Reaching the destination (how to reach the destination), and Info (information on services).

Table 6.4. Rotated Component Matrix for the Japanese sample.

Components							
	Health	Local living	Safety	Basics	Communication	Culture	Info
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Health hazards	.768						
Emergency numbers	.723						
Medical/hospital service	.721						
Local food/drinks	.524						
Taxi tips and costs		.745					
Bus and train		.618					
Air routes and fares		.617					
Places to shop		.617					
Short trips/itineraries		.604					
Climate		.531					
Internet cafes			.683				
Currency and exchange rates			.670				
Dangerous places to visit			.666				
Personal risks			.631				
Time differences			.583				
Places to stay				.739			
Maps				.634			
How to reach the destination				.569			
Language phrases					.819		
How to meet local people					.796		
Local customs and believes					.520		
Churches/temples						.796	
Historic sites						.788	
Festivals and social events						.541	
Tourist information centres							.674
Banks							.667

Table 6.5. Rotated Component Matrix for the Korean sample.

Components						
	Basics	Local living	Communication	Safety	Health	Destination overview
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Places to stay	.762					
Short trips/itineraries	.688					
Maps	.685					

Places to eat	.573					
Historic sites	.558					
Dangerous places to visit	.546					
Festivals and social events	.526					
Air routes and fares		.738				
Banks		.638				
Tourist information centres		.541				
Local public transport		.539				
Currency exchange rates		.522				
Telephone prefixes		.508				
Taxi tips and costs		.503				
How to meet local people			.816			
Language phrases			.717			
Internet cafes			.482			
Practical hints for children				.631		
Medical/hospital services				.604		
Embassies and consulates				.561		
Health hazards					.689	
Local food and drinks					.589	
Physical landscape						.751
Climate						.695

Table 6.6. Rotated Component Matrix for the Chinese sample.

	Components						
	Local living	Everyday hints	Communication	Basics	Health	Safety	Reaching the destination
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Taxi tips and costs	.813						
Bus and train	.796						
Air routes and fares	.723						
Local public transport	.614						
Local food and drinks	.605						
Currency and exchange rates	.566						
Places to shop	.564						
Festivals and social events		.654					
Practical hints for women		.630					
Practical hints for children		.618					
Photos of attractions		.612					
Maps		.607					
Local customs and beliefs			.775				
Avoiding arguments			.731				
Language phrases			.678				
Places to eat				.788			

Places to stay				.725			
How to tip and how much				.591			
Medical/hospital services					.772		
Emergency numbers					.720		
Health hazards					.635		
Mobile phone coverage						.656	
Personal risks						.517	
How to reach the destination							.787

Table 6.7. Rotated Component Matrix for the North American sample.

	Components					
	Health	Culture	Communication	Local living	Basics	Entertainment
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Emergency numbers	.753					
Environmental hazards	.746					
Practical hints for women	.707					
Health hazards	.688					
Medical, hospital service	.678					
Dangerous places to visit	.587					
Historic sites		.805				
Museums		.793				
Festivals and social events		.693				
Cultural events		.659				
Short trips/itineraries		.614				
How to meet local people			.758			
Avoiding arguments			.746			
Local customs and beliefs			.742			
Language phrases			.741			
Local public transport				.732		
Bus and train				.656		
Local food and drinks				.606		
Tourist information centres				.595		
Climate				.528		
Taxi tips and costs				.523		
How to tip and how much					.634	
Internet cafes					.545	
Places to stay					.540	
Places of entertainment						.626

From the above tables it is clear that there is a difference between the four samples. The issues dominating the Japanese sample relate first to health, secondly transport and other information useful when moving from one destination or site to another other, and thirdly information on safety, including information to reduce financial loss (currency and exchange rates), keeping in contact with family, friends, work by accessing the Internet and understanding time differences.

The Korean sample is interested primarily in basic information such as accommodation, maps, restaurants, and attractions such as events and itineraries. Secondly, Korean respondents are interested in information useful when moving from one destination or site to another, and thirdly they are interested in information on how to interact and communicate with locals. Unlike the Japanese, safety is not considered particularly important.

The Chinese sample is interested primarily in information useful when moving from one destination or site to another, such as local public transport, taxi tips and costs, and currency and exchange rates, secondly they are interested in everyday travelling hints such as advice for women travelling alone, parents travelling with children and activities to do and attractions to visit, and thirdly they are interested in how to communicate and interact with locals. The Chinese differ markedly from the Japanese and the Koreans. Similar to the Japanese respondents, the North American sample is interested primarily in health issues, secondly in information on cultural attractions, and thirdly in information on how to interact and communicate with locals.

It is interesting to note that the Japanese and the North American samples are both concerned with health issues first. The data collection in Thailand took place soon

after the SARS outbreak. Chinese independent travellers – interviewed mainly in Thailand and mostly coming from Hong Kong – and Korean travellers are not concerned with health issues, ranking this component as fifth. Possibly this is influenced through living in a country physically affected by the health problem (or in a nearby country), which has put them in a situation of greater knowledge on the issue through everyday information sources such as newspapers and TV news; and consequently they do not seek such information in travel guidebooks.

Table 6.8 shows the total explained variance of the components extracted for each cultural group.

Table 6.8. Total Variance Explained.

Japanese sample			
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.37	11.25	11.25
2	3.22	10.75	22.00
3	3.09	10.29	32.29
4	2.67	8.90	41.19
5	2.33	7.77	48.95
6	2.28	7.61	56.56
7	2.09	6.96	63.52

Korean ample			
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.56	15.21	15.21
2	4.00	13.32	28.54
3	2.64	8.81	37.34
4	2.62	8.72	46.06
5	2.41	8.04	54.11
6	2.41	8.02	62.13

Chinese sample			
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.69	15.62	15.62
2	3.94	13.14	28.76
3	3.12	10.39	39.15
4	3.00	9.98	49.13
5	2.49	8.31	57.44
6	1.74	5.80	63.24
7	1.26	4.21	67.44

North American sample			
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.86	12.88	12.88
2	3.66	12.21	25.09
3	3.28	10.93	36.02
4	3.01	10.03	46.05
5	2.92	9.75	55.80
6	1.55	5.16	60.96

From the principal component analysis discussed above, hypothesis 3.1 (the types of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differ according to cultural background) can be accepted. Therefore we can state that:

There is a cultural difference in the type of information sought in travel guidebooks.

The next paragraphs will focus on the second and third part of hypothesis three. Through Mann-Whitney U tests and principal component analyses, an attempt is made to determine if the type of information sought in travel guidebooks differs according to travel experience and knowledge of the destination.

6.1.3. Items of information sought by first-time visitors and repeat visitors to the destination

Knowledge of the destination has been established by asking the respondents how many times they have visited the destination previously. Although this was an open-ended question, the answers have been coded into two groups for the purpose of this analysis: first-time visitors at the destination, of which 473 cases have been recorded, and repeat visitors, of which 374 cases have been recorded.

Following the analysis in Chapter 5, the 58 items of information have been ranked in order of importance. The four most important items of information are the same for both first-time and repeat visitors, and six items appear in the top ten for both first-time and repeat visitors. The Mann-Whitney U test is used to determine if

there are any significant differences in the ranking of the 58 variables. Of the top ten variables, two have a significant difference at a level $\leq .005$ (festivals and social events: Mann-Whitney $U = 73049.5$, $z = -2.948$, $p = .003$; short trips/itineraries: Mann-Whitney $U = 73733$, $z = -2.890$, $p = .004$) and two at a level $\leq .05$ (tourist information centres: Mann-Whitney $U = 77284.5$, $z = -2.511$, $p = .012$; local public transport: Mann-Whitney $U = 76861.5$, $z = -2.434$, $p = .015$). Table 6.9 shows the top ten items of information for first-time visitors to the destination and repeat visitors.

Table 6.9. Top ten items of information by first-time visitors and repeat visitors.

	First-time visitors		Repeat visitors		Mann-Whitney	Z	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean			
Maps	1	5.632	1	5.494	78536.5	-1.619	.105
Places to stay	2	5.536	2	5.356	81913.5	-1.592	.111
Bus and train	3	5.448	3	5.282	82513.0	-1.485	.138
Places to eat	4	5.274	4	4.940	84934.5	-0.120	.905
Local public transport	5	5.206		4.940	76861.5	-2.434	.015
Dangerous places to visit	6	5.178	7	5.000	78579.0	-1.647	.100
Festivals & social events	7	5.133	16	4.835	73049.5	-2.948	.003
Short trips/itineraries	8	5.104	14	4.852	73733.0	-2.890	.004
Personal risks	9	5.093	5	5.044	83112.5	-0.146	.884
Tourist information centres	10	5.056	13	4.855	77284.5	-2.511	.012
Currency & exchange rates	12	5.047	6	5.041	83962.0	-0.081	.936
How to reach the destination	16	4.974	8	4.989	82519.5	-0.478	.633
Air routes and fares	17	4.915	9	4.986	82195.0	-1.074	.283
Emergency numbers	11	5.053	10	4.950	79106.0	-0.970	.332

Of all the 58 variables, the Mann-Whitney U test showed significant differences with nine variables at a $\leq .005$ level of significance (flora and fauna, post office, museums, historic sites, festivals and social events, short trips/itineraries, how to tip and how much, time differences and telephone prefixes) and 11 at a $\leq .05$ level (climate, driving rules and habits, local public transport, banks, tourist information centres, environmental hazards, real estate market prices, churches and temples, cultural events, photos of attractions and how to meet local people). Table 1 in Appendix 5 shows a comparison of the 58 variables, reporting the significant differences. Although there is a statistically significant difference in 20 of the 58 variables, there is no difference in the four most important items of information, indicating that for both first-time visitors and repeat visitors, maps, places to stay, bus and train, and places to eat are the most important items of information in a travel guidebook.

A Mann-Whitney U test of the means has also been conducted to determine any overall differences in the ranking of the 58 items of information. The Mann-Whitney U test shows that there are no differences in the overall rank of the variables (Mann-Whitney = 1418.0; $z = 1.4588$; $p = .145$).

6.1.4. Types of information sought by first-time visitors and repeat visitors to the destination – Principal Component Analysis

At first sight it appears that there are few differences between first-time visitors and repeat visitors and these differences are based only on a few single items of information. To further analyse whether there are any construct differences, a principal component analysis was carried out. As with the cultural groups previously, two analyses have been carried out; one for each group (first-time and repeat visitors).

As the analysis aims at identifying the most important types of information sought in a travel guidebook, and the differences between first-time visitors to the destination and repeat visitors, only the 30 most important items of information were used for the principal component analysis. In this way the ratio of cases to variables is high enough for a multivariate analysis. For each group, the items of information were ranked in order of importance and in both cases the top 30 variables were selected and two separate principal component analyses conducted. Refer to Table 2 in Appendix 5 for a list of the variables used for the analysis.

In the analysis of first-time visitors the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is .923 and in the repeat visitor analysis it is .901, giving assurance that the analysis was significant for the sample given. In the first-time visitor analysis, 473 cases were used, and seven components with an eigenvalue greater than 1, comprising 62% of the explained variance, were extracted. In the repeat visitor analysis 374 cases were used, and seven components with an eigenvalue greater than

1, comprising 62% of the explained variance extracted. For each of the two groups eight components were generated. Each component was named on the basis of which variables load significantly with a loading above 0.5. Where possible, the same names were used to label the components in the two analyses. Additionally, components similar to the ones extracted for the cultural analyses were given the same names. As can be seen in Tables 6.10 and 6.11, the ranking of the components varies between the groups, and some of the variables generating the components differ. The eight components were named as follows: Safety (general information for a safe trip), Local living (local transport, and other information necessary while on the move), Communication (how to communicate with local people), Health (health and hazard issues), Basics (basic tourist information, such as places to stay and places to eat), Attractions (historic sites and other cultural and non cultural attractions), Reaching the destination (how to reach the destination), and Transport (information on transport at the destination).

Table 6.10. Rotated component matrix of first-time visitors.

	Components						
	Safety	Local living	Communication	Basics	Attractions	Reaching the destination	Health
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dangerous places to visit	.730						
Currency and exchange rates	.690						
Personal risks	.667						
Practical hints for women	.652						
Maps	.561						
Local food and drinks		.633					
Health hazards		.618					
Climate		.599					
Bus and train		.575					
Taxi tips and costs		.543					
Language phrases			.800				
How to meet local people			.745				

Local customs and beliefs			.691				
How to tip and how much			.607				
Tourist information centres				.676			
Local public transport				.636			
Places to eat				.623			
Places to stay				.589			
Banks				.536			
Festivals and social events					.710		
Historic sites					.659		
Short trips/itineraries					.617		
Museums					.613		
Places to shop					.507		
Air routes and fares						.747	
How to reach the destination						.738	
Medical/hospital service							.645
Emergency numbers							.571

Table 6.11. Rotated component matrix of repeat visitors.

	Components						
	Transport	Health	Safety	Attractions	Communication	Basics	Reaching the destination
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Taxi tips and costs	.765						
Air routes and fares	.717						
Bus and train	.702						
Places to shop	.548						
Local public transport	.488						
Medical/hospital service		.761					
Emergency numbers		.727					
Health hazards		.682					
Banks		.501					
Internet cafes			.706				
Dangerous places to visit			.659				
Currency and exchange rates			.549				
Practical hints for women			.537				
Personal risks			.489				
Photos of attractions				.704			
Historic sites				.647			
Short trips/itineraries				.610			
Cultural events				.575			
Festivals and social events				.541			
Local customs and beliefs					.706		

Language phrases					.687		
How to meet local people					.503		
Places to stay						.741	
Places to eat						.704	
How to reach the destination							.745

Tables 6.10 and 6.11 show that there is a structural difference in the types of information sought in travel guidebooks. For first-time visitors the most important constructs are safety information such as dangerous places, personal risks, practical hints for women, and maps and other information which can reduce risk, such as information on currency and exchange rates which can reduce financial risks; of secondary importance is information that is useful when travelling from one destination or site to another, such as information on transport, climate, local food and health hazards. Thirdly, first-time visitors are interested in information relating to their interaction and communication with local people.

On the other hand, repeat visitors are mostly interested in information related to transport, from taxi tips and costs to air routes and fares and local public transport; secondary interest is information on health, such as medical and hospital services and emergency numbers. In third place, repeat visitors are interested in information on safety. As for first-time visitors, this component includes not only information on dangerous places to visit and personal risks, but also information useful to reducing further risks, such as currency and exchange rates.

It is interesting to note that first-time visitors feel more at risk by undertaking a trip to a new destination, and therefore are primarily interested in safety information. However, this information relates only to general safety and wellbeing and not to health (the health component has been ranked seventh by first-time visitors). On the other hand, in the analysis of repeat visitors, health and safety appear as second and

third components. In the literature (Chapter 2) it has been stated that one of the identifying features of a tourist product is that it cannot be tested in advance, and therefore information search as a tool of risk reduction becomes more important than in the purchase of other products. Therefore, assuming that previous visits to the destination may provide previous experiences or tests with the product, it would be expected that repeat visitors are less interested in information related to health risk reduction and general safety enhancement. The analyses show that both first-time visitors and repeat visitors are interested in information on safety, but first-time visitors are more interested in practical information on how to move around the destination, and how to interact with local people.

Table 6.12. Total variance explained for first-time and repeat visitors.

First-time visitors				Repeat visitors			
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings				Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.46	11.53	11.53	1	3.44	11.46	11.46
2	2.94	9.79	21.32	2	2.99	9.98	21.44
3	2.86	9.52	30.84	3	2.89	9.64	31.08
4	2.79	9.29	40.13	4	2.87	9.55	40.63
5	2.72	9.07	49.20	5	2.42	8.06	48.69
6	2.06	6.88	56.08	6	2.30	7.68	56.37
7	1.65	5.49	61.57	7	1.68	5.60	61.96

The principal components analysis has shown that there are some differences in the type of information sought by first-time visitors at the destination and repeat visitors, so the null hypothesis can be rejected and part two of hypothesis three can be accepted.

6.1.5. Items of information sought by travellers with no or little experience and by experienced travellers

Travel experience was investigated by asking respondents how many international trips they had taken in the five years prior to the data collection, and what destinations they had visited. The question was open-ended. However the results have been coded in SPSS as travellers with no or little experience (travellers who had undertaken zero, one, or two international trips in the five years before the data collection), generating 295 valid cases, and experienced travellers (travellers who had undertaken at least three international trips in the five years before the data collection), generating 510 valid cases.

Following from the analysis in Chapter 5, the 58 items of information were ranked in order of importance. Seven of the top ten items of information are the same for both groups, while the only difference in the top four items of information lies in bus and train, and places to stay, which are ranked second and third by travellers with no or little experience, and third and second by experienced travellers. Maps were considered the most important item of information by both experienced travellers and travellers with no or little experience. The Mann-Whitney U test was carried out to determine if there are any significant differences in the ranking of the 58 variables. Of the top ten variables, only one (air routes and fares) has a significant difference (Mann-Whitney U: 64772.5, $z = -2.819$, $p = .005$). Table 6.8 shows the top ten items of information for travellers with no or little experience, and for experienced travellers.

Table 6.13. Top ten items of information by experienced travellers and travellers with no or little experience.

	No or little experience		Experienced traveller		Mann-Whitney	Z	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean			
Maps	1	5.522	1	5.655	67112.0	-1.927	.054
Bus and train	2	5.461	3	5.359	69717.0	-1.579	.114
Places to stay	3	5.420	2	5.535	70594.0	-1.323	.186
Places to eat	4	5.236	4	5.279	70213.0	-1.051	.293
Dangerous places to visit	5	5.201	6	5.084	67856.0	-1.464	.143
Currency & exchange rates	6	5.146	11	5.004	68799.5	-1.126	.260
Personal risks	7	5.138	7	5.077	68042.0	-1.369	.171
Local public transport	8	5.131	5	5.092	70095.0	-0.658	.510
Air routes and fares	9	5.117	19	4.866	64772.5	-2.819	.005
Emergency numbers	10	5.117	15	4.984	65349.5	-1.531	.126
Festivals & social events	13	4.990	8	5.055	70898.5	-0.037	.970
Short trips/itineraries	14	4.983	9	5.050	68583.0	-0.957	.339
Health hazards	17	4.844	10	5.012	67028.0	-1.710	.087

Of the 58 variables, the Mann-Whitney U test showed significant differences with only nine variables, three at a significance level of $\leq .005$ (history, air routes and fares, and local customs and beliefs), and six at a significance level of $\leq .05$ (travel agencies, local food and drinks, employment availability, places of entertainment, photos of attractions, and how to tip and how much). Table 1 in Appendix 6 shows a comparison of the 58 variables, reporting the significant differences.

A Mann-Whitney U test of the means of the 58 items of information has also been conducted to determine any overall differences in the ranking of the 58 items of information. The Mann-Whitney U test shows that there are no differences in the overall rank of the variables (Mann-Whitney = 1660.0; $z = 1.4588$; $p = .903$).

6.1.6 Types of information sought by travellers with no or little experience and by experienced travellers – Principal Component Analysis

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test show that there is no difference in the importance attributed to the 58 items of information. As for the previous analysis, a further structural analysis was also conducted to investigate if there are differences in the structure of the types of information sought in a travel guidebook, in terms of the importance attributed to each type of information and in terms of the variables generating the type of information.

In the same way as the two previous principal component analyses, the investigation commenced with a ranking of the 58 variables for both travellers with no or little experience and experienced travellers, in order to determine the 30 most important items of information. Table 2 in Appendix 6 shows the variables used for the principal component analyses.

In the analysis of travellers with no or little experience, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is .895 and in the analysis of experienced travellers

it is .913. Both scores are high and provide assurance that the analysis is significant for the sample given. In the sample comprising travellers with no or little experience 295 cases were used and seven components with an eigenvalue greater than 1 were extracted. These seven components represent a total explained variance of 62%. In the sample comprising experienced travellers, six components with an eigenvalue greater than 1 were extracted with a total explained variance of 60%. The total explained variance for both analyses is reported in Table 6.16. The sets of variables generating the components are similar to the ones generated in the previous analysis and for this reason the same component names have been used where possible.

Between the two groups a total of eight different components were extracted and they were named as follows: Safety (dangerous places to visit, personal risks, practical hints for women, telephone prefixes, maps); Transport (transport to and at the destination including taxis, and air routes); Health (medical & hospital service, emergency numbers, health hazards); Attractions (places of entertainment and recreational activities); Basics (basic information such as places to stay and); Communication (how to interact and communicate with local people); Entertainment (places of entertainment); and Culture (historic sites and cultural events).

For both groups the three most important types of information refer to physical risk reduction and transport. However, the ranking, the components and the set of variables generating them are different. For travellers with no or little experience information on safety such as dangerous places to visit, personal risks, and practical hints for women are the most important. Included in this component is also information on currency and exchange rates, telephone prefixes and maps. Although these variables may appear not to be related to safety issues, in previous principal

component analyses they were grouped with either safety or health issues. Information on telephone prefixes and maps might be useful when travellers need to communicate or move during emergencies. The second most important type of information for travellers with no or little experience is information related to transport, while the third most important is information related to health. The health component includes variables (such as museums and banks) that are not strictly related to health. Although in the case of the safety component it was possible to assume a relationship among the variables, in the health component it is difficult to interpret the result. For experienced travellers the most important type of information relates to transport at the destination, health and safety. In a similar way, the safety and health component of travellers with no or little experience includes variables not strictly related to health and safety. Indeed the health component includes banks, and how to reach the destination, while the safety component includes currency and exchange rates and Internet cafes.

Tables 6.14 and 6.15 show the results of the component analyses for travellers with no or little experience, and for experienced travellers.

Table 6.14. Rotated component matrix of travellers with no or little experience.

	Components						
	Safety	Transport	Health	Attractions	Basics	Communication	Entertainment
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dangerous places to visit	.744						
Personal risks	.695						
Practical hints for women	.632						
Currency and exchange rates	.547						
Telephone prefixes	.517						
Maps	.500						
Air routes and fares		.746					

How to reach the destination		.716				
Bus and train		.702				
Taxi tips and costs		.617				
Local public transport		.560				
Medical/hospital service			.765			
Emergency numbers			.583			
Museums			.563			
Health hazards			.544			
Banks			.543			
Festivals and social events				.646		
Short trips/itineraries				.644		
Historic sites				.638		
Photos of attractions				.619		
Places to eat					.710	
Places to stay					.699	
How to meet local people						.779
Language phrases						.755
Local food and drinks						.589
Places to shop						.556

Table 6.15. Rotated component matrix of experienced travellers.

	Components					
	Transport	Health	Safety	Culture	Communication	Basics
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Taxi tips and costs	.787					
Places to shop	.650					
Bus and train	.623					
Air routes and fares	.583					
Emergency numbers		.731				
Medical/hospital service		.652				
Health hazards		.548				
Banks		.547				
How to reach the destination		.535				
Currency and exchange rates			.705			
Dangerous places to visit			.690			
Internet cafes			.646			
Practical hints for women			.620			
Personal risks			.582			
Museums				.830		
Cultural events				.720		

Historic sites				.724		
Festivals and social events				.511		
Language phrases					.799	
How to meet local people					.698	
Local customs and beliefs					.697	
Places to stay						.697
Places to eat						.678
Maps						.628
Tourist information centres						.548

The principal component analyses show that for travellers with no or little experience the most important types of information relate to safety, transport and health, while for experienced travellers the most important types of information relate to transport, health and safety.

It is evident that there is little difference in the ranking of the single items of information, and when it comes to the type of information, the differences between experienced travellers and travellers with no or little experience are minor.

It is interesting to note that experienced travellers and those who have visited the destination before have the same priorities in the types of information sought in travel guidebooks; the components and their rankings are equal, and the set of variables generating the components is similar, suggesting that travel experience and previous visits to the destination do not create different needs. However, the priorities of travellers with no or little experience and first-time visitors at the destination differ in the second and third components. For first-time visitors at the destination the most important types of information are safety, hints on how to move around, and communication, while for travellers with no or little experience, the most important components are safety, transport and health, suggesting that limited

experience with the destination and limited experience with travelling creates some different needs.

Table 6.16. Total explained variance.

No or little experience			
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.70	12.33	12.33
2	3.25	10.84	23.17
3	2.86	9.52	32.69
4	2.75	9.18	41.87
5	2.09	6.97	48.85
6	2.07	6.92	55.76
7	1.78	5.95	61.71

Experienced travellers			
Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.11	10.38	10.38
2	3.04	10.14	20.52
3	2.97	9.90	30.42
4	2.94	9.80	40.23
5	2.92	9.73	49.96
6	2.88	9.60	59.56

From the above analysis the null hypothesis can be rejected, and hypothesis 3.3 (the type of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differs according to knowledge about the destination) can be accepted. Further it can be stated that the types of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers only partially and marginally differs according to their travel experience.

Although the importance attributed to the single items of information does not differ according to cultural background, the type of information sought by travellers does differ according to cultural background.

Therefore the null hypothesis can be rejected and the hypothesis 3.1 can be accepted.

6.2. The use of travel guidebooks to improve travel quality

In the conceptual framework (Chapter 3) it was noted that information search is performed in order to reduce uncertainty and consequently risk, and that the reduction of risk results in quality assurance. In Chapter 5 a first analysis of the use of travel guidebooks to reduce risk demonstrated that independent travellers use travel guidebooks to reduce psychological risk by being able to do things independently, to reduce temporal risk by best using the time available; to reduce financial risk by saving money; and lastly to reduce performance risk by experiencing a comfortable holiday and identifying the best attractions to visit.

In the next paragraph the analysis will focus on differences generated by culture and travel experience. Through Mann-Whitney U tests, the 12 statements related to risk reduction will be compared to analyse possible differences.

6.2.1. Cultural differences in the use of travel guidebooks to improve travel quality

To determine if there is any difference among cultures, the 12 items have been ranked in order of importance for each cultural group. Table 6.17 shows the importance of the travel guidebook as a tool of independent travellers to reduce risk in travelling, divided by cultural groups. Three of the cultural groups (Japanese, Korean and North American) used travel guidebooks mainly to reduce psychological

and temporal risks, and three of the cultural groups (Japanese, Chinese and North American) do not use travel guidebooks to reduce social risks. The Kruskal-Wallis test reveals that in 11 of the 12 items there is a significant difference between the four cultural groups. The only quality attribute that is not statistically different is "Travel guidebooks help me to do things by myself". Table 6.17 shows the ranking of the 12 statements and the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test.

Table 6.17. The use of travel guidebooks to reduce risk by cultural groups.

	Japanese		Korean		Chinese		North American		χ^2	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean	R.	Mean	R.	Mean		
Travel guidebooks help me to do things by myself	1	5.14	1	5.31	7	5.06	1	5.28	3.78	.286
Travel guidebooks help me best use the time available	2	4.96	2	5.03	3	5.52	2	5.20	13.05	.005
Travel guidebooks help me to experience a comfortable holiday	3	4.68	5	4.84	4	5.18	10	4.78	18.20	.000
Travel guidebooks help me save money	4	4.68	3	4.90	2	5.27	5	5.04	29.94	.000
Information on the standard to expect from local transport	5	4.52	4	4.87	10	4.95	7	4.89	17.78	.000
Travel guidebooks reduce the degree of unexpected risk	6	4.48	7	4.56	6	5.10	8	4.84	38.10	.000
Information on the standard to expect from the accommodation named	7	4.46	9	4.49	5	5.12	3	5.15	62.70	.000
Travel guidebooks help me to experience an exciting holiday	8	4.44	6	4.78	8	5.03	9	4.80	21.27	.000
Travel guidebooks suggest which tourist attractions are the best to visit	9	4.26	8	4.56	1	5.47	4	5.11	112.27	.000
Information on the standard to expect from a local service	10	4.18	10	4.42	11	4.90	11	4.75	45.19	.000
Information on the standard to expect from the restaurants named	11	4.12	12	4.06	9	5.00	6	4.95	104.41	.000
Travel guidebooks help me to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition	12	3.62	11	4.40	12	4.85	12	2.77	166.57	.000

Japanese respondents use travel guidebooks mainly to reduce psychological, temporal and performance risks. Korean travellers use travel guidebooks mainly to meet psychological, temporal and financial needs. Chinese travellers use travel guidebooks to reduce firstly performance risks, secondly financial risks, and thirdly temporal risks. North American travellers use travel guidebooks mainly to reduce psychological, temporal, and performance risks. To further understand where the differences within the cultures lie, six different Mann-Whitney U tests have been conducted and the results of the statistically significant differences are shown in Table 6.18.

Table 6.18. Differences in the use of travel guidebooks to reduce risk.

Travel guidebooks reduce the degree of unexpected risk			
	Mann-Whitney	z	p
Japanese and Chinese	14870.5	-5.120	.000
Japanese and North American	20210.5	-3.148	.002
Korean and Chinese	14059.0	-8.292	.000
Korean and North American	19262.5	-3.171	.002
Travel guidebooks suggest which tourist attractions are best to be visited			
Japanese and Chinese	10464.5	-8.951	.000
Japanese and North American	16201.0	-6.203	.000
Korean and Chinese	10731.5	-8.292	.000
Korean and North American	16945.0	-5.063	.000
Chinese and North American	14886.5	-4.002	.000
Travel guidebook help me to best use the time available			
Japanese and Chinese	17590.5	-2.669	.008
Korean and Chinese	15664.5	-3.202	.001
Korean and North American	19653.0	-2.227	.026
Travel guidebooks help me to save money			
Japanese and Chinese	15099.5	-4.821	.000
Japanese and North American	19810.5	-2.970	.000
Korean and Chinese	14404.5	-4.324	.000
Korean and North American	19071.5	-2.288	.000
Chinese and North American	16355.0	-2.104	.035
Information on the standard to expect from a local service			
Japanese and Chinese	13670.0	-5.811	.000

Japanese and North American	17801.0	-4.985	.000
Korean and Chinese	14723.5	-4.129	.000
Korean and North American	18990.5	-3.228	.001
Information on the standard to expect from local transport			
Japanese and Korean	21073.5	-3.033	.002
Japanese and Chinese	16231.0	-3.664	.000
Japanese and North American	19851.0	-3.289	.001
Information on the standard to expect from the accommodation named			
Japanese and Chinese	14526.5	-5.094	.000
Japanese and North American	16981.5	-5.690	.000
Korean and Chinese	13359.5	-5.408	.000
Korean and North American	15464.5	-6.125	.000
Information on the standard to expect from the restaurants named			
Japanese and Chinese	12546.0	-6.731	.000
Japanese and North American	15382.5	-6.799	.000
Korean and Chinese	10960.0	-7.602	.000
Korean and North American	13522.0	-7.662	.000
Travel guidebooks help me to experience an exciting holiday			
Japanese and Korean	21159.5	-2.567	.010
Japanese and Chinese	15314.0	-4.467	.000
Japanese and North American	20129.5	-2.811	.005
Korean and Chinese	16784.0	-2.130	.033
Travel guidebook help me to experience a comfortable holiday			
Chinese and Japanese	15914.5	-3.816	.000
Chinese and Korean	15973.0	-3.223	.000
Chinese and North American	15029.5	-3.530	.000
Travel guidebooks help me to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition			
Japanese and Korean	17260.0	-5.558	.000
Japanese and Chinese	10758.5	-8.296	.000
Japanese and North American	16573.0	-5.522	.000
Korean and Chinese	15169.0	-3.726	.000
Korean and North American	10971.5	-9.254	.000
Chinese and North American	7140.5	-10.604	.000

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test show that there is no statistical difference between cultures in the use of travel guidebooks to do things independently. In the use of travel guidebooks to decide which tourist attractions are the best to visit, to

reduce financial risk, and to reduce social risks there is a difference among all of the four cultural groups. It is interesting to note that although all of the four cultural groups considered travel guidebooks as unimportant as a tool to gain social recognition, there is a significant difference in the means. Specifically, the mean ranges from 4.85 for the Chinese travellers to 2.77 for the North American travellers.

A Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance by ranks test is also used to test whether there is a difference between the means for each culture for all 12 quality attributes. The Chi-Square test result is Chi-Square = 18.432 and is significant at 3 degrees of freedom = .000. Therefore, the Kruskal-Wallis reject the null hypothesis and there is an overall difference between cultures in the use of travel guidebook to reduce risk.

It can be concluded that there are differences in the use of travel guidebooks to assure overall quality in the trip by different cultural groups. However, the use of travel guidebooks to reduce specific psychological risks is considered most important by Japanese, Korean and North American travellers and there is no difference among all the cultural groups. Additionally, most of the differences lie between Chinese travellers, on the one hand, and Japanese and Korean travellers on the other.

Therefore, hypothesis 4.1 that states that different cultural groups perceive the use of travel guidebook to enhance travel quality differently is accepted.

6.2.2. Travel experience and the use of travel guidebooks to improve quality

Hypothesis 4.2. states that there is a difference in the use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality, according to travel experience. The 12 items determining the use of travel guidebooks as a means to reduce risk were ranked in order of importance based on travel experience. Travel experience was determined by the number of international trips taken in the five years before the data collection. The variable was coded into two groups: travellers with no or little experience, and experienced travellers. Table 6.19 shows the use of travel guidebooks to reduce risk by travellers with no or little experience, and by experienced travellers, in order of importance. Table 6.19 shows also the results of the Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 6.19. The use of travel guidebooks to reduce risk, by travel experience.

	No or little experience		Experienced traveller		Mann-Whitney	Z	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean			
Travel guidebooks help me to do things by myself	1	5.28	1	5.22	72196.5	-0.314	.754
Travel guidebooks help me best use the time available	2	5.22	2	5.07	66598.5	-1.834	.067
Travel guidebooks help me save money	3	5.02	3	4.95	69638.0	-0.424	.672
Travel guidebooks help me to experience a comfortable holiday	4	4.94	5	4.81	69106.0	-1.068	.285
Travel guidebooks suggest which tourist attractions are the best to visit	5	4.89	7	4.78	71808.0	-0.547	.584
Information on the standard to expect from local transport	6	4.86	6	4.80	70769.5	-0.811	.417
Travel guidebooks help me to experience an exciting holiday	7	4.85	9	4.71	67936.0	-1.282	.200
Travel guidebooks reduce the degree of unexpected risk	8	4.80	8	4.74	72174.5	-0.517	.605
Information on the standard to expect from the accommodation named	9	4.77	4	4.84	69815.0	-1.083	.279

Information on the standard to expect from a local service	10	4.59	11	4.53	71533.5	-0.501	.617
Information on the standard to expect from the restaurants named	11	4.50	10	4.55	70783.5	-0.749	.454
Travel guidebooks help me to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition	12	4.24	12	3.64	58715.5	-4.565	.000

For both groups, travel guidebooks are important tools to reduce psychological risk and to be able to do things independently, to reduce temporal risk, and to reduce financial risk. Both group rankings of the items are very similar, and the Mann-Whitney U test reveals that there is a significant difference between the two groups only in reducing social risks by using travel guidebooks to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition (Mann-Whitney U: 58715.5; $z = -4.565$; $p = .000$).

A Mann-Whitney U test of the means of the quality attributes has also been conducted to determine any overall difference in the ranking of the quality attributes. The Mann-Whitney U test shows that there is no difference in the overall rank of the variables (Mann-Whitney = 58.0; $z = -.808$; $p = .419$).

Hence, the null hypothesis in hypothesis 4.2 cannot be rejected and as both the Mann-Whitney U tests shows that there are no differences according to travel experience in the use of travel guidebooks to assure quality in the trip.

6.3. Publication edition attributes preferred in travel guidebooks

The questionnaire contained a list of seven statements investigating the preferred publication edition attributes of the respondents. It has been seen in Chapter 5 that respondents are particularly concerned with how up-to-date and recent the information is in the guidebook.

6.3.1. Cultural background to determine the publication edition attributes sought in travel guidebooks

By listing the items in order of importance, it can be noted that the four cultural groups have similar preferences in terms of publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks. For all the groups it is very important that the information is up-to-date. The two most important concerns for all the groups were up-to-date information and the publication date of the book. For Japanese and North American independent travellers it is important that travel guidebooks provide lots of pictures, while the Korean and Chinese cultures are more concerned with the size of the book. The concern of book size is only limited to the physical appearance, as all cultural groups rank shortness of the book as fifth or sixth. Despite the similarities in the order of the items, the Kruskal-Wallis test shows that in five of the seven items there is a significant difference across the cultures. Table 6.20 shows the seven

items, with ranking position and mean for each cultural group and the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test.

Table 6.20. Edition attributes in order of importance by cultural groups.

	Japanese		Korean		Chinese		North American		X ²	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean	R.	Mean	R.	Mean		
Travel guidebooks have the latest information	2	5.17	1	5.48	1	5.30	1	5.53	8.396	.038
Travel guidebooks should be less than one year old	1	5.19	2	5.44	2	5.18	2	5.19	6.801	.079
Travel guidebooks should provide lots of pictures	3	4.45	4	4.22	4	4.92	3	3.84	56.820	.000
Travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket	4	4.22	3	4.40	3	5.13	4	3.81	81.231	.000
Travel guidebooks should be short	5	3.42	5	3.63	5	4.09	6	3.12	37.575	.000
Quality of paper is essential in a travel guidebook	6	2.59	6	2.63	6	3.85	5	3.21	77.115	.000
Travel guidebooks should provide private advertising	7	2.22	7	1.97	7	2.51	7	1.75	40.454	.000

In order to understand where the differences within the cultures lie, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. Six different Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted in order to compare each culture against others. The results of the Mann-Whitney U tests show that most of the differences lie between the North American and the Korean respondents, while the least differences lie between the Korean and the Japanese respondents. Table 6.21 shows the results of the significant differences.

Table 6.21. Cultural differences in the publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks.

Travel guidebooks should be short			
	Mann-Whitney	z	P
Chinese and Japanese	15885.0	-4.254	.000
Chinese and Korean	40740.0	-3.330	.000
Chinese and North American	12854.5	-5.666	.000
North American and Korean	19061.5	-3.333	.000
Travel guidebooks should provide lots of pictures			

Chinese and Japanese	16988.5	-3.309	.001
Chinese and Korean	13820.0	-5.362	.000
Chinese and North American	11191.0	-7.127	.000
Korean and Japanese	22603.5	-2.079	.038
North American and Japanese	18758.0	-4.199	.000
North American and Korean	20095.0	-2.378	.017
Travel guidebooks should be less than one year old			
North American and Korean	20194.0	-2.640	.008
Travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket			
Chinese and Japanese	13250.0	-6.630	.000
Chinese and Korean	13224.5	-5.853	.000
Chinese and North American	9661.5	-8.537	.000
North American and Japanese	20976.5	-2.492	.013
North American and Korean	18189.5	-3.674	.000
Quality of paper is essential in a travel guidebook			
Chinese and Japanese	11510.0	-7.692	.000
Chinese and Korean	10980.0	-7.488	.000
Chinese and North American	14518.0	-3.767	.000
North American and Japanese	19090.5	-3.943	.000
North American and Korean	18362.0	-3.609	.000
Travel guidebooks should provide private advertising			
Chinese and Korean	16113.0	-3.284	.001
Chinese and North American	13121.5	-5.504	.000
Japanese and North American	17935.0	-5.179	.000
Japanese and Korean	22541.5	-2.349	.019
Korean and North American	19813.5	-2.922	.000
Travel guidebooks have the latest information			
Japanese and Korean	22390.0	-2.354	.019
Japanese and North American	21491.5	-2.489	.013

From the results of the Mann-Whitney U tests it is clear that although the update of information and date of publication of the travel guidebooks is important for all of the cultural groups, there is a significant difference among some of the cultures.

A Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance by ranks test is also used to test whether there is a difference between the means for each culture for all 12 quality

attributes. The Chi-Square test result is Chi-Square = 8.880 and is not significant at 3 degrees of freedom = .830. Therefore, the Kruskal-Wallis does not reject the null hypothesis and there is no overall difference between cultures in the publication edition attributes sought in a travel guidebook.

Although the Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance by ranks test showed that there is no difference in overall publication edition attributes sought in travel guidebooks, the Kruskal-Wallis test shows that there are differences in five of the publication edition attributes of guidebooks. Current information and the date of edition of the book is of primary concern for all the cultural groups. However, there is a significant difference between North American and Korean travellers in the importance attributed to the date of edition of the guidebook (Korean travellers attribute more importance than North American travellers). There is also a significant difference in the importance attributed to current and update information between Japanese and Korean travellers, and Japanese and North American travellers (North American and Korean travellers attribute more importance than Japanese travellers).

Also there is a significant difference between the cultural groups in the importance attributed to the provision of private advertising. Although the item was ranked as last by all the groups, Chinese travellers (with a mean of 2.51) seem to be more inclined to accept private advertising than North American travellers, who attributed to the item a mean of 1.75.

Therefore, there are cultural differences in the preference of publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks. The null hypothesis can be rejected and hypothesis

5.1 (the edition attributes of travel guidebooks preferred by independent travellers differ according to cultural background) can be accepted.

6.3.2. Travel experience as a determinant of the publication edition attributes sought in travel guidebooks

Hypothesis 5.2 states that there are differences between the publication edition attributes preferred by travellers with no or little experience and those preferred by experienced travellers. By putting the attributes in order of importance, it can be noted that both groups of travellers are concerned with how current are both the information and the book. For travellers with no or little experience the date of publication of the books is the most important issue, while for experienced travellers the most important feature is how up-to-date the information is. After the date of publication of the book and the currency of the information, travellers with no or little experience are concerned with pictures of the destination, while experienced travellers are concerned with the size of the book and the comfort of being able to carry it around in a pocket. The mean rankings of both groups of travellers were compared through the Mann-Whitney U test. The test revealed a significant difference in 'travel guidebooks should provide lots of pictures' and 'travel guidebooks should provide private advertising' at a significance level of $p \leq .005$, and in 'travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket' at a significance level of $p \leq .05$. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test are shown in table 6.22.

Table 6.22. Preference in edition attributes by travellers with no or little experience, and experienced travellers.

	No or little experience		Experienced traveller		Mann-Whitney	Z	P
	R.	Mean	R.	Mean			
Travel guidebooks should be less than one year old	1	5.41	2	5.20	68433	-1.973	.048
Travel guidebooks have the latest information	2	5.41	1	5.40	74145	-0.049	.961
Travel guidebooks should provide lots of pictures	3	4.57	4	4.24	64796	-2.893	.004
Travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket	4	4.57	3	4.26	65733	-2.469	.014
Travel guidebooks should be short	5	3.63	5	3.47	70376	-1.258	.208
Quality of paper is essential in a travel guidebook	6	3.07	6	2.99	71222.5	-0.549	.583
Travel guidebooks should provide private advertising	7	2.30	7	1.97	63317	-3.518	.000

A Mann-Whitney U test of the means of the publication edition attributes has also been conducted to determine any overall difference in the ranking of the quality attributes. The Mann-Whitney U test shows that there is no difference in the overall rank of the variables (Mann-Whitney = 19.0; $z = -.703$; $p = .482$) and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

In terms of travel experience, the most important publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks relate to how current the information and the book are, and there is no significant difference between the two groups. However there is a difference in the second and third most important attributes, with travellers with no or little experience preferring pictures and experienced travellers preferring the comfort of being able to carry the book in a pocket. A difference lies also in the provision of private advertising in the book. Both groups considered the attribute not important, but experienced travellers appear to be less inclined to accept private advertising in travel guidebooks.

The Mann-Whitney U test of all the overall ranking of the publication edition attributes shows no statistically significant difference according to travel experience. However, there are differences in four of the edition attributes preferred by travellers with no or little experience and those preferred by experienced travellers.

Hence it is possible to reject the null hypothesis and accept hypothesis 5.2. travel experience impacts upon the edition attributes preferred in a travel guidebook.

6.4. Concluding remarks

Chapter 6 has focused on the analysis of the differences in the information sought in a travel guidebook, in the use of travel guidebooks to reduce risk and enhance the quality of the trip, and in the publication edition characteristics of the book, according to cultural background, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination.

The analysis has demonstrated that the type of information sought in a travel guidebook differs according to cultural background, with Japanese and North American travellers being more concerned with health, Korean travellers with basic information, and Chinese travellers with information on where to find services.

Although when single items of information are analysed individually, there are no differences according to knowledge about the destination; when the single items of information are grouped into constructs there are differences according to the knowledge about the destination. First-time visitors at the destination are more

concerned with safety information and information on how to move around the destination, while repeat visitors are more concerned with transport and health. The analysis has demonstrated that first-time visitors feel more at risk by undertaking a trip to a new destination, and therefore are primarily interested in safety information. In the literature (Chapter 2) it has been stated that one of the identifying features of a tourist product is that it cannot be tested in advance, and therefore information search as a tool of risk reduction becomes more important than in the purchase of other products. Therefore, assuming that previous visits to the destination may provide previous experiences or tests with the product, it would be expected that repeat visitors are less interested in information related to health risk reduction and general safety enhancement. The analysis has shown that both first-time visitors and repeat visitors are interested in information on safety, but first-time visitors are more interested in practical information on how to move around the destination, and how to interact with local people.

In terms of travel experience, both the nonparametric analysis and the factor analysis have demonstrated that there are no differences in the types of information sought in travel guidebook. Both experienced and inexperienced travellers are concerned with safety and health.

Furthermore, the analysis has shown that experienced travellers and those who have visited the destination before have the same priorities in the types of information sought in travel guidebooks; the components and their rankings are equal, and the set of variables generating the components is similar, suggesting that travel experience and previous visits to the destination determine similar needs. Hence, it can be concluded that no matter the experience of traveller, the first visit at the destination causes the need for similar types of information.

In terms of the use of travel guidebooks to assure overall quality in the trip, it can be concluded that there are differences according to cultural background. However, the use of travel guidebooks to reduce specific psychological risks is considered most important by Japanese, Korean and North American travellers and there is no difference among all the cultural groups. Additionally, most of the differences lie between Chinese travellers on the one hand, and Japanese and Korean travellers on the other.

The analyses conducted on the use of travel guidebooks to assure quality in the trip have shown no statistically significant difference according to travel experience. Therefore, both experienced and inexperienced travellers used travel guidebooks for similar purposes and to reduce similar types of risks, with both groups using travel guidebooks primarily to reduce psychological risks.

The analysis has demonstrated that there are cultural differences in the preference of publication edition attributes of travel guidebooks. However, all of the cultural groups are primarily concerned with updated information and date of edition of the guidebook.

Also, travel experience impacts upon the publication edition attributes sought in travel guidebooks.

CHAPTER 7

Structural Equation Modelling

The role of cultural importance constructs for information satisfaction with travel guidebooks

7.1. Introduction

Section 6.1.2 in Chapter 6 tested hypothesis 3.1 “the types of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differ according to their cultural backgrounds”. Fifty eight items of information were listed in the questionnaire delivered to independent travellers and through factor analysis, using the principal component technique, the 58 variables have been grouped together to identify the main constructs that summarise the types of information sought. For each cultural group a separate factor analysis has been carried out and the results of each factor analysis allowed the researcher to identify the cultural differences in information search by Japanese, Chinese, Korean and North American travellers. The results show that Japanese and North American travellers are more concerned with health, Korean travellers with basic information and Chinese travellers with information on where to find services.

In section 5.4.1, Table 5.2 displays the degree of satisfaction for the top ten items of information for the entire sample, and the Mann-Whitney U test shows the mean rank comparison between importance and satisfaction. Through the Mann-Whitney U test, it has been possible to determine if there is a relationship between the mean

importance and mean satisfaction of each item of information, and if the items of information that are considered most important are the ones which provide most satisfaction. Of the top ten most important items of information, all of the items are statistically different in terms of importance and satisfaction. Therefore, it has been concluded that there is no relationship between importance and satisfaction.

Understanding the relationship between importance and satisfaction of items of information is important for travel guidebook editors, to determine what information to provide in travel guidebooks in order to generate a market of satisfied buyers. In Chapter 5 it was determined that there is no relationship between importance and satisfaction for each individual item of information. Hypothesis 6 is tested in Chapter 6. Hypothesis 6 states that the information obtained from travel guidebooks by independent travellers has different levels of importance for each cultural group, and these different importance levels impact upon the level of satisfaction with the travel guidebook. A factor analysis on the importance attributed to each item of information and, a factor analysis on the satisfaction with each item of information is conducted in order to better test for differences in importance and satisfaction among groups of items in the form of constructs. The test in Chapter 5 found no difference based on a comparison of individual items and whilst these suggest no difference, it is unlikely tourists make decisions based on single items. Tourists are more likely to focus on sets of variables (items) and themselves form constructs or wider associations of meaning defined by more than one item.

For each cultural group the factor analyses on importance and satisfaction become the starting point for the analysis of the relationship between importance and satisfaction. Following the factor analysis, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) can then be used to examine a series of multiple simultaneous relationships between

the importance dimensions, and the satisfaction dimensions in order to test for a relationship between the constructs of importance and satisfaction. Chapter 5 (section 5.4.1) has shown that the simple bivariate correlation may not be sufficient in examining the relationship between the 58 items of information. Given the use of constructs as tested above, Structural Equation Modelling is the suitable methodology for exploring the relationship between importance and satisfaction. Furthermore, the Factor Analysis in Chapter 6 demonstrates that there are differences in the set of variables creating constructs of importance between cultures. By conducting separate Structural Equation Model analyses for each cultural group, the aim is to identify the nature of the relationship between importance and satisfaction.

For the Structural Equation Modelling, AMOS (Version 5.0) linked to SPSS (Version 14) is used.

Hair et al. (1995) and Reisinger and Turner (1999) identified eight stages in the application of structural equation modelling: 1. development of a theoretical model; 2. construction of a path diagram; 3. model specification; 4. choose the input matrix type; 5. identification of the model; 6. evaluation of the model; 7. model modification; 8. identification of the final model. These stages are used here to establish the research procedure.

7.2.1. Theoretical Model Development

Through the results of the factor analysis of both importance and satisfaction, an initial theoretical model is theorised (refer to Chapter 6 and Appendix 7). The initial model defines causal relationships between the importance constructs and the satisfaction constructs. Therefore, the justification of the inclusion of the specific latent constructs and their indicators in the model is provided in the factor analysis conducted in Chapter 6.

For each cultural group the theoretical model consists of the theoretical relationship between the dimensions of importance among the dimensions of satisfaction. From the analysis in chapter 6, each of the four models theorises different constructs for both importance level and satisfaction level.

The construct and their indicators of importance have been identified in section 6.1.2 and are shown in Table 2 in Appendix 7.

When asked about the satisfaction with the information provided in the travel guidebook, only 48% of the respondents answered. This is due mainly to the fact that only 60% of the sample was using a travel guidebook in the first place. Furthermore, some respondents encountered problems in answering the question as they were using more than one guidebook. Others stated that some of the information items were not in the book they were using, while others stated that so far they had read only a small part of the book. Of the four cultural groups, the Chinese sample is the one with the lowest number of usable cases (63 cases). In order to maintain a good ratio between the number of variables and the number of cases (see Chapter 6, Section 6.1.2) only the 20 items of information providing most

satisfaction have been used for the factor analysis of the satisfaction level. The results of the factor analyses for the four cultural groups are represented in Table 2 in Appendix 7.

7.2.2. Path diagram construction

The second stage of the SEM involves the construction of a path diagram. The path diagram indicates all possible causal relationships between the constructs and their indicators. In the development of the path diagram the relationships are graphically designed with the help of arrows. In Figure 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4 the relationships are indicated by a straight arrow (direct causal-effect relationship between importance constructs and satisfaction constructs) and curved lines (correlation/covariance between constructs).

With the development of the path diagram it is possible to identify exogenous and endogenous constructs. In the present research, each cultural group has a different number of exogenous and endogenous constructs. The Japanese sample has seven exogenous constructs (Health, Local living, Safety, Basics, Communication, Culture, Info) and five endogenous constructs (Basics, Sites, Practical hints, Communication, General overview); the Korean sample has six exogenous constructs (Basics, Local living, Communication, Safety, Health, Destination overview) and five endogenous constructs (Sites, Basics, Events, Moving, General overview); the Chinese sample has seven exogenous constructs (Local living, Everyday hints, Communication, Basics, Health, Safety, Reaching the destination) and three endogenous constructs (Attractions, Basics, General overview); the North

American sample has six exogenous constructs (Health, Culture, Communication, Local living, Basics, Entertainment) and three endogenous constructs (Attractions, General Overview, Basics).

7.2.3. Model specification

In steps one and two a theoretical model is developed as a construct model and all the possible relationships between the exogenous and endogenous constructs, and all possible correlations between exogenous constructs, have been identified. In the model specification the path diagram is used to identify the relevant formulas:

- The straight arrows are translated into a series of linear equations that link the constructs.
- The variables loading on each construct are measured.
- The matrices indicating the hypothesised correlation/covariance between constructs or variables are measured.

For each cultural sample a different model has been specified and each model contains a different number of equations according to the number of exogenous and endogenous constructs. Each equation represents a single relationship between an exogenous construct and an endogenous construct. In the Japanese sample there are 35 equations (Figure 7.1), in the Korean sample there are 30 equations (Figure 7.2), in the Chinese sample there are 21 equations (Figure 7.3), and in the North American sample there are 18 equations (Figure 7.4).

Figure 7.1. Model specification – Japanese sample.

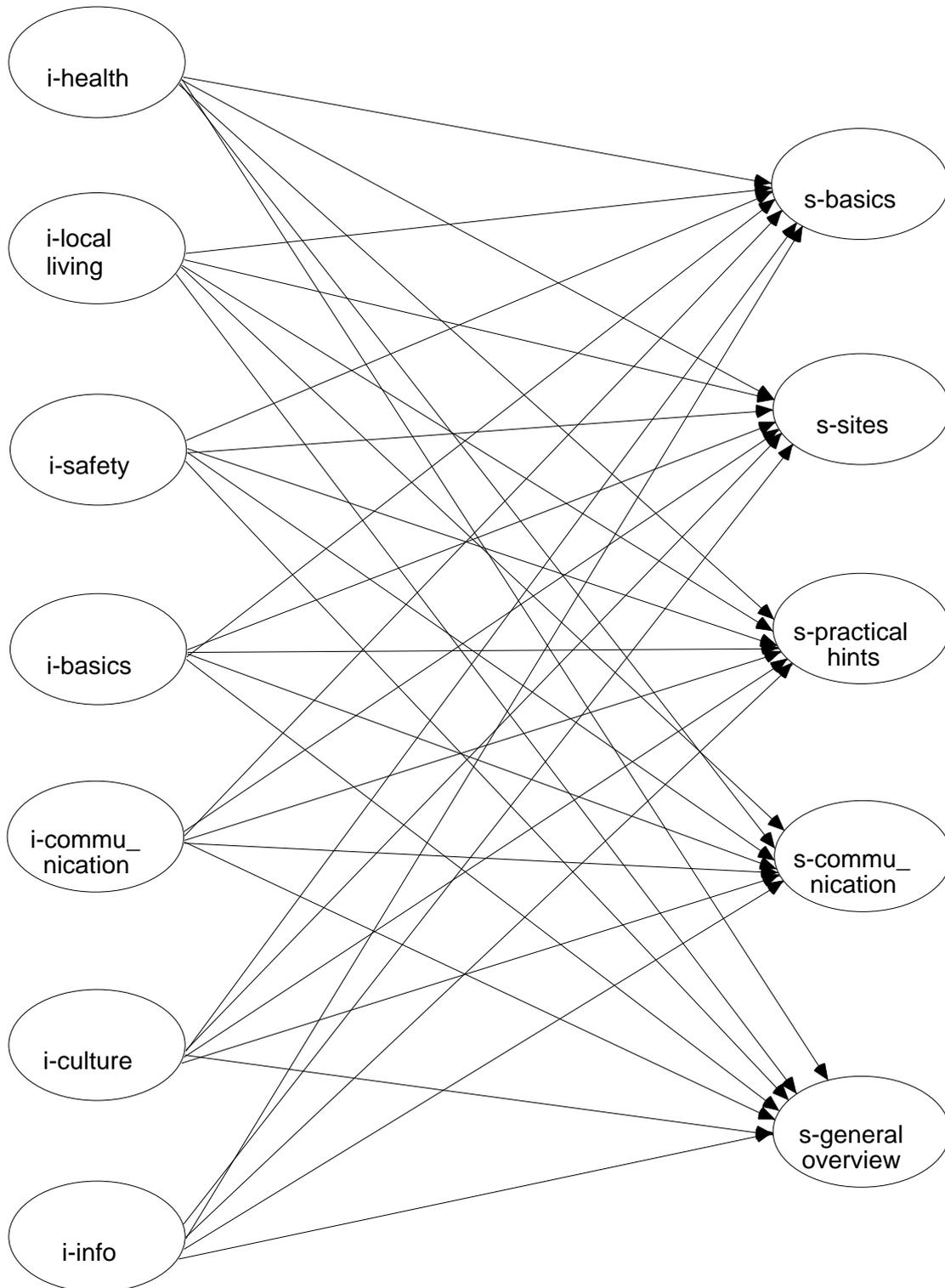


Figure 7.2. Model specification – Korean sample.

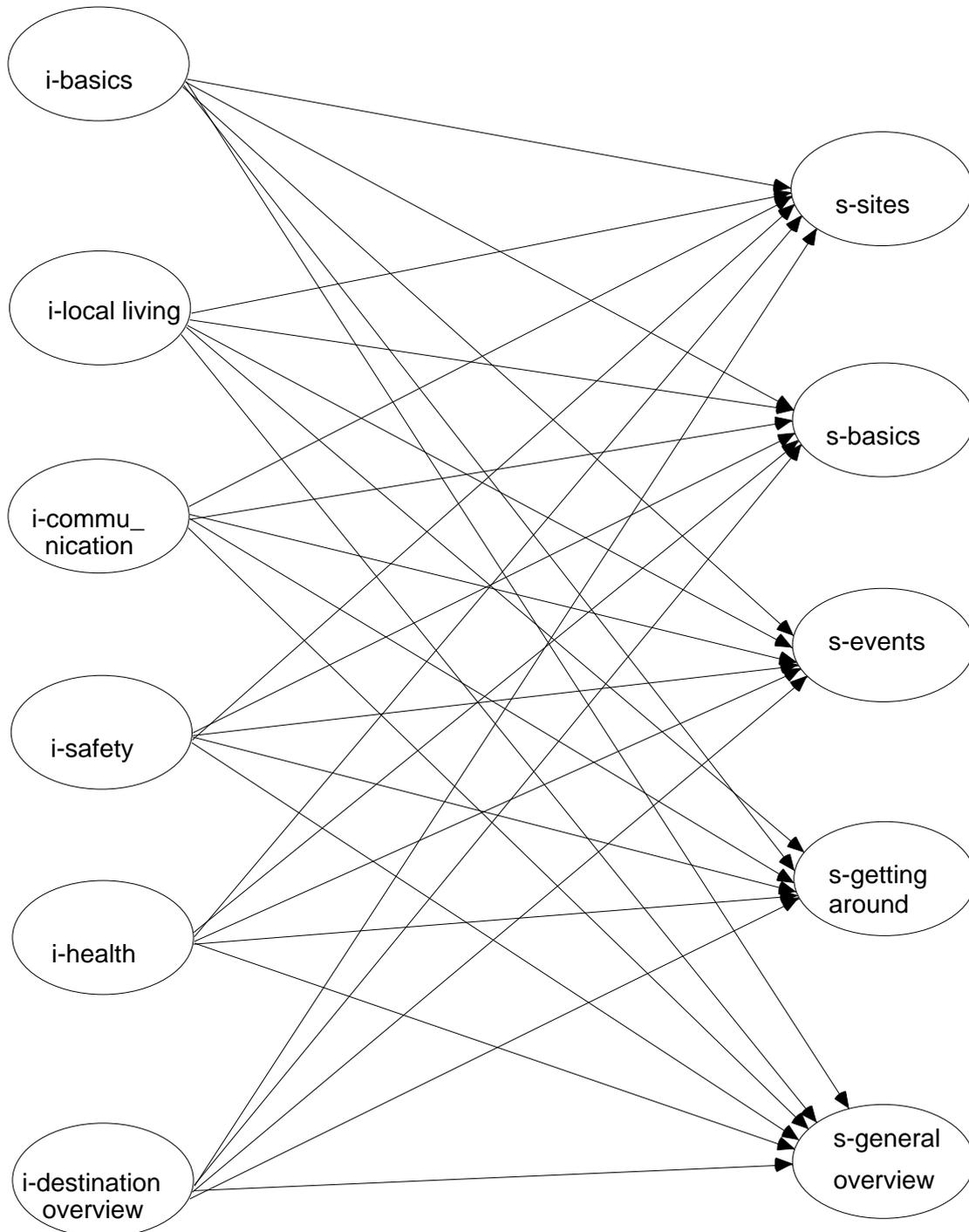


Figure 7.3. Model specification – Chinese sample.

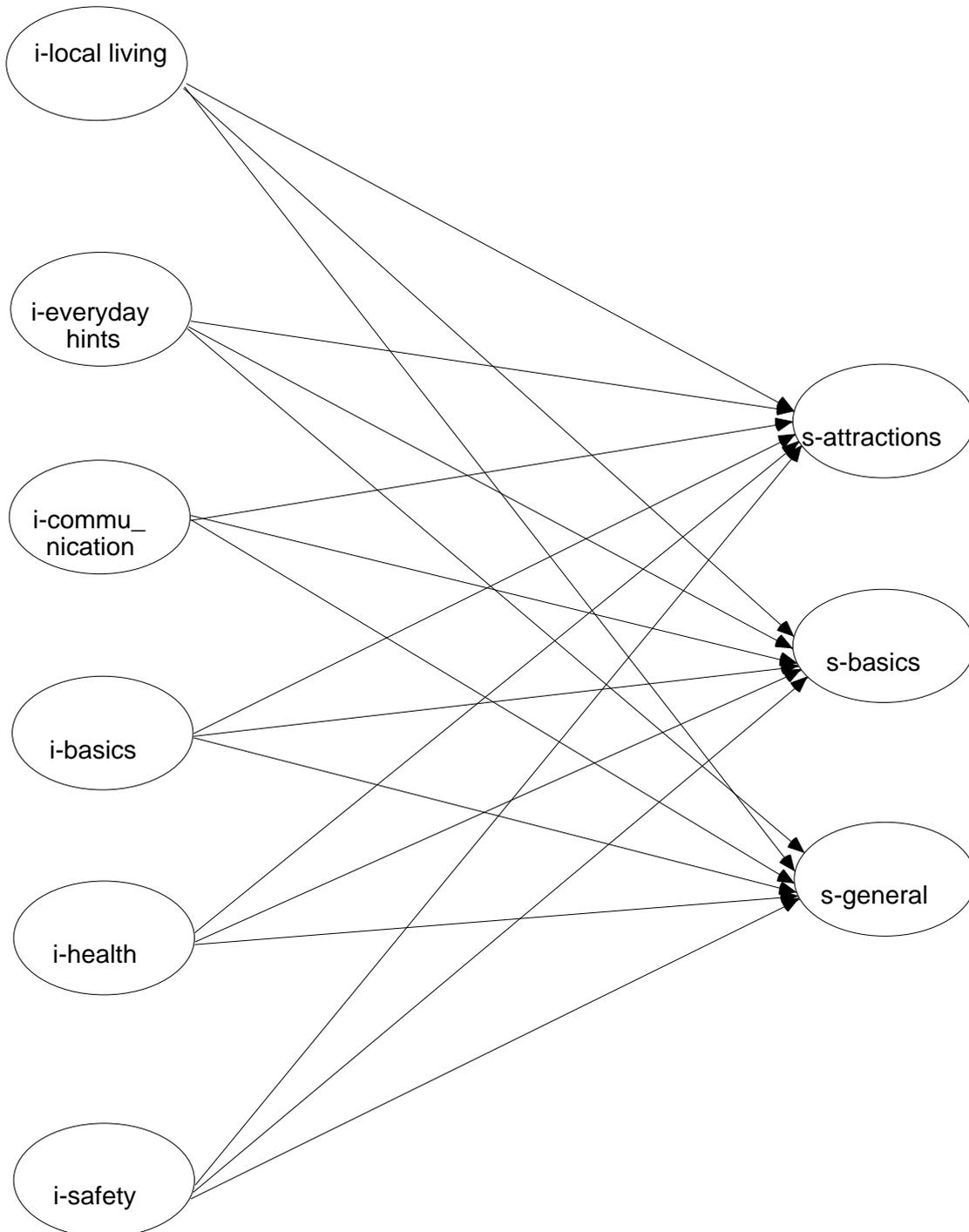
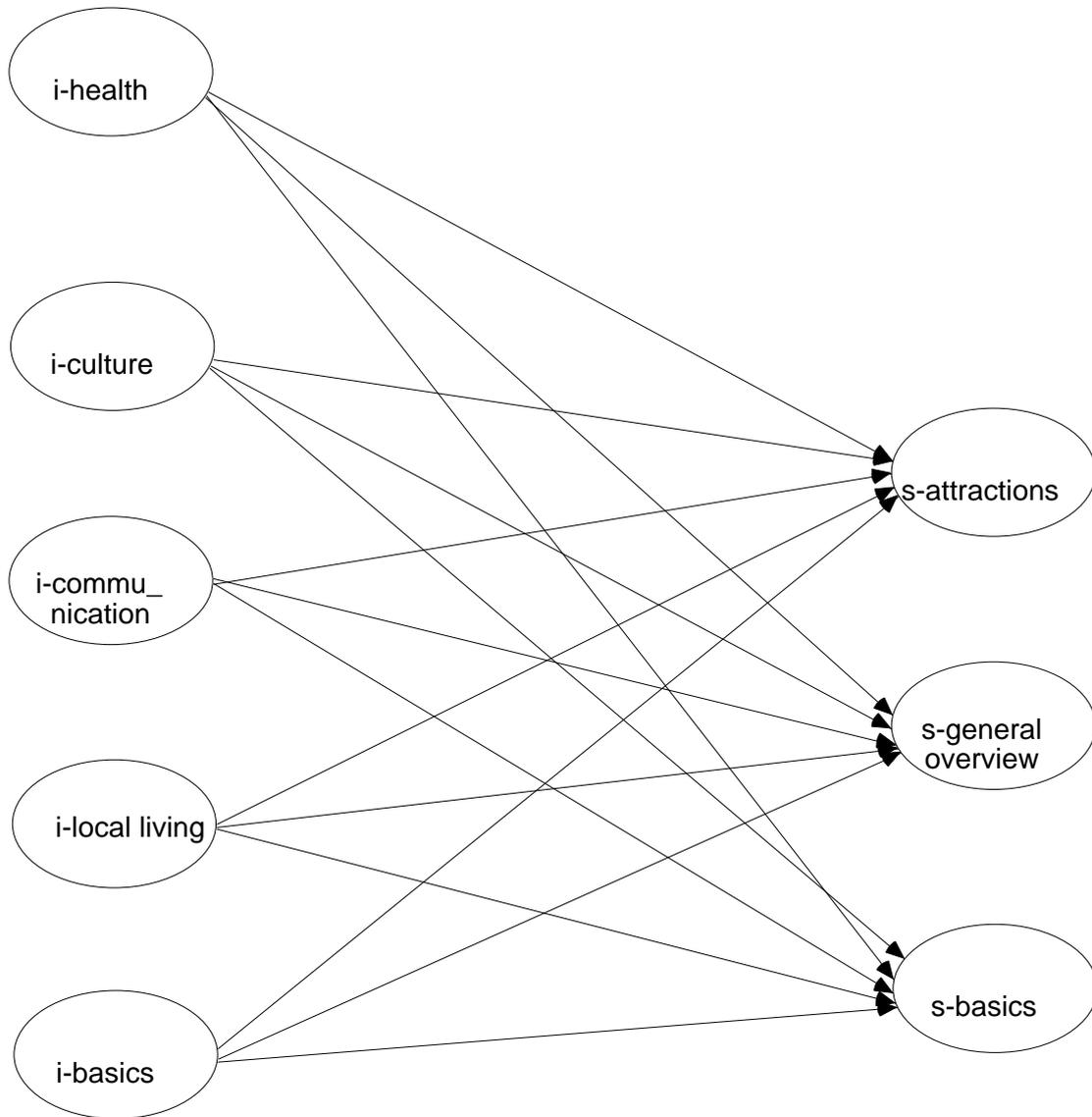


Figure 7.4. Model specification – North American sample.



7.2.4. Input matrix type

When conducting SEM two types of input data matrices are available for the computation of the relationships: variance/covariance matrix, and correlation matrix. As in the current research SEM is used to determine the patterns of relationships between the constructs and not to test a theory by explaining the total variance of a construct, the correlation matrix is used.

In the structural model the maximum likelihood (ML) estimation model is used. When estimating and interpreting the SEM with ML, Hair et al. (1998) state that the sample size is critical. Although there is no fixed rule, Hair et al. suggest a feasible range to be between 100 and 200. When a sample size exceeds the critical size of 200, the maximum likelihood estimation method becomes unreliable as almost any difference is detected. Consequently, all goodness-of-fit measures become a poor indicator. Furthermore, it is important to consider the ratio between sample size and the number of estimated parameters, as identified in this research for the factor analysis. Reisinger and Turner (1999) identify as a rule of thumb a sample size at least five times the number of the parameters, but within an absolute minimum of 50 cases. This makes our sample size of 122 Japanese respondents, 113 Korean, 63 Chinese and 133 North American respondents a suitable sample.

7.2.5. Identification of the model

The scope of model identification is to identify the extent to which the information provided by the data is sufficient to enable parameter estimation (Reisinger and Turner, 1999). During this stage it is necessary to identify if the model is just identified, over-identified, or unidentified. As specified by Reisinger and Turner (1999) in a just identified model there is only one estimate for each parameter and the degrees of freedom are equal to zero; in an over-identified model it is possible to obtain several estimates of the same parameter and the degrees of freedom are positive; while in an unidentified model an infinite number of values of the parameter could be obtained. In this latter case it is necessary to either add more manifest variables or set certain parameters to zero (Reisinger and Turner, 1999).

In the current Structural Equation Modelling, the large size of some of the factor loadings (see Chapter 6 and Appendix 7) will create an over-identified model. For this reason, all factors with low explained variance will not be included in the structural equation model and the problem with over-identification is removed. Moreover, only the more significant and better explained (by variable loadings) constructs are used in the SEM.

7.2.6. Evaluation of the model

The evaluation of the model involves assessing the structural model with the use of a number of fit measurements. Through the analysis of the measurements it is possible to either accept or reject the proposed hypothesis.

The current research is explorative in nature, and the objective of the hypothesis tested through the structural equation is to determine any possible relationship between important factors and satisfaction factors. Therefore, before evaluating the measurements of goodness-of-fit the following criteria are met: 1) the variables are independent; 2) the sampling of the respondents has been collected randomly; 3) there is linearity in all the relationships; 4) the data is measured on a Likert scale. Furthermore, following Structural Equation Modelling theory (Hair et al., 1998) it is determined that there are no negative error variances or nonsignificant error variances for each construct, the standardised coefficients are very close to or exceed 1.0, and there are no large standard errors associated with any estimated coefficient.

In Structural Equation Modelling there is no absolute number for determining the significance of the test. Acceptance of the model is achieved when a number of measures reach the minimum necessary values. The literature debates the minimum necessary values and the number of measures (Hair et al. 1998; Reisinger and Turner, 1999; Byrne, 2001). Amos Software package Version 5 has been used for the current analysis and the software package provides a variety of measures. These measures are grouped under measures of absolute fit, incremental measures and, measures of parsimonious fit.

The **Measures of Absolute Fit** are used to assess the overall fit of the model and determine the existence of covariance or correlation. However, measures of absolute fit don't consider possible problems of 'overfitting'. The measures of absolute fit used for the current model are: Chi-Square statistic, Cmin/df, Goodness-of-Fit index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit (AGFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).

The Incremental Fit Measures are used to compare the hypothesised model to the independence model. The incremental fit measures can also compare the hypothesised model with a baseline model with a poor fit. The scope of the comparison is to determine the discrepancy. The values of the measures range from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating no fit and 1 indicating a perfect fit. In the current analysis the following incremental fit measures are used: Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI).

The measures of parsimonious fit are used to determine whether the amount of fit achieved is due to the use of a high number of coefficients, which cause the model to overfit. This is reached through the comparison of the goodness-of-fit measures of the hypothesised model with the number of coefficients used to determine the fit achieved by each coefficient.

The measures of parsimonious fit used in the current analysis are the Parsimonious Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI), and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC).

7.2.6.1. Interpreting the measures

To accept the hypothesised relationship between the constructs, and therefore to consider the proposed models of an acceptable representation, the following results are expected:

Chi-Square statistic: compares the Chi-Square value with the tabled value for the given degree of freedom. Good fit is indicated by an insignificant value.

Cmin/df: is the minimum discrepancy divided by its degrees of freedom. It is a ratio, and the closer the ratio is to one, the more correct the model is.

Goodness-of-Fit index (GFI): represents the overall degree of fit by comparing the squared residuals from prediction with the actual data, and it is not adjusted for the degrees of freedom. Its value ranges from 0 to 1.0. A value closer to 1 indicates better fit, however there is no threshold level of acceptance.

Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit (AGFI): taking the GFI as a base it is adjusted by the ratio of the degrees of freedom of the proposed model and the null model. A high value close to, equal to, or greater than 0.90 indicates a good fit.

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA): is the value representing the discrepancy of the population per degree of freedom. The aim of the RMSEA is to accept the GFI as representative of the entire population and not only the sample used for the estimation. RMSEA is used to correct the tendency of the Chi-square statistic to reject any specified model with a large sample. Acceptable values range from 0.05 to 0.08.

Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI): is an incremental fit measure. Combining a measure of parsimony into a comparative index between the hypothesised model in the analysis and the null model, it provides a value ranging between 0 and 1.0. A value close to one indicates a good fit.

Normed Fit Index (NFI): is a comparison of the hypothesised model and the null model. Similar to the TLI and other measures it is a measure ranging from 0 to 1.0. A value close to 1 represents perfect fit.

Comparative Fit Index (CFI): this measure is particularly suitable for small samples and is a good compromise between the TLI and the NFI. It is a comparative model evaluating the discrepancy, degrees of freedom and noncentrality parameters of the hypothesised model and the baseline model. The values of CFI range from 0 to 1.0, where 0 indicates poor fit and 1 indicates perfect fit.

Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI): is an extension of the GFI and adjusts the GFI by the degrees of freedom for the hypothesised model to the degrees of freedom for the null model, while the PGFI is adjusted based on the parsimony of the estimated model. Its values range between 0 and 1.0, with values closer to 1 indicating greater parsimony in the model.

Akaike Information Criterion (AIC): can be used to compare models with different numbers of constructs, the AIC indicates a good fit between the observed and predicted covariances or correlation and indicates whether a model is prone to overfit. The closer the AIC value is to 0, the better the model fits and the greater is the parsimony.

7.2.7. Model modification

When testing the initial model, SEM software packages provide the indices of measures of absolute fit, incremental fit measures, and parsimonious fit measures in a table. These indices are the initial analysis of the model fit and work as a base for model improvement.

SEM software also provides lists of the t-values of the estimated parameters and the significance of those parameters. The first approach to model modification is to consider the significant parameters and consider the deletion of non significant parameters.

Once the significance of the parameters has been considered, it is necessary to analyse the modification indices. The aim of the modification indices is to produce suggestions for modifications that will result in lower chi-square values. High modification index values indicate the need to undertake modification. There are four actions that can be undertaken: the deletion of the parameter, constraining the parameter, adding a new parameter, or allowing for covariation with other parameters.

In the current research both the parameter significance and modification indices have been considered and actions taken to improve the initial goodness-of-fit. Parameters with insubstantial theoretical justification were deleted. Furthermore, the modification indices were considered for all the non-free parameters. Large scores illustrate no theoretical support and the relevant variable is deleted. Finally, the measurement items in each construct were considered. Some constructs had a large number of measurement items and the measurements associated with high

modification indices were deleted. The deletion reduced the degrees of freedom and improved the overall fit of the model. Furthermore, the chances of overfitting were reduced. There has been an attempt to keep the number of latent variables in each construct at about three (chosen on the basis of the most significant variables). Schumacker and Lomax (1996) consider this the ideal number in structural equation modelling.

Every model modification had theoretical support before being undertaken and is considered against the theoretical structure of the conceptual framework.

7.2.8. Identification of the final model

After interpreting the parameter significance, the modification indices and the indices of goodness-of-fit, the initial model is modified. The final step of structural equation modelling is to interpret the measurements of the new model and either accept or reject the new model.

In the case where the new model is accepted, no further modification will be made and the model is considered to be the final model. The final model can then be interpreted and the relationship between exogenous and endogenous constructs can be explained in both empirical and practical terms.

In Section 7.3 the final models illustrating the relationship between the importance and satisfaction constructs, for each cultural group, are explained.

7.3. The role of importance constructs for information satisfaction with travel guidebooks

Starting from the results of the factor analyses a separate structural equation model has been identified for each cultural group. In the present section the measurements of the goodness-of-fit of each initial model (see Figures 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4 for the initial model specification) are compared with the measurements of the final models and the relationship between importance constructs and satisfaction constructs are interpreted.

7.3.1. The Japanese sample

As shown in the specification of the initial model in Figure 7.1, seven exogenous constructs of importance were identified. Table 7.1 shows the latent variables included in the model for each exogenous construct. For an interpretation of the initial factor analysis and the importance constructs see Section 6.1.2.

Table 7.1. Latent variables included in each exogenous construct.

Health	Health hazards	Emergency numbers	Medical/hospital service	Local food/drinks		
Local living	Taxi tips and costs	Bus and train	Air routes and fares	Places to shop	Short trips/itineraries	Climate
Safety	Internet cafes	Currency & exchange rates	Dangerous places to visit	Personal risks	Time differences	
Basics	Places to stay	Maps	How to reach the destination			
Communication	Language phrases	How to meet local people	Local customs and beliefs			

Culture	Churches / temples	Historic sites	Festivals and social events			
Info	Tourist information centres	Banks				

From the factor analysis of the satisfaction with the items of information provided in a travel guidebook (see Appendix 7 for results of the factor analysis) five endogenous constructs have been identified. Table 7.2 shows the latent variables included in the model for each endogenous construct.

Table 7.2. Latent variables included in each endogenous construct.

Basics	Places to stay	Places to eat	Short trips/ itineraries	Places to shop
Culture	Churches/temples	Museums	Historic sites	
Practical hints	Personal risks	Tourist information centres	Currency & exchange rates	
Communication	Telephone prefixes	How to tip & how much	Time differences	
General overview	Physical landscape	History		

The goodness-of-fit values produced by the initial model are shown in table 7.3.

Table 7.3. GOF Measures for the Initial Structural Model (Japanese sample).

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Model estimate
Model fit		
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	802.849
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	538
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to2	1.490
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.760
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.703

RMSEA	Acceptable values under .08	.068
Comparative measures		
TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.815
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.652
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.842
Parsimony measures		
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.614
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	1058.849

From these initial values, the modification indices and the parameter estimates the initial model has been modified to improve total fit and eliminate non significant parameters. The final model is shown in Figure 7.5.

From the initial model four exogenous and two endogenous constructs were deleted. The number of latent variables has been reduced for some of the constructs and of the initial 35 equations between importance constructs and satisfaction constructs only six are significant. Furthermore, there is covariance between each of the exogenous constructs. The regression weights are shown in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4. Regression weights (Japanese sample).

	Estimate	S.E.	t-value.	P
Importance factor <i>local living</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>culture</i>	.323	.109	2.977	.003
Satisfaction factor <i>general overview</i>	.231	.123	1.874	.061
Importance factor <i>culture</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>culture</i>	.424	.116	3.642	.000
Satisfaction factor <i>communication</i>	.308	.128	2.408	.016
Satisfaction factor <i>general overview</i>	.324	.133	2.444	.015
Importance factor <i>health</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>communication</i>	.353	.161	2.187	.029

The overall goodness-of-fit of the final model has improved and Table 7.5 shows a comparative analysis of the initial and the final model.

Table 7.5. A comparison of the GOF of the initial and final model (Japanese sample).

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Initial Model	Final Model
Model fit			
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	802.849	134.306
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	538	110
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to2	1.492	1.221
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.760	.888
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.703	.844
RMSEA	Acceptable values under .08	.068	.043
Comparative measures			
TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.815	.959
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.652	.845
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.842	.967
Parsimony measures			
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.614	.638
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	1058.849	220.306

Table 7.5 shows that the overall goodness-of-fit of the model has improved. Although the initial model showed good fit, the high number of latent variables and constructs could have caused the model to overfit. Additionally, despite the good fit, there were only a few significant parameters.

By reducing the number of parameters and deleting the constructs that are either not causing, or are not caused by any relationship, the overall fit of the model has improved, while parsimony has been achieved.

7.3.1.1. Explanation of the model

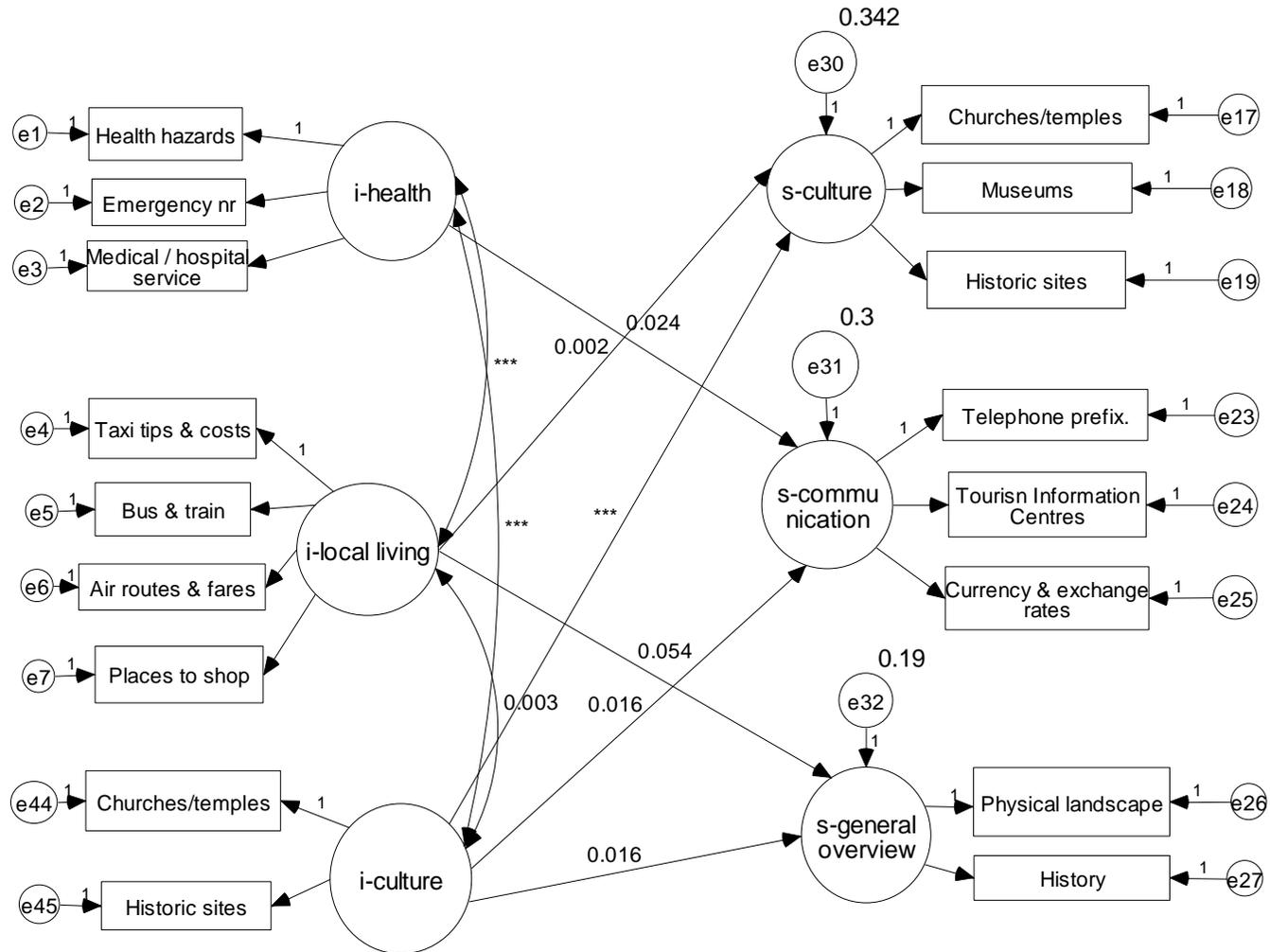
The model in Figure 7.5 shows that the importance construct *culture* is the only construct explaining more than one satisfaction factor. Although in the relationship between importance and satisfaction, factor *culture* was expected to be important, the SEM shows further significant relationships between the importance of information related to churches, temples, historic sites and festivals with information on how to communicate within the country, and with information related to the general overview of the destination such as physical landscape and history. Therefore, although information related to culture and cultural sites did not appear of importance from the initial factor analysis, the SEM has demonstrated that the information provided in travel guidebooks on culture and cultural sites affect the general satisfaction with information not only related to culture, but also to communication and the general overview of the destination.

Furthermore, the SEM demonstrates that satisfaction in each factor is affected by more than one importance construct. Satisfaction with cultural information is affected by information on culture and information on how to move around the destination. Satisfaction with information related to how to communicate within the destination is affected by information on health and culture, while satisfaction with information related to the general overview of the destination is affected by

information on how to move around the destination and information on culture and cultural sites. Therefore, to be satisfied with one construct, Japanese travellers need to be provided with the correct amount and depth of at least two importance constructs.

The overall level of explanation for satisfaction is reasonable; the multiple R^2 is given at 34% for culture, 30% for communication and 19% for general overview.

Figure 7.5. Importance constructs for information satisfaction with travel guidebooks (Japanese sample).



7.3.2. The Korean sample

Figure 7.2 shows the specification of the initial model for the Korean sample, in which six exogenous constructs illustrating importance level were identified. Table 7.6 shows the latent variables included in the model for each exogenous construct. From the initial factor analysis only latent variables with a loading greater than .59 have been included. For an interpretation of the initial factor analysis and the importance constructs see Section 6.1.2.

Table 7.6. Latent variables included in each exogenous construct (Korean sample).

Basics	Places to stay	Short trips / itineraries	Maps
Local living	Air routes and fares	Banks	
communication	How to meet local people	Language phrases	
Safety	Practical hints for children	Medical / hospital services	
Health	Health hazards	Local food and drinks	
Destination overview	Physical landscape	Climate	

The factor analysis on the satisfaction with the items of information provided in travel guidebooks (see Appendix 7 for results of the factor analysis) produced five endogenous constructs. Table 7.7 shows the latent variables included in the model for each endogenous construct.

Table 7.7. Latent variables included in each endogenous construct (Korean sample).

Sites	Museums	Churches/temples	Historic sites	Places to shop
Basics	Bus and train	Places to stay	Places to eat	
Events	Festival & social events	Cultural events	Short trips/itineraries	
Getting around	Maps	History	How to reach the destination	
General overview	Time differences	Climate		

The goodness-of-fit values produced by the initial model are shown in Table 7.8.

Table 7.8. GOF Measures for the Initial Structural Model (Korean sample).

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Model estimate
Model fit		
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	394.93
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	279
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to 2	1.416
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.807
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.739
RMSEA	Acceptable values under .08	.061
Comparative measures		
TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.842
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.690
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.874
Parsimony measures		
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.596
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	592.937

By examining the modification indices and the parameter estimates, the initial model is modified to improve total fit and to eliminate non significant parameters. The final model is shown in Figure 7.6.

From the initial model three exogenous constructs were deleted. All of the endogenous constructs have remained, as they all have a significant relationship with at least one of the exogenous constructs. The number of latent variables has not been changed and of the initial 30 equations between importance constructs and satisfaction constructs only six are significant. Furthermore, there is no covariance

between any of the exogenous constructs. The regression weights are shown in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9. Regression weights (Korean sample).

	Estimate	S.E.	t-value.	P
Importance factor <i>local living</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>moving</i>	2.417	.964	2.508	.012
Satisfaction factor <i>general overview</i>	1.485	.574	2.588	.010
Importance factor <i>communication</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>getting around</i>	-.980	.326	-3.007	.003
Importance factor <i>safety</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>sites</i>	1.373	.437	3.139	.002
Satisfaction factor <i>basics</i>	.853	.308	2.770	.006
Satisfaction factor <i>events</i>	1.337	.445	3.003	.003

The overall goodness-of-fit of the final model has improved and Table 7.10 shows a comparative analysis of the initial and the final model.

Table 7.10. A comparison of the GOF of the initial and final model (Korean sample).

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Initial Model	Final Model
Model fit			
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	394.93	270.557
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	279	161
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to 2	1.416	1.680
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.807	.795
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.739	.733
RMSEA	Acceptable values under .08	.061	.078
Comparative measures			
TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.842	.814
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.690	.694
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values	.874	.842

	indicate better fit		
Parsimony measures			
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.596	.610
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	592.937	368.557

The initial model shows good fit and the GFI and AGFI show higher scores in the initial model than in the final model. The high number of constructs and latent variables are probably the reason for those high scores, and have caused the initial model to slightly overfit. By removing the parameters which are not significant the model has maintained an acceptable level of GFI and AGFI, while improving parsimony.

7.3.2.1. Explanation of the model

For the Korean sample there are three importance factors explaining all of the satisfaction factors. Safety that is ranked as the fourth construct is affecting satisfaction with the three constructs sites, basics, and events. These constructs include information on sites, basic information such as places to stay and places to eat, and information on events and short trips and itineraries. For these three constructs, safety is the only importance factor affecting them.

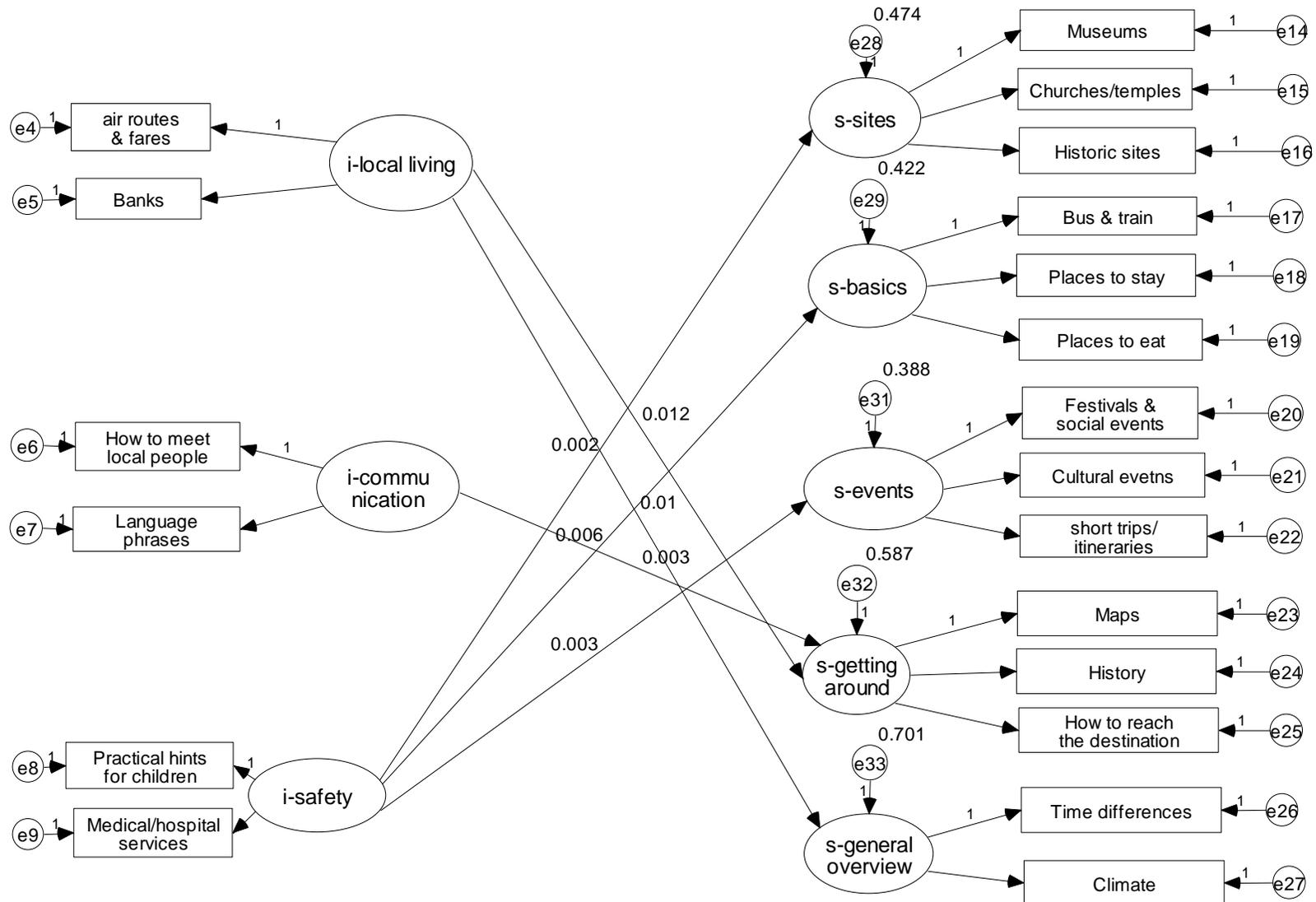
Importance factor *local living* explains the satisfaction factors moving and general overview.

While satisfaction factor general overview of the destination is accounted for by factor *local living* (the provision of information related to air tours and fares, and banks), satisfaction with information on how to move around the destination

(satisfaction factor moving) is also accounted for by local living and by information on how to communicate with local people (factor communication).

Overall the satisfaction constructs are reasonably well explained. The multiple R square is given as 47% for sites, 42% for basics, 39% for events, 59% for moving and 70% for general overview.

Figure 7.6. Importance constructs for information satisfaction with travel guidebooks (Korean sample).



7.3.3. The Chinese sample

The Chinese analysis result is given in Figure 7.3. where six exogenous constructs are extracted from the factor analysis of the Chinese sample. Table 7.11 shows the latent variables included in the model for each exogenous construct. From the initial factor analysis carried out in Section 6.12 only latent variables with a loading greater than .60 have been taken. For an interpretation of the initial factor analysis and the importance constructs see Section 6.1.2.

Table 7.11. Latent variables included in each exogenous construct (Chinese sample).

Local living	Taxi tips and costs	Bus and train	Air routes and fares	Local public transport	Local food and drinks
Everyday hints	Festivals and social events	Practical hints for women	Practical hints for children	Photos of attractions	Maps
Communication	Local customs and beliefs	Avoiding arguments	Language phrases		
Basics	Places to eat	Places to stay	How to tip and how much		
Health	Medical/hospital service	Emergency numbers	Health hazards		
Safety	Mobile phone coverage	Personal risks			

The factor analysis on the satisfaction with the items of information provided in travel guidebooks (see Appendix 7 for results of the factor analysis) produced three endogenous constructs. Table 7.12 shows the latent variables included in the model for each endogenous construct.

Table 7.12. Latent variables included in each endogenous construct (Chinese sample).

Attractions	Photos of attractions	Maps	Historic sites	Places to shop	Museums
Basics	Places to eat	Places to stay	Churches/temples		

General overview	Climate	Physical landscape	How to reach the destination		
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The goodness-of-fit values produced by the initial model are shown in Table 7.13.

Table 7.13. GOF Measures for the Initial Structural Model (Chinese sample).

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Model estimate
Model fit		
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	689.605
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	401
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to 2	1.720
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.639
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.554
RMSEA	Acceptable values under .08	.108
Comparative measures		
TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.701
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.565
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.743
Parsimony measures		
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.517
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	879.605

Using the modification indices and the parameter estimates, the initial model is modified to improve total fit, and to eliminate non significant parameters. The final model is shown in Figure 7.7.

From the initial six exogenous constructs only four remain. However, all of the endogenous constructs remain, as they all have a significant relationship with at least one of the exogenous constructs. The number of latent variables has changed, decreasing in number in both the exogenous and endogenous constructs. Of the

initial 18 equations between importance constructs and satisfaction constructs only six remain as significant. Furthermore, there are five covariances between the exogenous constructs. The regression weights are shown in Table 7.14.

Table 7.14. Regression weights (Chinese sample).

	Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P
Importance factor <i>every day hints</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>attractions</i>	3.685	2.041	1.805	.071
Satisfaction factor <i>basics</i>	4.052	2.317	1.749	.080
Importance factor <i>communication</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>general overview</i>	.525	.183	2.861	.004
Importance factor <i>health</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>attractions</i>	1.266	.573	2.210	.027
Satisfaction factor <i>basics</i>	1.330	.659	2.019	.044
Importance factor <i>safety</i>				
Satisfaction factor <i>general overview</i>	-.468	.215	-2.180	.029
Satisfaction factor <i>basics</i>	-2.912	1.360	-2.142	.032
Satisfaction factor <i>attractions</i>	-2.725	1.155	-2.358	.018

The overall goodness-of-fit of the final model has improved and Table 7.15 shows a comparative analysis of the initial and the final model.

Table 7.15. A comparison of the GOF of the initial and final model.

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Initial Model	Final Model
Model fit			
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	689.605	256.179
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	401	175
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to 2	1.720	1.464
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.639	.747
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.554	.667

RMSEA	Acceptable values under .80	.108	.086
Comparative measures			
TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.701	.845
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.565	.694
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.743	.871
Parsimony measures			
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.517	.566
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	879.605	368.179

The initial model shows a poor fit, with the GFI below .64 and AGFI below .56. The initial analysis of the score weights and the modification indices has helped in the identification of the parameters and the variables to eliminate. As a result, the final model has improved the model fit, parsimony, and comparative fit measures. All of the goodness-of-fit measures are now at an acceptable level.

7.3.3.1. Explanation of the model

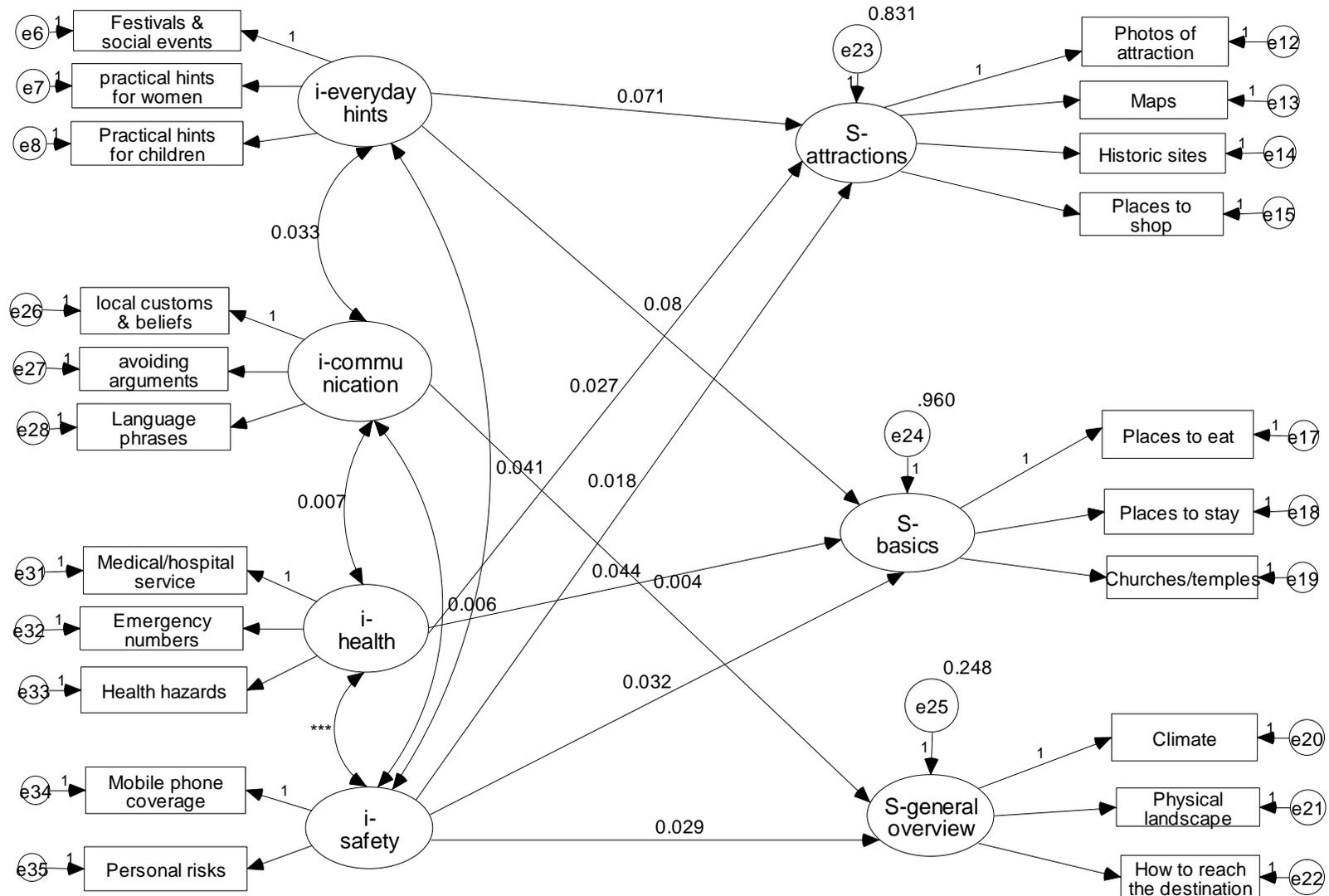
In the Chinese sample four importance constructs are needed to explain three satisfaction factors.

Safety, ranked sixth among the importance factors, but aids in accounting for all of the three satisfaction constructs. No satisfaction factor is accounted for solely by one importance construct. Chinese travellers are affected by information on everyday hints, health and safety, to be satisfied with information on attractions, and

basic information on where to stay and where to eat; they are affected by information on how to communicate with local people and safety.

Overall explanation of the satisfaction dimensions is quite high for attractions with a multiple R^2 of 83% and basics at 96% with the construct general overview lower at 25%.

Figure 7.7. Importance constructs for information satisfaction with travel guidebooks (Chinese sample).



7.3.4. The North American sample

The specification of the model in Figure 7.4 identified five exogenous constructs and three endogenous constructs. Table 7.16 shows the latent variables included in the model for each exogenous and endogenous construct. From the initial factor analysis carried out in Section 6.12 only latent variables with a loading greater than .60 have been taken. For an interpretation of the initial factor analysis and the importance constructs see Section 6.1.2. For results of the factor analysis on satisfaction see Table 2 in Appendix 7.

Table 7.16. Latent variables included in each exogenous and endogenous construct (North American sample).

Exogenous constructs							
Health	Emergency numbers	Environmental hazards	Practical hints for women	Health hazards	Medical, hospital service		
Culture	Historic sites	Museums	Festivals and social events	Cultural events	Short trips/ itineraries		
Communication	How to meet local people	Avoiding arguments	Local customs and beliefs	Language phrases			
Local living	Local public transport	Bus and train	Local food and drinks	Tourist information centres			
Basics	How to tip and how much	Internet cafes	Places to stay				
Endogenous constructs							
Attractions	Historic sites	Museums	Places of entertainment	Cultural events	Churches /temples	Places to shop	Festival & social events
General overview	History	Climate	Embassy and consulate				
Basics	Places to eat	Places to stay					

The goodness-of-fit values produced by the initial model are shown in table 7.17.

Table 7.17. GOF Measures for the Initial Structural Model (North American sample).

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Model estimate
Model fit		
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	787.121
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	438
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to 2	1.793
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.744
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.692
RMSEA	Acceptable values under .08	.078
Comparative measures		
TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.831
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.721
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.851
Parsimony measures		
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.619
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	965.121

Using the modification indices and the parameter estimates the initial model is modified to improve the overall fit, and to eliminate non significant parameters.

The final model is shown in Figure 7.8.

Two of the exogenous constructs have been deleted (culture and communication) as they did not have a significant relationship to any of the endogenous constructs. On the other hand, all of the endogenous constructs had a significant relationship caused by at least one of the exogenous constructs. The number of latent variables has changed, decreasing in number in both the exogenous and endogenous

constructs. Of the initial 15 equations between importance constructs and satisfaction constructs only six remain significant. Furthermore, there are three significant covariances between the exogenous constructs. The regression weights are shown in Table 7.18.

Table 7.18. Regression weights (North American sample).

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Importance factor health				
Satisfaction factor <i>basics</i>	-.389	.173	-2.256	.024
Importance factor local living				
Satisfaction factor <i>attractions</i>	-.699	.221	-3.161	.002
Satisfaction factor <i>general overview</i>	-.469	.182	-2.574	.010
Importance factor basics				
Satisfaction factor <i>attractions</i>	1.710	.368	4.642	.000
Satisfaction factor <i>general overview</i>	1.353	.316	4.278	.000
Satisfaction factor <i>basics</i>	1.387	.394	3.522	.000

The overall goodness-of-fit of the final model has improved and Table 7.19 shows a comparative analysis of the initial and the final model.

Table 7.19. A comparison of the GOF of the initial and final model.

Goodness-of-fit Measures	Level of acceptable fit	Initial Model	Final Model
Model fit			
Likelihood ratio Chi-Square statistic	Chi-square value	787.121	274.070
Degree of freedom	The number of redundant correlations/ covariance minus the number of estimated coefficients	438	143
CMIN/DF	Ratio 2 to 1 or 3 to 2	1.793	1.917
GFI	Value close to .90, high value indicates better fit	.744	.830
AGFI	Value (adjusted for df) close to .90, high value indicated better fit	.692	.774
RMSEA	Acceptable values under .80	.078	.083
Comparative measures			

TLI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.831	.873
NFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.721	.806
CFI	Value close to .90, higher values indicate better fit	.851	.894
Parsimony measures			
PGFI	Higher values indicate greater parsimony	.619	.624
AIC	Smaller positive values indicate parsimony	965.121	368.070

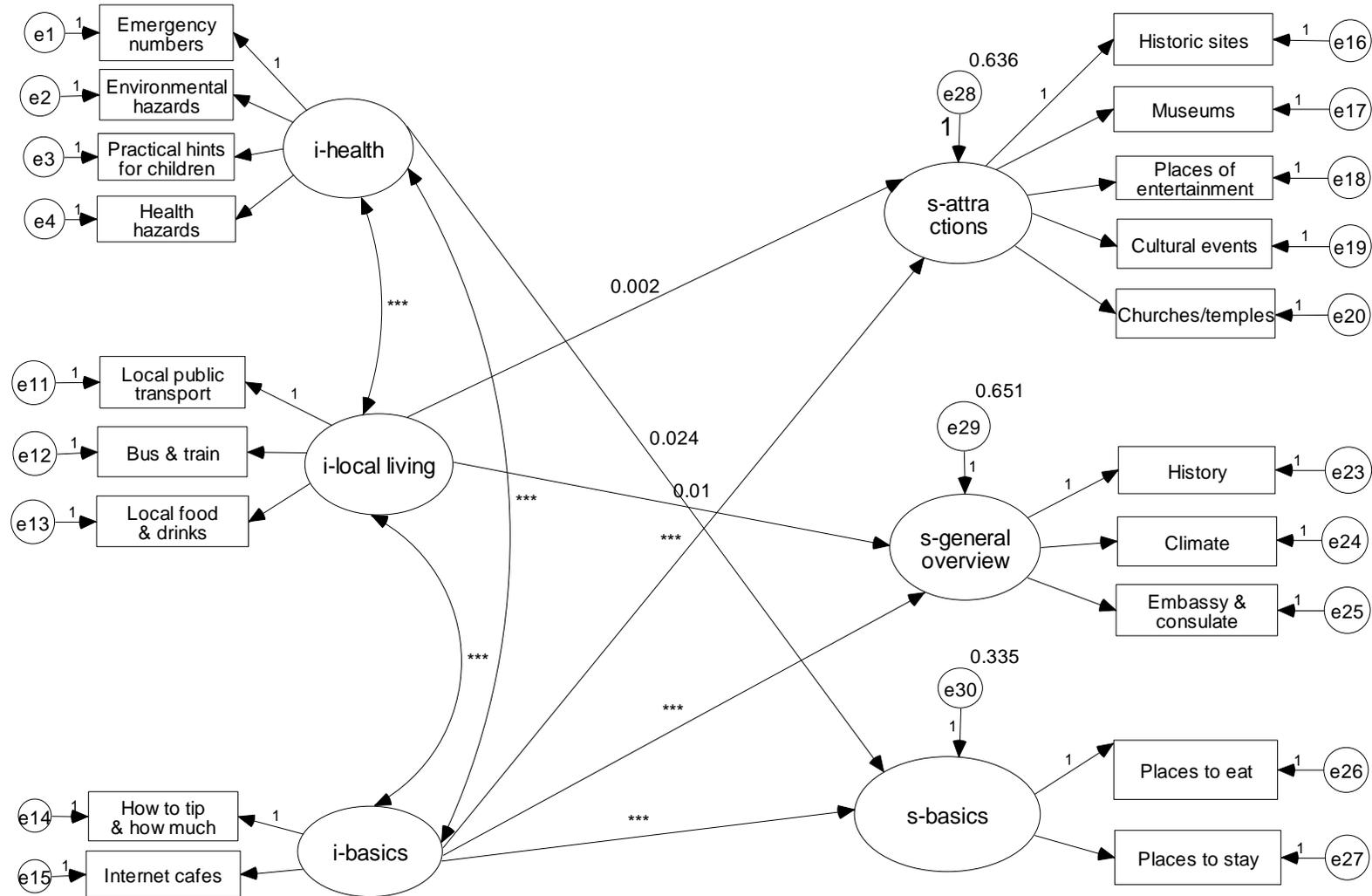
The initial model shows a mediocre fit, with the GFI below .750 and AGFI below .695. The initial analysis of the score weights and the modification indices has helped in the identification of the parameters and the variables to eliminate. As a result, the final model has improved the model fit, parsimony, and comparative figures. All of the goodness-of-fit measures are now at an acceptable level.

7.3.4.1. Explanation of the model

Three importance factors are affecting three satisfaction factors, and basic information alone affects all the three satisfaction factors. Each satisfaction factor is affected by two importance factors. To be satisfied with information on attractions, and information on the general overview of the destination, North American travellers need to be provided with the correct amount and depth of information on moving and being on the roads at the destination, and basic information. To be satisfied with basic information, North American travellers require not only basic information but also information on health.

The overall level of explanation of the satisfaction constructs is moderately high with a multiple R^2 of 64% for attractions, 65% for general overview and 34% for basics.

Figure 7.8. Importance constructs for information satisfaction with travel guidebooks (North American sample).



7.4. Conclusions

The structural modelling is based upon four models, one for each culture – Japanese, Korean, Chinese and North American. As can be seen from Table 7.20 there is some overlap of the relevant main dimensions. Overall a large element of satisfaction relates to finding what is important to different cultures in the guidebooks. However, each culture perceives different relational structures for travel guidebooks.

The Japanese are health conscious but concerned with culture and find these concepts cause satisfaction with culture aspects of guidebooks alongside communication. For the Japanese market, culture locations, local living information and health information are prominent elements for achieving satisfaction.

The Koreans are most concerned with local day to day destination issues including communication and want information that makes them feel secure. This information also derives significant market satisfaction for basic data provision particularly related to local movement and overall information.

The Chinese are seeking day-to-day information, with an emphasis on communication and risk reduction, and find this information causes market satisfaction with finding attractions and basic information including an overview of the destination.

The North Americans are looking for health related information, local living information and basic knowledge and they find this information currently causes a degree of satisfaction with finding attractions and basic information including an overview of the destination.

There are similarities between cultures, particularly in what derives satisfaction but less so in what is considered to be important information for a guidebook and can result in market satisfaction.

Table 7.20. Summary of Structural Equation Modelling results.

Japanese Sample	Importance	Satisfaction
Health hazards, Emergency numbers, Medical/hospital services	Health	Communication
Taxi tips & costs, Bus & train, Air routes & fares, Places to shop	Local living	Culture, General overview
Churches/temples, historic sites	Culture	Culture, Communication, General overview
Korean Sample	Importance	Satisfaction
Air routes & fares, banks	Local living	Getting around, General overview
How to meet local people, language phrases	Communication	Getting around
Practical hints for children, medical/hospital services	Safety	Sites, Basics, Events
Chinese Sample	Importance	Satisfaction
Festivals & social events, practical hints for women, practical hints for children	Every day hints	Attractions, Basics
Local customs & beliefs, avoiding arguments, language phrases	Communication	General overview
Medical/hospital services, emergency numbers, health hazards	Health	Attractions, Basics
Mobile phone coverage, personal risks	Safety	Attractions, Basics, General overview
North American Sample	Importance	Satisfaction
Emergency numbers, environmental hazards, practical hints for children, health hazards	Health	Basics
Local public transport, bus & train, local food & drinks	Local living	Attractions, General overview
How to tip & how much, Internet cafes	Basics	Attractions, General overview, Basics

Note: The variables in the sample column are the main variables loading on each importance dimension.

CHAPTER 8

Discussion and conclusions

8.1. Introduction

In deciding to conduct the current investigation, the researcher identified a limited understanding of the type of information required by independent travellers. The main aim of the thesis emerged as an exploration of the information needs of independent travellers. It was soon realised that there are several alternative information sources but that the least researched area was travel guidebooks. Travel guidebooks have been studied in the literature for their impact on the tourism phenomenon and destination image, and for their impact on the evolution of independent tourism. However, no published work on travel guidebooks seemed to examine the question of cross-cultural differences in the search for guidebook information.

The decision to focus on fully independent travellers (FIT) reflected an observation evident from the recent literature, that a shift is occurring in tourism away from mass group tours and towards independent tourism. Furthermore, independent tourism has been increasingly recognised as a form of sustainable tourism in developing countries. The literature has identified that independent travellers produce a higher level of economic contribution to the destinations where they purchase most of their tourism services. Group travellers purchase most of their services in their country of origin, often with few transactions between the foreign

tour operators and the local tourism operators at the destination. Furthermore, independent travellers are more inclined to explore and experience the culture of the destination visited in an authentic way, opposing the trend of cultural commodification and commercialisation in tourism. The independent traveller is also more likely to be empowered by using a travel guidebook.

Although the issues associated with information search and needs are widely covered in the consumer behaviour literature, limited prior research was identified with a specific focus on tourism and even less in regard to the use of travel guidebooks. It is recognised in the literature that the purchase of tourism services involves different levels of risk, including physical risks (the potential traveller might be unsafe at the destination), financial risks (the money spent for the trip is not worthwhile), temporal risks (the time spent on the trip could be spent in a better way), psychological risks (a trip might not induce the feeling of empowerment sought during the holiday), and social risks (the holiday or trip does not provide the right social recognition for the traveller).

These risks induce potential travellers to opt for a group holiday, unless substantial and correct information is provided to them, in an attempt to reduce the risks associated with the trip. Therefore, information search and information sources are vital for the transition of group travellers into independent travellers. The growth of the independent travel market may be the reason why the use of travel guidebooks has increased. This may also relate to the reduction of risk.

An examination of the current behavioural literature revealed that the publication of travel guidebooks relates strongly to the question of cultural difference in tourism – the most significant cultural differences being between East and West. Moreover,

with the continuing growth of Asia-Pacific tourism, there will be a large non-western growth market for travel guidebooks over the medium term.

The research problem was narrowed down to the question of whether different cultures require different travel information as supplied in travel guidebooks and in what way. How should the publishers of travel guidebooks direct their publications for tourists from different cultural backgrounds?

8.2. Main stages of the research

Drawing upon the relevant literature, a conceptual model was developed to characterise the relationships which exist between independent and group travellers and their use of travel guidebooks.

After an introductory section, this thesis has provided an extensive and comprehensive literature review on independent tourism, information search, and the issues related to culture and cultural based behaviour. The literature review on information search explored the various theoretical models in consumer behaviour and information search in the case of general product or service purchase. These theories were then applied to the holiday consumption and from there the conceptual framework was outlined. The literature review section on culture focused on cross-cultural analysis determinants and measurements, to introduce cultural differences in information search by travellers.

The conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 3, starts with the initial search for information in terms of destination and travel choice. It is argued that there is little difference between independent travellers and package tourists during the initial search for information since both groups need to undertake this initial search. The following stage is the planning phase. It is argued that planning a trip requires knowledge of the destination, and therefore involves a search for information. During this phase package tour travellers and independent travellers behave differently. Package tour travellers perform a very limited search, as tour operators and travel agencies organise the necessary arrangements within a small range of pre-packaged options and provide customers with the required destination information. For independent travellers the planning phase is a crucial stage of the holiday as it provides a structure for the trip.

The final stage of the model involves actual travel. During the trip, travellers have to organise on-site activities and services that have not been arranged or booked during the planning phase. Independent travellers experience a need for further information. In the case of package tours, tour operators arrange on-site activities, and the accompanying staff provide information and suggestions for the limited free time that is available to the tourist.

The first conclusion of this conceptual framework is that travel guidebooks are used more by independent travellers than by package tour travellers for on-site information search. The independent traveller's need for information can be satisfied through the use of travel guidebooks, in terms of basic information, reducing risk and to assure quality in the trip.

In the literature review on information search it is argued that travellers undertake information searches with the primary aim of enhancing the quality of their trip. Travellers can improve the trip quality by decreasing the level of uncertainty and increasing destination knowledge. The conceptual framework has taken this into account. The information search occurs within the focused scope of reducing risk and consequently increasing quality. As a consequence, the conceptual framework associates information search as a form of risk reduction and quality assurance.

In the literature review it has been argued that the type of information sought and the selection of the information sources used by each tourist to plan the vacation are not random. For this reason, there are three variables in the conceptual framework, to determine the type of information needed and the source of information used. These variables are cultural background, personal travel experience and knowledge about the destination.

In this study it has been assumed that Japanese, Chinese, Korean and North American travellers represent a degree of cultural diversity that is representative of significant behavioural variation. From the literature it is expected that different cultures have different information needs and search behaviour and that the items of information sought in a travel guidebook and the use of information sources by these cultural groups will differ from one another. Similarly, the literature pointed to the conclusion that the items of information and information sources vary depending on personal travel experience.

Furthermore, in the conceptual framework, it is assumed that while undertaking the trip, and searching for information, experience will be gained. This experience will

affect the information search for future travel. The experience will also affect the level of satisfaction with the sources of information used.

From the conceptual framework, the following six general hypotheses were formulated:

1. Travel guidebooks are used more by independent travellers than by package tourists.
2. The source of travel information used by independent travellers differs according to cultural background, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination.
3. The types of information sought in travel guidebooks by independent travellers differ according to cultural background of the tourists, travel experience, and knowledge of the destination.
4. Different cultural groups perceive the use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality differently.
Travellers with different travel experience perceive the use of travel guidebooks to enhance travel quality differently.
5. The physical characteristic of travel guidebooks preferred by independent travellers differs according to cultural background and travel experience.
6. Information obtained from travel guidebooks by independent travellers has different levels of importance for each cultural group, and these different importance levels impact upon the level of satisfaction with the travel guidebook.

After the conceptual framework was outlined and explained, the researcher outlined the data collection process and discussed methodology issues.

This research is exploratory and quantitative in nature. A quantitative questionnaire has been developed and distributed to Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and North American travellers in Sydney and Thailand. Altogether 1,096 valid questionnaires have been collected. The questionnaire was translated from English into Japanese, Chinese, and Korean to facilitate respondents. The questionnaires were distributed at tourist attractions and collected on the spot.

Within the conceptual framework it has been assumed that group travellers undertake less information search and use travel guidebooks less than independent travellers. The data collection included 20% of group travellers, providing a control group to test whether there is a difference between independent and group travellers, and whether independent travellers use travel guidebooks more than group travellers.

By necessity the method of data collection had to involve a survey instrument. A decision was taken to collect data in two countries that were not cultural samples, and the two most obvious western and eastern examples were determined to be Australia and Thailand.

A comprehensive survey instrument was developed to measure the elements in the conceptual frame. The reliability and validity of the data generated by the instrument was also tested.

Following an in-depth discussion of methodology, the data was analysed in two parts. The first part conducted a descriptive analysis of the data. In this section of the thesis, the sample was described and the differences between the independent and group travellers were tested. From the descriptive analysis, the second part of the analysis moved on to testing whether cultural background, travel experience, and knowledge about the destination affect the sources of information used while travelling and the types of information sought in a travel guidebook. This section investigated also the differences in the use of travel guidebooks as a means of reducing risk according to cultural background and travel experience. Finally, the physical attributes sought in travel guidebooks by different cultures and travellers with different travel experiences has been investigated.

The initial descriptive analysis is followed by a rigorous conceptual analysis intended to investigate the types of information sought in travel guidebooks and to outline differences based upon cultural background, travel experience and information about the destination. The final section of the thesis focuses on the impact of importance of each item of information upon satisfaction with the travel guidebook. The approach for this investigation developed constructs of information for both importance and satisfaction with the items of information. Structural equation modelling has then been used to examine the relationship between importance and satisfaction.

The results obtained from the research and outlined in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are discussed in the following section.

8.3. Discussion of the results

The first conclusion from this research is the clear difference between independent and group travellers. The research has demonstrated that, as might be expected, independent travellers use travel guidebooks more than group travellers. However, a substantial percentage (42.8%) of group travellers use travel guidebooks. Guidebooks are mainly used by independent travellers who consider the book as a means of reducing the psychological risk of being unable to travel independently, to reduce the temporal risk of wasting time at attractions that are not worth visiting, and to reduce the financial risk of losing money. In terms of culture, little difference was found across cultures in using travel guidebooks to reduce risk. The present research has shown that the use of travel guidebooks to reduce psychological risk is considered to be the most important by Japanese, Korean and North American travellers. There is no difference among the cultural groups. Where there are some differences in the use of travel guidebooks as a means of reducing risk, most of the differences are between Chinese travellers, on the one hand, and Japanese and Korean travellers on the other.

The most important consideration for independent travellers is how recent and up to date the information is in a travel guidebook. Independent travellers expect a constant update of the information provided and they are more likely to choose the most recently published guidebook from the various available brands.

The issue of recent and updated information in a travel guidebook is of primary concern for all the cultural groups. However, the North American respondents have attributed a higher value than other cultural groups to the issue on how up to date the information is, while Korean travellers have attributed a higher value than other

cultural groups on the publication date of the edition. However, none of the cultural groups are willing to risk being provided with unreliable information on prices of recommended services, opening times of attractions and old telephone numbers. For many backpackers it is considered important to explore newly discovered destinations away from the beaten track. As a form of fashion in travel, many travellers want to make sure they are visiting the most fashionable destination and attractions.

Additionally, independent travellers prefer travel guidebooks of a reasonable size that can fit in a pocket. The physical size of the guidebook and not the conciseness of the information becomes another important factor in the selection of the book. Travellers don't want to face the extra weight and space taken by a travel guidebook while travelling.

When publishing a travel guidebook and deciding on its physical attributes, the issue of private advertising is worth noting. The provision of private advertising has been considered the least important attribute of a guidebook for all cultural groups. However, there is a significant difference among the cultural groups. Although the item was ranked as last by all of the groups, Chinese travellers (with a mean of 2.51) seem to be more inclined to accept private advertising than North American travellers, who attributed a mean of 1.75 to the item.

In terms of how much travellers are prepared to pay for a guidebook, the research has demonstrated that a suitable price is considered to be less than US\$30. This is particularly important for Chinese travellers more so than for North American and Japanese travellers, and for travellers with no or little experience.

From this research it has been found that different guidebook uses do not only relate to the type of travel (independent or package travel), but that culture and knowledge of the destination also impact upon the use of travel guidebooks. Japanese and North American travellers use travel guidebooks more than Korean and Chinese travellers. However, this may relate more to language and availability. Similarly, first time visitors to the destination use travel guidebooks more than repeat visitors.

One of the major issues of investigation has been the impact of cultural background on the information sought in travel guidebooks. In general, the items of information considered most important in travel guidebooks by independent travellers relate to how to move around the destination (maps, bus and trains, local public transport), where to find accommodation and food (places to stay and places to eat), safety (dangerous places to visit, personal risks, emergency numbers), and attractions (festivals and social events). The single items of information taken per se did not show significant differences between cultures. However, when grouped into constructs, the importance attributed to the items of information differs. The factor analysis has shown that Japanese and North American travellers are more concerned with health related information, while Korean travellers are more interested in information related to basic information, and Chinese travellers with information on where to find services. With this research it has been demonstrated that cultural background impacts upon the items of information sought in a travel guidebook and that this is understood more readily through a conceptual structural analysis rather than a simple comparison of variables.

The different information sought from travel guidebooks is not only impacted upon by cultural background. This research has confirmed the initial hypotheses that knowledge of the destination, and travel experience also impact upon the

information items sought in travel guidebooks. Visitors travelling to a destination for the first time are more concerned with safety information and information about how to move around, while repeat visitors are more concerned with transport and health.

For both experienced travellers and travellers with little or no experience, the three types of information considered most important refer to physical risk reduction and transport. However, the ranking and the factor analyses undertaken indicate that the components and the set of variables generating them are different. For travellers with little or no experience, information on safety such as dangerous places to visit, personal risks and practical hints for women are the most important. Included in this component is also information on currency and exchange rates, telephone prefixes and maps. The second most important type of information for travellers with little or no experience is information related to transport, while the third most important is health-related information. For experienced travellers the most important type of information relates to transport at the destination, health and safety. Similar to the safety and health component of travellers with no or little experience, the two components include variables not strictly related to health and safety. Indeed the health component includes banks, and how to reach the destination, while the safety component includes currency and exchange rates and Internet cafes.

Finally, this thesis has addressed the issue related to importance of the items of information. The question is addressed by how importance level impacts upon the satisfaction with the information provided in travel guidebooks and how this varies on the basis of cultural background.

The structural equation modelling has shown differences in the relationship between importance and satisfaction among the cultures. Taking the factor analyses on importance and satisfaction as the base, structural equation modelling has been performed for each cultural group. The number of importance constructs explaining the satisfaction constructs differ according to cultural background. The type of constructs also impact upon the satisfaction constructs according to culture. In the case of Japanese travellers, culture alone impacts upon the satisfaction with information on culture, communication, and general destination overview. Although information on culture is not considered to be of major importance among Japanese travellers, the same constructs cannot be denied by travel guidebook publishers as it impacts upon satisfaction with three main variables. Similarly, information on health impacts upon the satisfaction with information on communication and local living impacts upon information on general overview.

In the case of Korean travellers, three importance factors explain the satisfaction with five satisfaction factors. 'Safety' alone impacts upon three constructs (sites, basics, and events), 'local living' explains 'getting around' and 'general overview', while 'communication' explains moving. Similar to the Japanese sample, one factor alone, not ranked as one of the most important factors, impacts upon the satisfaction with three factors.

Similar to the Japanese sample, three importance factors impact upon three satisfaction factors in the case of the North American sample. In a similar way to the Japanese, Korean and North American samples an importance factor which was not ranked highly impacts upon three satisfaction factors. 'Basic information' impacts upon 'attractions', 'general overview', and 'basic information'. 'Health'

impacts upon 'basic information', while 'on the road' impacts upon 'attractions' and 'general overview'.

The Chinese sample differs from the other cultural groups. Four importance factors are needed to explain three satisfaction factors. This cultural group is the only group in which the number of importance constructs is higher than the number of satisfaction factors explained. However, as for the other cultural groups there is only one importance factor impacting upon three satisfaction factors. This factor is 'safety', which has not been ranked highly on level of importance.

This research has demonstrated that there are cultural differences in the items of information impacting upon satisfaction, with information on culture being particularly important for the Japanese travellers, safety for the Korean and Chinese travellers, and basics for the North American travellers.

8.4. Marketing implications

One of the objectives of this thesis was to discover the key success factors for guidebook publishers to be effective in the independent travel market within the Asia-Pacific region.

From the conclusions discussed above it is possible to recommend some marketing implications for travel guidebook publishers.

As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, independent travellers have increased relative to package tourists in recent years, probably with the help of travel guidebooks. Sorensen (2003) further states that for independent travellers and specifically backpackers, being able to discover adventurous places off the beaten track, being assimilated in a group of other backpackers and being seen as experienced, is particularly important. Being able to show fellow backpackers the bargains obtained (even if only a few cents less than was paid by others) is another point of pride. This research has shown that travel guidebooks serve these needs. When editing a travel guidebook, editors should consider including detailed information about how to travel independently, where and how to obtain bargains, and provide information on newly discovered and adventurous attractions. Independent travellers want to feel different and to be considered as such from package travellers and travel guidebooks are one of the means they use to achieve this result. Detailed descriptions of cultural attractions such as churches and temples have become less important over the years. For the publishers of travel guidebooks it is now more important to consider emerging independent travel behaviours ranging from visiting to experiencing the destination.

This research has shown some cultural differences in the information sought in travel guidebooks, and in the use of travel guidebooks to reduce risk. In translating travel guidebooks for particular destinations into other languages, such as Japanese, Chinese and Korean, it is important that the need for different types of information by each cultural group is addressed from a competitive position. For English and Japanese editions, particular care must be placed upon information related to health and safety. Furthermore, it is important that travel guidebook publishers take account of the different types of travel undertaken by different cultural groups.

Chinese travellers require less information on safety and health, but need more business related information as they have a higher propensity to travel for work. Similarly, Japanese travellers are more inclined to travel alone and therefore need different information from Koreans who travel in small groups of friends.

Therefore, a separate safety and health section highlighted under a red cross may be a useful guidebook feature. It will appeal more to the Japanese and North Americans but will not discourage purchases by other groups. In Japanese editions, more discussion is needed of the advantages of particular places for single tourists, or means by which single tourists can avoid additional costs (single supplements) may better place the guidebook in a more competitive Japanese market.

Travel guidebook publishers are also urged to consider the different needs of North American travellers who not only require a higher amount of information on safety when travelling around the Asia-Pacific region, but also need some specific information related to issues related to longer stays at the destination, and how to find employment.

In the previous section the importance of the currency of information has been noted. Travel guidebook publishers are encouraged to look for strategies to improve the longevity of their publications. Internet updates, toll free telephone numbers and SMS services can all respond to the challenges of longevity. Publishing new editions in the second half of the year for the following year can also help competitiveness. In doing so it will however be important to consider the cultural differences towards each strategy selected. The North American group is the oldest and less inclined to respond positively to Internet updates. On the contrary, the

Japanese travellers are not only young, as a cultural group they are also more inclined to use the Internet and technology generally.

In marketing travel guidebooks within the Asia-Pacific region, publishers should give consideration to the travel behaviour of each cultural group. Although this research found that Japanese travellers use travel guidebooks more than other travellers, they are also more likely to visit the destination for a second or third time. Japanese travellers also want recent information. They have a higher propensity to use a travel guidebook purchased on a previous trip than the Chinese and the Koreans. Newer information becomes more important in the Japanese market in order to induce new purchases.

Knowing the right distribution point for travel guidebooks is an important success factor for publishers. This research has demonstrated that most purchases occur at home during the planning phase. Most marketing and distribution should be directed at the countries of origin and less at the destination. The research has also demonstrated that the second most popular time of purchase is immediately prior to departure. The airports of the countries of origin of the travellers become a very important distribution point. As outlined in the conceptual framework the research has demonstrated that group travellers are less inclined to use travel guidebooks. Nevertheless a percentage of group travellers do use guidebooks. These travellers tend to buy their travel guidebooks during the planning phase of the trip. If publishers are interested in reaching this part of the market, an effective point of market and sale of travel guidebooks is travel agencies that organise package travel.

Purchasers consider price as part of a quality-value trade-off. Setting the right price in each market is essential to maintain market volume and competitiveness. This

research has demonstrated that the suitable price for a travel guidebook to maximise volume of sales is less than US \$30 (2005) and that the Chinese market is willing to spend a smaller amount than other cultural groups. To be competitive in the Chinese market it is important to maintain lower prices. Furthermore, the issue of copyright and illegal copies has to be addressed. Especially in China, the higher the price the more likely potential consumers will not buy the product and possibly use illegal copies. Reducing printing costs becomes essential for achieving success in the Chinese market.

Reducing the price is also essential for reaching new consumers. Travellers with little or no experience want to spend less and without experience do not fully see the value of such purchases. This further suggests that a worthwhile marketing strategy could be to introduce new customers at a lower rate. Consequently, cheaper editions of the book could be introduced on the market in order to attract new consumers. Newly acquired customers may then move to the more expensive editions that offer additional features such as free Internet updates.

There are marketing implications from the relationship between perceived importance of guidebook information, and satisfaction with what is provided currently. It may be that travellers who are satisfied with a particular guidebook will be more inclined to re-purchase the same brand. In the purchase decision, different cultures attach different levels of importance to different information. This is sufficiently important to lead to satisfaction. The two constructs (importance/satisfaction) are not only different between cultures but also different between importance and satisfaction. This may indicate that satisfaction is achieved indirectly and not directly from guidebook information. Purchasers are, for example, able to see the attractions that they intend to visit. However, they need

everyday local information, communication and risk reduction information in the case of the Chinese, if they are to feel comfortable.

If this is a correct interpretation, the marketing emphasis on deriving satisfaction could be made more explicit in the guidebook. In the case of the Chinese, the information about attractions needs to be directly related to information about health and risk reduction (socially, personally and healthwise). A similar situation arises with the North Americans but with less emphasis on risk reduction. The Koreans also want to move around (less emphasis on specific attractions) and are less concerned with risk reduction. However, they want information on moving related to penetrating local involvement but with a degree of safety. The Japanese are more concerned with cultural penetration and with gaining an overall understanding of the destination and want this linked more directly to health, security and basic information about how to experience the local culture.

These issues could be editorial control points for books produced for the different cultures, and lead to significant but subtle differences in the way material is presented to each cultural group.

8.5. Limitations and future research

The first limitation encountered in this research is the difficulty of collecting data from Chinese independent travellers. Although every attempt has been made to collect at least 180 questionnaires from independent Chinese travellers, it was

impossible to reach the optimal number to conduct factor analysis and structural equation modelling due to the current travel practices of the Chinese market. Although factor analyses and structural equation modelling have been conducted on the Chinese cultural group, a higher number of respondents would have excluded possible bias in the results, and would have enabled more in-depth analysis. The number of variables analysed together could have been increased beyond 30 in some sections.

A further unavoidable limitation of the results is the skewness of some variables. A list of all the variables with mean, median, standard deviation and skewness has been reported in Appendix 2. To avoid unreliable results, non-parametric testing has been used. The non-parametric tests used are the most powerful available, and still provide sufficient statistical rigour to test the various hypotheses.

It was opted not to investigate the differences between the data collected in Australia and in Thailand as the focus of this research was the differences between cultures and not between destinations. However, this can be seen as a limitation of the research and future research could focus on the needs for information at different destinations.

For the conduct of future research it is recommended that a content analysis is undertaken of the existing travel guidebooks in the Japanese, Korean, Chinese and North American markets. A content analysis could provide more insight into the existing differences in the travel guidebook marketplace and enable content comparison. Such an analysis could relate back to cultural differences and link the results back to traveller attitudes and behaviour towards the use of travel guidebooks.

Further research could also examine whether there are significant differences between western countries in their cultural approach to using information as independent travellers that would warrant different emphases in different world regions.

8.6. Conclusions

In conclusion, this research has demonstrated that there is a difference between independent travellers and group travellers in the use of information sources and in specific travel guidebooks. Travel guidebooks are an aid to reduce risks associated with travelling independently, and they play a positive role in the recent tourism trend, which sees a shift away from mass tourism towards a more sustainable form of independent tourism. For this reason, travel guidebooks are a tool to promote new forms of more sustainable tourism.

This research has also demonstrated that cultural background is a determinant in the types of information searched and in the use of travel guidebooks while travelling. A section of the literature review has focused on how culture affects consumer behaviour. It has been discussed that different cultures are defined by different values and different needs. Risk perception and the use of travel guidebooks to reduce risks are affected by those values and therefore by cultural background. Additionally, culture affects the general hierarchy of needs; also, the need for information is affected by culture.

Finally, this research has provided a contribution to current theories of consumer behaviour, with specific focus on independent tourism and information needs. This research has developed a new conceptual framework, and has also applied advanced statistical methods to data collected for this study, to enable unbiased discussion on possible directions for travel guidebook publishers to be successful in the Asian market.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

Questionnaire in English, Japanese, Korean, Chinese

Appendix 2:

Valid cases, missing cases, mean, median, standard deviation, skewness

Table 1 – Importance of items of information

Table 2 – Satisfaction with the items of information

Table 3 – Importance of the sources of information

Table 4 – Importance of the physical attributes of travel guidebooks

Table 5 – Importance of travel guidebooks to reduce risk

Appendix 3:

Table 1 – 58 items of information in order of importance

Table 2 – 58 items of information in order of satisfaction

Table 3 – 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between importance and satisfaction

Appendix 4:

Table 1 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between Japanese and Korean travellers

Table 2 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between Korean and Chinese travellers

Table 3 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between North American and Chinese travellers

Table 4 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between Chinese and Japanese travellers

Table 5 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between Japanese and North American travellers

Table 6 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between Korean and North American travellers

Appendix 5:

Table 1 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between first time and repeat visitors

Table 2 – variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of first time visitors

Table 3 – variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of repeat visitors

Appendix 6:

Table 1 – 58 items of information: Mann Whitney U test between experienced travellers and travellers with no experience

Table 2 – variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of experienced travellers

Table 3 – variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of travellers with no experience

Appendix 7:

Table 1 – factors and indicators resulting from the principal component analysis conducted on importance

Table 2 – factors and indicators resulting from the principal component analysis conducted on satisfaction

Appendix 1

Questionnaire in English, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese

10. Please list the countries you have visited in the past 5 years.

Name of the country	(Number of visits)	Name of the country	(Number of visits)
.....	(____)	(____)
.....	(____)	(____)
.....	(____)	(____)

11. Please rate the following statements in terms of their importance to you.

	unimportant				important	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Travel guidebooks should be short	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks should provide lots of pictures	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks should be less than 1 year old	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Quality of paper is essential in a travel guidebook	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks should contain private advertising	<input type="checkbox"/>					

12. How important do you consider the following when using a travel guidebook?

	unimportant				important	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Travel guidebooks have the latest information	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks reduce the degree of unexpected risk	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks suggest which tourist attractions are the best to visit	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks help me do things by myself	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks help me best use the time available	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks help me save money	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks provide information on:						
the standard to expect from a local service	<input type="checkbox"/>					
the standard to expect from local transport	<input type="checkbox"/>					
the standard to expect from the accommodation named	<input type="checkbox"/>					
the standard to expect from the restaurants named	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks help me to experience an exciting holiday	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks help me to experience a comfortable holiday	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Travel guidebooks help me to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other (please specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					

13. How much are you prepared to pay for a high quality country travel guidebook? In US Dollars

- up to 10 US\$
 11-20 US\$
 21-30 US\$
 31-40US\$
 41+ US

PERSONAL DETAILS

14. Gender: male female

15. Age: years

16. What is your net annual household income in US Dollars?

- 0-30,000US\$
 31,000-60,000US\$
 60,000US\$ and above

17. Origin (please specify country of residence):



10. 過去5年間にあなたが旅行された国を列挙して下さい。

国名	(訪問回数)	国名	(訪問回数)
.....	(____)	(____)
.....	(____)	(____)
.....	(____)	(____)

11. あなたにとって重要かどうかの観点から以下の記述を評価して下さい。

	重要でない					重要
	1	2	3	4	5	6
旅行ガイドブックは簡略で短くあるべき	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックは写真をたくさん載せるべき	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックは1年以内の新刊であるべき	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックは小さくてポケットにはいるサイズであるべき	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックは上質紙を使った装丁が必須	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックには商業広告を掲載すべき	<input type="checkbox"/>					

12. 旅行ガイドブックを利用する時、あなたは下記の事項をどの程度重要視されますか？

	重要でない					重要
	1	2	3	4	5	6
旅行ガイドブックが最新の情報を載せている	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックが不慮の危険の度合いを軽減してくれる	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックがどの観光アトラクションが必見か教えてくれる	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックが自分ひとりでの行動に役立つ	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックが時間を有効に使うのに役立つ	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックが費用の節約に役立つ	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックが以下の情報を提供すること:						
現地のサービスに期待できる水準	<input type="checkbox"/>					
現地の交通機関に期待できる水準	<input type="checkbox"/>					
現地の名指しの宿泊施設に期待できる水準	<input type="checkbox"/>					
現地の名指しのレストランに期待できる水準	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックがエキサイティングなホリデーを体験する役に立つ	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックが快適なホリデーを体験する役に立つ	<input type="checkbox"/>					
旅行ガイドブックを参考にして適正なホリデーを企画することによって 自分が社会的に認められる結果が得られる	<input type="checkbox"/>					
その他 (具体的にお書き下さい).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					

13. 質の高い、国別の旅行ガイドブックに、USドルで何ドルぐらい出費してもよいとお考えになりますか？

- 10 USドル以下
 11-20 USドル
 21-30 USドル
 31-40USドル
 41 USドル以上

個人的事項

14. 性別: 男 女

15. 年齢: 才

16. あなたの税引後の年間家計所得は USドルで何ドルぐらいですか？

- 0-30,000USドル
 31,000-60,000USドル
 60,000USドル以上

17. 出身 (あなたの居住国名をお書き下さい):



10. 지난 5년간 방문했던 국가들을 명시해 주십시오.

(방문횟수)	(방문 횟수)
국가명	국가명
..... (____) (____)
..... (____) (____)
..... (____) (____)

11. 아래 명시된 사항의 중요성 정도를 평가해 주십시오.

	중요하지 않음			중요함		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
여행 안내 책자는 반드시 간략해야 한다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 풍부한 사진을 담고 있어야 한다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 발행한지 1년 이내의 것이어야 한다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 주머니에 적합한 작은 사이즈 여야 한다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 반드시 고품질의 종이를 사용해야 한다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 사실 광고를 기재해야만 한다	<input type="checkbox"/>					

12. 여행 안내 책자를 이용할 시, 아래의 사항에 얼마 만큼의 비중을 두십니까?

	중요하지 않음			중요함		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
여행 안내 책자는 최신 정보를 수록하고 있다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 예기치 않은 위험을 줄여준다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 가장 인기 있는 곳을 관광객들에게 제안한다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 혼자 여행 할 수 있도록 도와준다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 시간을 최상으로 활용할 수 있게 도와준다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 비용을 절약할 수 있도록 도와준다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 아래의 정보를 담고 있다:						
지역 서비스 상황	<input type="checkbox"/>					
지역 교통편 일반 상황	<input type="checkbox"/>					
명시된 숙소에서 제공하는 기본 서비스	<input type="checkbox"/>					
명시된 레스토랑에서 제공하는 기본 서비스	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 휴가를 즐겁게 보내도록 도와준다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 휴가를 편하게 보내도록 도와준다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
여행 안내 책자는 사회적으로 인정되는 올바른 휴가를 보내도록 도와준다	<input type="checkbox"/>					
기타 (상세히 명시하십시오).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					

13. 최상의 여행 안내 책자를 구입하는데 얼마 정도를 소비하시겠습니까? 미화 (US\$)

10 불 정도
 11-20 불
 21-30 불
 31-40 불
 41 불 이상

인적 사항

14. 성별: 남 여

15. 연령: 세

16. 미화로 연간 순수입이 얼마나 되십니까?

0-30,000 불
 31,000-60,000 불
 60,000 이상

17. 국적 (국적을 명시해 주시기 바랍니다):



10. 请列出过去 5 年内您访问过的国家。

(访问 次数)	(访问 次数)
国家名称 ()	国家名称 ()
..... () ()
..... () ()

11. 按照对自己的重要性而言，请对以下说明进行评级。

	不重要					重要
	1	2	3	4	5	6
观光指南应该简短	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南应该有很多图片	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南应该是 1 年内出版的	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南应该体积小，可以放入口袋中	<input type="checkbox"/>					
纸张质量对观光指南而言至关重要	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南应该有私人广告	<input type="checkbox"/>					

12. 使用观光指南时，您认为以下内容对您有多重要？

	不重要					重要
	1	2	3	4	5	6
观光指南中有最新的资料	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能减少发生意外危险的程度	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能建议最好到哪些旅游景点去观光	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能帮助我独自做事	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能帮助我最好地利用时间	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能帮助我省钱	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能提供以下资料：						
期望当地服务机构的服务水平	<input type="checkbox"/>					
期望当地交通的服务水平	<input type="checkbox"/>					
期望所说明住宿之处的服务水平	<input type="checkbox"/>					
期望所说明餐馆的服务水平	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能帮助我体验让人兴奋的假日	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能帮助我体验舒适的假日	<input type="checkbox"/>					
观光指南能帮助我把假日组织妥当， 以获得社会认可	<input type="checkbox"/>					
其他（请详细说明）	<input type="checkbox"/>					

13. 要购买一本高质量的国家观光指南，您愿意付多少钱？用美元计算

- 最多 10 美元
 11-20 美元
 21-30 美元
 31-40 美元
 41+美元

个人资料

14. 性别 男 女

15. 年龄： 岁

16. 用美元计算，您的家庭净收入是多少？

- 0-30,000 美元
 31,000-60,000 美元
 60,000 美元和以上

17. 来自何处（请说明您居住的国家）：



Appendix 2

Table 1. Importance of items of information

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness
how to reach the destination	833	20	4.987	6	1.440	-1.464
history	841	12	4.214	4	1.424	-0.460
physical landscape	838	15	4.350	4	1.305	-0.499
climate	840	13	4.758	5	1.270	-0.949
flora and fauna	837	16	3.732	4	1.379	-0.060
local arts	845	8	4.083	4	1.340	-0.341
local economy	841	12	3.779	4	1.348	-0.165
government and politics	842	11	3.742	4	1.445	-0.117
bus and train	845	8	5.372	6	1.131	-2.229
air routs and fares	840	13	4.945	5	1.382	-1.329
taxi tips and costs	844	9	4.768	5	1.352	-0.996
car hire	833	20	3.935	4	1.619	-0.360
driving rules and habits	832	21	4.279	4	1.468	-0.606
info on hitchhiking	832	21	3.685	4	1.681	-0.160
local public transports	834	19	5.080	5	1.226	-1.561
banks	845	8	4.551	5	1.347	-0.811
tourist information centres	839	14	4.964	5	1.172	-1.099
travel agencies	845	8	4.305	4	1.374	-0.536
embassy and consulate	843	10	4.447	5	1.446	-0.672
post office	842	11	3.999	4	1.480	-0.326
TV channels & radio	846	7	2.843	3	1.442	0.395
newspapers and magazines	840	13	3.206	3	1.479	0.185
local food / drinks	838	15	4.908	5	1.202	-1.200
health hazards	835	18	4.921	5	1.214	-1.102
medical/hospital service	833	20	4.809	5	1.266	-0.989
emergency numbers	822	31	5.005	5	1.264	-1.340
environmental hazards	815	38	4.417	5	1.448	-0.723
real estate market prices	826	27	2.421	2	1.372	0.808
employment availability	821	32	2.798	2	1.643	0.533
museums	840	13	4.615	5	1.307	-0.820
churches/ temples	841	12	4.348	5	1.459	-0.658
historic sites	839	14	4.889	5	1.240	-1.129
places of entertainment	831	22	4.348	5	1.433	-0.714
cultural events	821	32	4.521	5	1.324	-0.723
places to shop	824	29	4.677	5	1.363	-0.948
festivals & social events	824	29	5.002	5	1.191	-1.366

short trips/itineraries	827	26	4.990	5	1.214	-1.279
sport activities	829	24	4.107	4	1.439	-0.399
photos of attractions	827	26	4.568	5	1.432	-0.871
places to stay	844	9	5.455	6	1.004	-2.395
places to eat	839	14	5.235	6	1.101	-1.779
how to tip & how much	839	14	4.604	5	1.422	-0.867
how to meet local people	829	24	4.595	5	1.359	-0.780
language phrases	822	31	4.835	5	1.309	-1.043
local customs and beliefs	835	18	4.695	5	1.322	-0.825
avoiding arguments	833	20	4.311	4	1.449	-0.591
legal help	836	17	3.907	4	1.477	-0.252
electricity supply	832	21	4.010	4	1.552	-0.376
time differences	834	19	4.366	5	1.530	-0.695
telephone prefixes	830	23	4.506	5	1.473	-0.767
mobile phones coverage	832	21	3.745	4	1.716	-0.224
personal risks	830	23	5.065	5	1.215	-1.426
Internet cafes	829	24	4.513	5	1.421	-0.753
currency & exchange rates	833	20	5.038	6	1.269	-1.464
dangerous places to visit	831	22	5.095	6	1.245	-1.561
practical hints for women	827	26	4.886	5	1.495	-1.381
practical hints for children	823	30	4.431	5	1.685	-0.835
maps	826	27	5.565	6	0.939	-2.887

Table 2. Satisfaction with the items of information

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness
how to reach the destination	414	439	4.447	5	1.204	-0.553
history	421	432	4.214	4	1.227	-0.290
physical landscape	424	429	4.210	4	1.177	-0.239
climate	419	434	4.413	4	1.235	-0.480
flora and fauna	413	440	3.947	4	1.291	-0.206
local arts	414	439	3.957	4	1.240	-0.124
local economy	415	438	3.754	4	1.370	-0.048
government and politics	417	436	3.777	4	1.341	-0.068
bus and train	423	430	4.071	4	1.452	-0.427
air routs and fares	425	428	4.033	4	1.344	-0.312
taxi tips and costs	426	427	3.876	4	1.396	-0.225
car hire	407	446	3.823	4	1.376	-0.123
driving rules and habits	408	445	3.767	4	1.351	-0.075
info on hitchhiking	405	448	3.617	4	1.504	-0.058
local public transports	415	438	4.067	4	1.436	-0.414

banks	416	437	4.060	4	1.407	-0.284
tourist information centres	421	432	4.247	4	1.373	-0.413
travel agencies	420	433	3.990	4	1.357	-0.178
embassy and consulate	417	436	4.165	4	1.432	-0.347
post office	412	441	4.024	4	1.395	-0.227
TV channels & radio	408	445	3.483	3	1.448	0.122
newspapers and magazines	411	442	3.630	4	1.368	0.052
local food / drinks	416	437	4.178	4	1.312	-0.403
health hazards	415	438	3.995	4	1.409	-0.273
medical/hospital service	405	448	4.037	4	1.437	-0.261
emergency numbers	402	451	4.182	4	1.387	-0.306
environmental hazards	397	456	3.856	4	1.355	-0.129
real estate market prices	395	458	3.441	3	1.559	0.119
employment availability	396	457	3.323	3	1.574	0.180
museums	416	437	4.740	5	1.153	-0.797
churches/ temples	413	440	4.559	5	1.221	-0.629
historic sites	412	441	4.706	5	1.187	-0.748
places of entertainment	410	443	4.356	4	1.323	-0.638
cultural events	412	441	4.211	4	1.311	-0.356
places to shop	411	442	4.535	5	1.232	-0.601
festivals & social events	408	445	4.277	4	1.319	-0.527
short trips/itineraries	411	442	4.436	5	1.348	-0.649
sport activities	409	444	3.966	4	1.438	-0.243
photos of attractions	412	441	4.197	4	1.401	-0.455
places to stay	414	439	4.459	5	1.348	-0.699
places to eat	411	442	4.397	5	1.333	-0.581
how to tip & how much	409	444	4.100	4	1.453	-0.373
how to meet local people	408	445	3.505	4	1.512	0.003
language phrases	404	449	3.856	4	1.566	-0.217
local customs and beliefs	414	439	3.911	4	1.431	-0.171
avoiding arguments	409	444	3.579	4	1.452	0.015
legal help	407	446	3.484	3	1.503	0.175
electricity supply	409	444	4.137	4	1.507	-0.481
time differences	407	446	4.575	5	1.380	-0.747
telephone prefixes	409	444	4.318	4	1.454	-0.585
mobile phones coverage	404	449	3.542	3	1.620	0.028
personal risks	411	442	4.114	4	1.461	-0.482
Internet cafes	406	447	3.695	4	1.584	-0.148
currency & exchange rates	411	442	4.302	4	1.396	-0.528
dangerous places to visit	412	441	3.995	4	1.473	-0.308
practical hints for women	398	455	3.776	4	1.577	-0.193
practical hints for children	393	460	3.646	4	1.571	-0.052
maps	407	446	4.322	5	1.486	-0.628

Table 3. Importance of the sources of information

Sources of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness
media	824	29	3.573	3.5	1.563	-0.001
tourist information centres	826	27	4.521	5	1.471	-0.759
Internet	828	25	4.758	5	1.399	-1.055
travel guidebooks	826	27	5.151	6	1.112	-1.452
word of mouth	817	36	4.856	5	1.285	-1.018
info at the accommodation	826	27	4.841	5	1.226	-1.032
tour guides	819	34	3.697	4	1.558	-0.154

Table 4. Importance of the physical attributes of travel guidebooks

Sources of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness
travel guidebooks should be short	844	9	3.541	4	1.604	-0.034
travel guidebooks should provide lots of pictures	841	12	4.339	5	1.504	-0.640
travel guidebooks should be less than one year old	842	11	5.253	6	1.163	-1.836
travel guidebooks should be small and fit in a pocket	839	14	4.359	5	1.535	-0.640
quality of paper is essential in a travel guidebook	836	17	3.024	3	1.606	0.326
travel guidebooks should provide private advertising	841	12	2.099	2	1.368	1.216
travel guidebooks have the latest information	844	9	5.366	6	1.033	-1.922

Table 5. Importance of travel guidebooks to reduce risk

Sources of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness
travel guidebooks reduce the degree of unexpected risk	841	12	4.729	5	1.255	-0.859
travel guidebooks suggest which tourist attractions are the best to visit	839	14	4.810	5	1.302	-1.037
travel guidebooks help me to do things by myself	838	15	5.204	6	1.104	-1.644
travel guidebooks help me best use the time available	830	23	5.100	5	1.111	-1.289
travel guidebooks help me save money	824	29	4.953	5	1.233	-1.142

information on the standard to expect from a local service	835	18	4.541	5	1.221	-0.611
information on the standard to expect from local transport	836	17	4.797	5	1.146	-0.906
information on the standard to expect from the accommodation named	835	18	4.783	5	1.203	-0.881
information on the standard to expect from the restaurants named	835	18	4.502	5	1.281	-0.639
travel guidebooks help me to experience an exciting holiday	828	25	4.743	5	1.259	-0.932
travel guidebooks help me to experience a comfortable holiday	830	23	4.854	5	1.212	-1.076
travel guidebooks help me to organise the right holiday to gain social recognition	830	23	3.876	4	1.677	-0.340

Appendix 3

Table 1. 58 items of information in order of importance

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
maps	826	27	5.565	0.939	0.881
places to stay	844	9	5.455	1.004	1.007
bus and train	845	8	5.372	1.131	1.279
places to eat	839	14	5.235	1.101	1.213
dangerous places to visit	831	22	5.095	1.245	1.551
local public transports	834	19	5.080	1.226	1.503
personal risks	830	23	5.065	1.215	1.477
currency & exchange rate	833	20	5.038	1.269	1.612
emergency numbers	822	31	5.005	1.264	1.598
festivals & social events	824	29	5.002	1.191	1.419
short trips/itineraries	827	26	4.990	1.214	1.474
how to reach the destination	833	20	4.987	1.440	2.073
tourist information centres	839	14	4.964	1.172	1.373
air routs and fares	840	13	4.945	1.382	1.909
health hazards	835	18	4.921	1.214	1.473
local food / drinks	838	15	4.908	1.202	1.446
historic sites	839	14	4.889	1.240	1.538
practical hints for women	827	26	4.886	1.495	2.236
Important: language phrases	822	31	4.835	1.309	1.714
medical/hospital service	833	20	4.809	1.266	1.602
taxi tips and costs	844	9	4.768	1.352	1.827
climate	840	13	4.758	1.270	1.614
local customs and beliefs	835	18	4.695	1.322	1.747
places to shop	824	29	4.677	1.363	1.857
museums	840	13	4.615	1.307	1.708
how to tip & how much	839	14	4.604	1.422	2.022
how to meet local people	829	24	4.595	1.359	1.848
photos of attractions	827	26	4.568	1.432	2.052
banks	845	8	4.551	1.347	1.814
cultural events	821	32	4.521	1.324	1.752
Internet cafes	829	24	4.513	1.421	2.018
telephone prefixes	830	23	4.506	1.473	2.171
embassy and consulate	843	10	4.447	1.446	2.091
practical hints for children	823	30	4.431	1.685	2.839
environmental hazards	815	38	4.417	1.448	2.096
time differences	834	19	4.366	1.530	2.340
physical landscape	838	15	4.350	1.305	1.702
churches/temples	841	12	4.348	1.459	2.130
important: places of entertain.	831	22	4.348	1.433	2.054
avoiding arguments	833	20	4.311	1.449	2.099
travel agencies	845	8	4.305	1.374	1.888

driving rules and habits	832	21	4.279	1.468	2.156
history	841	12	4.214	1.424	2.028
sport activities	829	24	4.107	1.439	2.069
local arts	845	8	4.083	1.340	1.796
electricity supply	832	21	4.010	1.552	2.409
post office	842	11	3.999	1.480	2.191
car hire	833	20	3.935	1.619	2.621
legal help	836	17	3.907	1.477	2.183
local economy	841	12	3.779	1.348	1.818
mobile phones coverage	832	21	3.745	1.716	2.943
government and politics	842	11	3.742	1.445	2.089
flora and fauna	837	16	3.732	1.379	1.902
info on hitchhiking	832	21	3.685	1.681	2.827
newspapers and magazines	840	13	3.206	1.479	2.188
TV channels & radio	846	7	2.843	1.442	2.078
employment availability	821	32	2.798	1.643	2.698
real estate market prices	826	27	2.421	1.372	1.883

Table 2. 58 items of information in order of satisfaction

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
museums	416	437	4.740	1.153	1.330
historic sites	412	441	4.706	1.187	1.410
time differences	407	446	4.575	1.380	1.905
churches/temples	413	440	4.559	1.221	1.490
places to shop	411	442	4.535	1.232	1.518
places to stay	414	439	4.459	1.348	1.818
how to reach the destination	414	439	4.447	1.204	1.449
short trips/itineraries	411	442	4.436	1.348	1.817
climate	419	434	4.413	1.235	1.525
places to eat	411	442	4.397	1.333	1.776
places of entertainment	410	443	4.356	1.323	1.751
maps	407	446	4.322	1.486	2.209
telephone prefixes	409	444	4.318	1.454	2.114
currency & exchange range	411	442	4.302	1.396	1.948
festivals & social events	408	445	4.277	1.319	1.739
tourist information centres	421	432	4.247	1.373	1.886
history	421	432	4.214	1.227	1.507
cultural events	412	441	4.211	1.311	1.719
physical landscape	424	429	4.210	1.177	1.386
photos of attractions	412	441	4.197	1.401	1.964
emergency numbers	402	451	4.182	1.387	1.925
local food / drinks	416	437	4.178	1.312	1.722
embassy and consulate	417	436	4.165	1.432	2.052
electricity supply	409	444	4.137	1.507	2.270

personal risks	411	442	4.114	1.461	2.136
how to tip & how much	409	444	4.100	1.453	2.110
bus and train	423	430	4.071	1.452	2.109
local public transports	415	438	4.067	1.436	2.063
banks	416	437	4.060	1.407	1.980
medical/hospital service	405	448	4.037	1.437	2.065
air routs and fares	425	428	4.033	1.344	1.806
post office	412	441	4.024	1.395	1.946
health hazards	415	438	3.995	1.409	1.985
dangerous places to visit	412	441	3.995	1.473	2.170
travel agencies	420	433	3.990	1.357	1.842
sport activities	409	444	3.966	1.438	2.067
local arts	414	439	3.957	1.240	1.538
flora and fauna	413	440	3.947	1.291	1.667
local customs and beliefs	414	439	3.911	1.431	2.048
taxi tips and costs	426	427	3.876	1.396	1.949
language phrases	404	449	3.856	1.566	2.451
environmental hazards	397	456	3.856	1.355	1.835
car hire	407	446	3.823	1.376	1.895
government and politics	417	436	3.777	1.341	1.799
practical hints for women	398	455	3.776	1.577	2.486
driving rules and habits	408	445	3.767	1.351	1.825
local economy	415	438	3.754	1.370	1.877
Internet cafes	406	447	3.695	1.584	2.509
practical hints for children	393	460	3.646	1.571	2.469
newspapers and magazines	411	442	3.630	1.368	1.873
info on hitchhiking	405	448	3.617	1.504	2.262
avoiding arguments	409	444	3.579	1.452	2.107
mobile phones coverage	404	449	3.542	1.620	2.626
how to meet local people	408	445	3.505	1.512	2.285
legal help	407	446	3.484	1.503	2.260
TV channels & radio	408	445	3.483	1.448	2.098
real estate market prices	395	458	3.441	1.559	2.430
employment availability	396	457	3.323	1.574	2.478

Table 3. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test importance-satisfaction

Items of information	Mean importance	Mean satisfaction	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	4.987	4.447	118584	-9.471	0.000
history	4.214	4.214	173446	-0.601	0.548
physical landscape	4.350	4.210	163522	-2.375	0.018
climate	4.758	4.413	145118	-5.253	0.000
flora and fauna	3.732	3.947	157136	-2.678	0.007

local arts	4.083	3.957	163338	-1.959	0.050
local economy	3.779	3.754	171535	-0.504	0.614
government and politics	3.742	3.777	173980	-0.265	0.791
bus and train	5.372	4.071	80936	-17.142	0.000
air routs and fares	4.945	4.033	106363	-12.220	0.000
taxi tips and costs	4.768	3.876	113577	-11.037	0.000
car hire	3.935	3.823	158879	-1.829	0.067
driving rules and habits	4.279	3.767	132007	-6.504	0.000
info on hitchhiking	3.685	3.617	163166	-0.916	0.360
local public transports	5.080	4.067	99278	-12.841	0.000
banks	4.551	4.060	139409	-6.139	0.000
tourist information centres	4.964	4.247	122482	-9.237	0.000
travel agencies	4.305	3.990	152685	-4.144	0.000
embassy and consulate	4.447	4.165	154669	-3.559	0.000
post office	3.999	4.024	173335	-0.020	0.984
TV channels & radio	2.843	3.483	131022	-7.060	0.000
newspapers and magazines	3.206	3.630	144455	-4.788	0.000
local food / drinks	4.908	4.178	116413	-9.934	0.000
health hazards	4.921	3.995	106899	-11.425	0.000
medical/hospital service	4.809	4.037	115793	-9.249	0.000
emergency numbers	5.005	4.182	106728	-10.519	0.000
environmental hazards	4.417	3.856	122276	-7.065	0.000
real estate market prices	2.421	3.441	102338	-10.794	0.000
employment availability	2.798	3.323	131027	-5.593	0.000
museums	4.615	4.740	168373	-1.087	0.277
churches/ temples	4.348	4.559	163232	-1.779	0.075
historic sites	4.889	4.706	154306	-3.226	0.001
places of entertainment	4.348	4.356	168016	-0.405	0.686
cultural events	4.521	4.211	144848	-4.230	0.000
places to shop	4.677	4.535	153566	-2.762	0.006
festivals & social events	5.002	4.277	111921	-9.960	0.000
short trips/itineraries	4.990	4.436	127258	-7.539	0.000
sport activities	4.107	3.966	159593	-1.715	0.086
photos of attractions	4.568	4.197	141973	-4.919	0.000
places to stay	5.455	4.459	92938	-14.842	0.000
places to eat	5.235	4.397	105947	-11.786	0.000
how to tip & how much	4.604	4.100	135888	-6.142	0.000
how to meet local people	4.595	3.505	100671	-11.854	0.000
language phrases	4.835	3.856	105779	-10.680	0.000
local customs and beliefs	4.695	3.911	118306	-9.340	0.000
avoiding arguments	4.311	3.579	121744	-8.354	0.000
legal help	3.907	3.484	141965	-4.829	0.000
electricity supply	4.010	4.137	162380	-1.333	0.182
time differences	4.366	4.575	158525	-1.942	0.052

telephone prefixes	4.506	4.318	155565	-2.461	0.014
mobile phones coverage	3.745	3.542	155636	-2.143	0.032
personal risks	5.065	4.114	103428	-11.815	0.000
Internet cafes	4.513	3.695	118366	-8.676	0.000
currency & exchange rates	5.038	4.302	115340	-9.833	0.000
dangerous places to visit	5.095	3.995	95079	-13.379	0.000
practical hints for women	4.886	3.776	95967	-12.300	0.000
practical hints for children	4.431	3.646	114971	-8.356	0.000
maps	5.565	4.322	78696	-17.108	0.000

Appendix 4

Table 1. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between Japanese and Korean travellers

Items of information	Mean Japanese	Mean Koreans	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	5.273	5.140	22770.5	-2.325	0.020
history	4.116	4.308	23700.5	-1.424	0.155
physical landscape	4.087	4.505	21042.5	-3.316	0.001
climate	4.822	4.572	22865	-1.992	0.046
flora and fauna	3.642	3.682	25157	-0.268	0.789
local arts	3.853	4.027	23511	-1.647	0.100
local economy	3.734	3.308	20842	-3.607	0.000
government and politics	3.707	3.410	22773.5	-2.182	0.029
bus and train	5.485	5.464	25368	-0.231	0.818
air routs and fares	4.974	5.092	24771	-0.492	0.623
taxi tips and costs	4.711	4.575	24044.5	-1.186	0.236
car hire	3.575	3.703	23848.5	-0.832	0.405
driving rules and habits	4.299	4.171	24160	-0.675	0.500
info on hitchhiking	3.048	3.750	18845	-4.765	0.000
local public transports	4.930	5.195	22813.5	-1.938	0.053
banks	4.476	4.638	23633	-1.408	0.159
tourist information centres	4.775	5.149	20818	-3.584	0.000
travel agencies	4.343	4.356	25839	-0.018	0.986
embassy and consulate	4.379	4.477	24982.5	-0.566	0.571
post office	4.099	3.968	24256.5	-1.012	0.311
TV channels & radio	2.603	2.910	21945.5	-2.789	0.005
newspapers and magazines	3.237	3.213	25331	-0.223	0.823
local food / drinks	5.052	4.592	20184	-3.948	0.000
health hazards	4.784	4.699	24424.5	-0.658	0.510
medical/hospital service	4.879	4.565	20740	-3.282	0.001
emergency numbers	5.092	4.912	22204	-1.930	0.054
environmental hazards	4.319	4.175	23068	-0.838	0.402
real estate market prices	2.541	2.409	23166.5	-1.107	0.268
employment availability	2.518	2.995	20516	-2.808	0.005
museums	4.358	4.468	24254	-0.937	0.349
churches/ temples	4.491	3.941	20561.5	-3.656	0.000
historic sites	4.780	4.745	25496	-0.018	0.986
places of entertainment	4.416	3.773	18837	-4.589	0.000
cultural events	4.297	4.466	22186.5	-1.630	0.103
places to shop	4.714	4.343	20534	-3.105	0.002

festivals & social events	4.909	5.097	22715.5	-1.823	0.068
short trips/itineraries	4.520	5.281	16131.5	-6.742	0.000
sport activities	3.957	4.130	23325.5	-1.134	0.257
photos of attractions	4.248	4.659	20986.5	-2.990	0.003
places to stay	5.476	5.498	25561.5	-0.163	0.871
places to eat	5.099	5.119	25309.5	-0.068	0.945
how to tip & how much	4.407	4.164	22987.5	-1.794	0.073
how to meet local people	4.648	4.730	23484	-0.950	0.342
language phrases	4.921	4.700	22206.5	-1.881	0.060
local customs and beliefs	4.755	4.101	17765.5	-5.419	0.000
avoiding arguments	4.065	3.926	23496.5	-1.014	0.311
legal help	3.791	3.612	23637.5	-1.155	0.248
electricity supply	3.922	4.055	24088	-0.804	0.422
time differences	4.418	4.244	22959	-1.653	0.098
telephone prefixes	4.409	4.523	24324	-0.391	0.696
mobile phones coverage	3.491	3.385	24429.5	-0.632	0.528
personal risks	5.026	4.949	23685.5	-0.899	0.369
Internet cafes	4.578	4.581	24767.5	-0.142	0.887
currency & exchange rates	5.070	5.124	24749	-0.256	0.798
dangerous places to visit	5.134	5.208	24728	-0.178	0.859
practical hints for women	4.670	5.135	21762	-2.350	0.019
practical hints for children	4.213	4.653	21391	-2.625	0.009
maps	5.651	5.551	23213	-1.614	0.106

Table 2. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between Korean and Chinese travellers

Items of information	Mean Korean	Mean Chinese	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	5.140	4.818	18084.5	-0.771	0.441
history	4.308	3.825	16547	-2.695	0.007
physical landscape	4.505	4.384	18869	-0.699	0.484
climate	4.572	4.635	19067.5	-0.621	0.534
flora and fauna	3.682	3.551	18245	-1.007	0.314
local arts	4.027	4.100	19169.5	-0.716	0.474
local economy	3.308	3.801	15610	-3.455	0.001
government and politics	3.410	3.754	17352.5	-2.220	0.026
bus and train	5.464	5.221	18882	-1.070	0.285
air routes and fares	5.092	5.073	18977	-0.411	0.681
taxi tips and costs	4.575	4.757	18148	-1.662	0.097
car hire	3.703	4.185	15931.5	-3.186	0.001

driving rules and habits	4.171	4.112	19137	-0.159	0.874
info on hitchhiking	3.750	4.554	13161.5	-5.668	0.000
local public transports	5.195	4.938	18276.5	-1.237	0.216
banks	4.638	4.254	17609	-2.126	0.034
tourist information centres	5.149	4.859	17343.5	-2.073	0.038
travel agencies	4.356	4.309	19577	-0.162	0.872
embassy and consulate	4.477	4.285	18497	-1.221	0.222
post office	3.968	3.611	17237.5	-2.343	0.019
TV channels & radio	2.910	3.343	16995.5	-2.722	0.006
newspapers and magazines	3.213	3.328	18944	-0.550	0.582
local food / drinks	4.592	4.960	16126	-2.924	0.003
health hazards	4.699	4.807	18728.5	-0.502	0.616
medical/hospital service	4.565	4.727	17357.5	-1.532	0.126
emergency numbers	4.912	4.988	18184.5	-0.275	0.783
environmental hazards	4.175	4.362	16919	-1.355	0.175
real estate market prices	2.409	2.480	18543.5	-0.251	0.802
employment availability	2.995	2.567	15566.5	-2.434	0.015
museums	4.468	4.469	18928.5	-0.490	0.624
churches/ temples	3.941	4.419	16097	-3.204	0.001
historic sites	4.745	4.730	19188.5	-0.358	0.720
places of entertainment	3.773	4.309	15167	-3.679	0.000
cultural events	4.466	4.291	18228.5	-0.854	0.393
places to shop	4.343	5.051	12134	-6.293	0.000
festivals & social events	5.097	4.655	15587.5	-3.131	0.002
short trips/itineraries	5.281	4.931	16112.5	-2.700	0.007
sport activities	4.130	3.824	16916.5	-1.843	0.065
photos of attractions	4.659	4.787	17387.5	-1.401	0.161
places to stay	5.498	5.196	17309.5	-2.511	0.012
places to eat	5.119	5.299	16912	-2.327	0.020
how to tip & how much	4.164	4.616	15845	-3.274	0.001
how to meet local people	4.730	4.114	14273.5	-4.219	0.000
language phrases	4.700	4.529	17659	-0.944	0.345
local customs and beliefs	4.101	4.684	14183	-4.649	0.000
avoiding arguments	3.926	4.599	13520.5	-5.117	0.000
legal help	3.612	4.264	14434	-4.545	0.000
electricity supply	4.055	4.023	18947	-0.037	0.970
time differences	4.244	4.229	18797	-0.175	0.861
telephone prefixes	4.523	4.494	18960.5	-0.044	0.965
mobile phones coverage	3.385	4.599	11248.5	-7.252	0.000
personal risks	4.949	5.213	16491	-2.486	0.013
Internet cafes	4.581	4.139	15914	-2.654	0.008
currency & exchange rates	5.124	5.034	18774	-0.497	0.619
dangerous places to visit	5.208	4.730	15810.5	-2.898	0.004
practical hints for women	5.135	4.869	17539	-1.345	0.179

practical hints for children	4.653	4.609	18630	-0.153	0.878
maps	5.551	5.391	17750	-1.000	0.317

Table 3. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between Korean and Chinese travellers

Items of information	Mean Chinese	Mean North American	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	4.818	4.648	16162	-1.690	0.091
history	3.825	4.550	14144	-4.209	0.000
physical landscape	4.384	4.445	18314.5	-0.171	0.864
climate	4.635	4.990	16003	-2.555	0.011
flora and fauna	3.551	4.038	14734.5	-3.432	0.001
local arts	4.100	4.379	17116.5	-1.723	0.085
local economy	3.801	4.303	14936.5	-3.398	0.001
government and politics	3.754	4.124	16231	-2.291	0.022
bus and train	5.221	5.280	18476	-0.641	0.522
air routs and fares	5.073	4.654	15413.5	-3.243	0.001
taxi tips and costs	4.757	5.043	17216.5	-1.701	0.089
car hire	4.185	4.361	17462	-0.985	0.325
driving rules and habits	4.112	4.515	15755	-2.438	0.015
info on hitchhiking	4.554	3.580	12424.5	-5.423	0.000
local public transports	4.938	5.248	16406	-1.941	0.052
banks	4.254	4.797	15606	-3.295	0.001
tourist information centres	4.859	5.067	17250.5	-1.291	0.197
travel agencies	4.309	4.208	18286	-0.538	0.590
embassy and consulate	4.285	4.629	15902	-2.698	0.007
post office	3.611	4.254	14403	-4.056	0.000
TV channels & radio	3.343	2.607	13790.5	-4.841	0.000
newspapers and magazines	3.328	3.062	16821.5	-1.639	0.101
local food / drinks	4.960	5.033	18283	-0.292	0.770
health hazards	4.807	5.402	12712.5	-5.617	0.000
medical/hospital service	4.727	5.053	15798	-2.510	0.012
emergency numbers	4.988	5.019	17013	-0.693	0.488
environmental hazards	4.362	4.831	13886	-3.566	0.000
real estate market prices	2.480	2.251	16819.5	-1.247	0.212
employment availability	2.567	3.090	14661	-3.148	0.002
museums	4.469	5.175	13884.5	-4.565	0.000
churches/ temples	4.419	4.557	17779.5	-0.947	0.344
historic sites	4.730	5.297	14973	-3.540	0.000
places of entertainment	4.309	4.908	14276	-3.880	0.000

cultural events	4.291	5.020	13210	-4.600	0.000
places to shop	5.051	4.660	14522	-3.403	0.001
festivals & social events	4.655	5.307	13148	-4.484	0.000
short trips/itineraries	4.931	5.256	15466.5	-2.571	0.010
sport activities	3.824	4.493	13530.5	-4.437	0.000
photos of attractions	4.787	4.646	16265.5	-1.618	0.106
places to stay	5.196	5.607	15643.5	-3.476	0.001
places to eat	5.299	5.450	18098.5	-0.603	0.547
how to tip & how much	4.616	5.270	13692	-4.835	0.000
how to meet local people	4.114	4.799	13444.5	-4.613	0.000
language phrases	4.529	5.136	13282.5	-4.428	0.000
local customs and beliefs	4.684	5.251	14156.5	-4.385	0.000
avoiding arguments	4.599	4.733	17467.5	-1.060	0.289
legal help	4.264	4.038	17057	-1.437	0.151
electricity supply	4.023	4.048	18119.5	-0.076	0.939
time differences	4.229	4.548	16283.5	-1.977	0.048
telephone prefixes	4.494	4.606	17584.5	-0.686	0.493
mobile phones coverage	4.599	3.678	12453.5	-5.397	0.000
personal risks	5.213	5.102	16159	-2.181	0.029
Internet cafes	4.139	4.679	14620	-3.315	0.001
currency & exchange rates	5.034	4.918	17519	-0.873	0.383
dangerous places to visit	4.730	5.238	15002	-3.258	0.001
practical hints for women	4.869	4.883	17774.5	-0.354	0.724
practical hints for children	4.609	4.291	16271.5	-1.369	0.171
maps	5.391	5.631	17086	-0.984	0.325

Table 4. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between Chinese and Japanese travellers

Items of information	Mean Chinese	Mean Japanese	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	4.818	5.273	16886.5	-2.731	0.006
history	3.825	4.116	18725	-1.556	0.120
physical landscape	4.384	4.087	17635.5	-2.368	0.018
climate	4.635	4.822	19052	-1.249	0.212
flora and fauna	3.551	3.642	19410	-0.873	0.383
local arts	4.100	3.853	18585	-1.958	0.050
local economy	3.801	3.734	19882.5	-0.538	0.591
government and politics	3.754	3.707	20236.5	-0.451	0.652
bus and train	5.221	5.485	19786.5	-1.303	0.192
air routs and fares	5.073	4.974	19848.5	-0.815	0.415

taxi tips and costs	4.757	4.711	20306.5	-0.599	0.549
car hire	4.185	3.575	15736	-3.949	0.000
driving rules and habits	4.112	4.299	19671	-0.767	0.443
info on hitchhiking	4.554	3.048	10163	-8.800	0.000
local public transports	4.938	4.930	19930	-0.488	0.626
banks	4.254	4.476	19829	-0.922	0.356
tourist information centres	4.859	4.775	19099.5	-1.190	0.234
travel agencies	4.309	4.343	20560.5	-0.152	0.879
embassy and consulate	4.285	4.379	19979	-0.675	0.499
post office	3.611	4.099	17170.5	-3.152	0.002
TV channels & radio	3.343	2.603	14993.5	-5.094	0.000
newspapers and magazines	3.328	3.237	19717	-0.701	0.484
local food / drinks	4.960	5.052	19616	-0.899	0.369
health hazards	4.807	4.784	20175.5	-0.135	0.892
medical/hospital service	4.727	4.879	18620	-1.600	0.110
emergency numbers	4.988	5.092	17901	-1.514	0.130
environmental hazards	4.362	4.319	19221.5	-0.621	0.534
real estate market prices	2.480	2.541	19157.5	-0.780	0.435
employment availability	2.567	2.518	19400.5	-0.085	0.933
museums	4.469	4.358	19072.5	-1.267	0.205
churches/ temples	4.419	4.491	20688.5	-0.065	0.948
historic sites	4.730	4.780	20316	-0.292	0.770
places of entertainment	4.309	4.416	20480.5	-0.068	0.946
cultural events	4.291	4.297	18892.5	-0.481	0.631
places to shop	5.051	4.714	16836.5	-3.227	0.001
festivals & social events	4.655	4.909	18472.5	-1.458	0.145
short trips/itineraries	4.931	4.520	15878.5	-3.626	0.000
sport activities	3.824	3.957	19391.5	-0.813	0.416
photos of attractions	4.787	4.248	15532.5	-3.973	0.000
places to stay	5.196	5.476	18163	-2.643	0.008
places to eat	5.299	5.099	18280	-2.181	0.029
how to tip & how much	4.616	4.407	18479	-1.715	0.086
how to meet local people	4.114	4.648	16100	-3.546	0.000
language phrases	4.529	4.921	16593	-2.685	0.007
local customs and beliefs	4.684	4.755	19751.5	-0.459	0.646
avoiding arguments	4.599	4.065	15791.5	-3.982	0.000
legal help	4.264	3.791	16383	-3.535	0.000
electricity supply	4.023	3.922	19494	-0.699	0.485
time differences	4.229	4.418	18738	-1.367	0.172
telephone prefixes	4.494	4.409	19803	-0.385	0.700
mobile phones coverage	4.599	3.491	13107	-6.393	0.000
personal risks	5.213	5.026	18900	-1.618	0.106
Internet cafes	4.139	4.578	16820.5	-2.735	0.006
currency & exchange rates	5.034	5.070	19579	-0.719	0.472

dangerous places to visit	4.730	5.134	17186	-2.690	0.007
practical hints for women	4.869	4.670	19260	-0.892	0.373
practical hints for children	4.609	4.213	17454	-2.273	0.023
maps	5.391	5.651	17950.5	-2.541	0.011

Table 5. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between Japanese and North American travellers

Items of information	Mean Japanese	Mean North American	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	5.273	4.648	18302	-4.897	0.000
history	4.116	4.550	19671.5	-3.663	0.000
physical landscape	4.087	4.445	20394	-2.816	0.005
climate	4.822	4.990	22346	-1.424	0.154
flora and fauna	3.642	4.038	20106.5	-3.172	0.002
local arts	3.853	4.379	18770	-4.348	0.000
local economy	3.734	4.303	18410	-4.720	0.000
government and politics	3.707	4.124	19764	-3.433	0.001
bus and train	5.485	5.280	22104	-2.167	0.030
air routs and fares	4.974	4.654	21289	-2.588	0.010
taxi tips and costs	4.711	5.043	21104	-2.558	0.011
car hire	3.575	4.361	16861	-5.309	0.000
driving rules and habits	4.299	4.515	21239.5	-1.989	0.047
info on hitchhiking	3.048	3.580	19447.5	-3.201	0.001
local public transports	4.930	5.248	20397.5	-2.712	0.007
banks	4.476	4.797	20778.5	-2.851	0.004
tourist information centres	4.775	5.067	20759	-2.750	0.006
travel agencies	4.343	4.208	23698.5	-0.756	0.450
embassy and consulate	4.379	4.629	21534.5	-2.175	0.030
post office	4.099	4.254	22424.5	-1.390	0.164
TV channels & radio	2.603	2.607	24338.5	-0.105	0.916
newspapers and magazines	3.237	3.062	23087	-0.967	0.333
local food / drinks	5.052	5.033	23659	-0.638	0.524
health hazards	4.784	5.402	17589.5	-5.295	0.000
medical/hospital service	4.879	5.053	23228.5	-0.808	0.419
emergency numbers	5.092	5.019	22473	-0.936	0.349
environmental hazards	4.319	4.831	17664	-4.297	0.000
real estate market prices	2.541	2.251	20798.5	-2.283	0.022
employment availability	2.518	3.090	19258	-3.618	0.000
museums	4.358	5.175	15720.5	-6.770	0.000
churches/ temples	4.491	4.557	23055.5	-1.003	0.316

historic sites	4.780	5.297	18681.5	-4.421	0.000
places of entertainment	4.416	4.908	17861	-4.664	0.000
cultural events	4.297	5.020	15481	-5.905	0.000
places to shop	4.714	4.660	23133	-0.250	0.803
festivals & social events	4.909	5.307	19373	-3.263	0.001
short trips/itineraries	4.520	5.256	15568	-6.507	0.000
sport activities	3.957	4.493	18719.5	-4.015	0.000
photos of attractions	4.248	4.646	20122.5	-2.792	0.005
places to stay	5.476	5.607	23629	-0.887	0.375
places to eat	5.099	5.450	20923	-3.025	0.002
how to tip & how much	4.407	5.270	15472	-6.970	0.000
how to meet local people	4.648	4.799	22166.5	-1.464	0.143
language phrases	4.921	5.136	21003	-1.965	0.049
local customs and beliefs	4.755	5.251	19016.5	-4.125	0.000
avoiding arguments	4.065	4.733	17435	-5.186	0.000
legal help	3.791	4.038	21575	-1.890	0.059
electricity supply	3.922	4.048	23045	-0.829	0.407
time differences	4.418	4.548	23634.5	-0.558	0.577
telephone prefixes	4.409	4.606	22557	-1.065	0.287
mobile phones coverage	3.491	3.678	22302.5	-1.138	0.255
personal risks	5.026	5.102	23371.5	-0.426	0.670
Internet cafes	4.578	4.679	23248	-0.614	0.539
currency & exchange rates	5.070	4.918	21899.5	-1.650	0.099
dangerous places to visit	5.134	5.238	23531.5	-0.599	0.549
practical hints for women	4.670	4.883	22138	-1.265	0.206
practical hints for children	4.213	4.291	22451	-0.709	0.478
maps	5.651	5.631	22222	-1.710	0.087

Table 6. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between Korean and North American travellers

Items of information	Mean Korean	Mean North American	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	5.140	4.648	19649.5	-3.017	0.003
history	4.308	4.550	20666.5	-2.098	0.036
physical landscape	4.505	4.445	22495.5	-0.561	0.575
climate	4.572	4.990	19166	-3.331	0.001
flora and fauna	3.682	4.038	19538.5	-2.749	0.006
local arts	4.027	4.379	19759.5	-2.892	0.004
local economy	3.308	4.303	13479	-7.776	0.000
government and politics	3.410	4.124	16739	-5.096	0.000

bus and train	5.464	5.280	21086	-1.929	0.054
air routs and fares	5.092	4.654	19221.5	-3.126	0.002
taxi tips and costs	4.575	5.043	18643	-3.698	0.000
car hire	3.703	4.361	17158.5	-4.492	0.000
driving rules and habits	4.171	4.515	19292	-2.496	0.013
info on hitchhiking	3.750	3.580	21555.5	-0.798	0.425
local public transports	5.195	5.248	21624	-0.898	0.369
banks	4.638	4.797	21723.5	-1.359	0.174
tourist information centres	5.149	5.067	22184.5	-0.849	0.396
travel agencies	4.356	4.208	22567	-0.757	0.449
embassy and consulate	4.477	4.629	21147	-1.723	0.085
post office	3.968	4.254	20071.5	-2.396	0.017
TV channels & radio	2.910	2.607	20162.5	-2.562	0.010
newspapers and magazines	3.213	3.062	21635.5	-1.240	0.215
local food / drinks	4.592	5.033	18633.5	-3.475	0.001
health hazards	4.699	5.402	15903	-5.852	0.000
medical/hospital service	4.565	5.053	17305	-4.340	0.000
emergency numbers	4.912	5.019	21163.5	-1.012	0.311
environmental hazards	4.175	4.831	15379.5	-4.971	0.000
real estate market prices	2.409	2.251	20966.5	-1.065	0.287
employment availability	2.995	3.090	21412	-0.689	0.491
museums	4.468	5.175	16023.5	-5.803	0.000
churches/ temples	3.941	4.557	17628.5	-4.346	0.000
historic sites	4.745	5.297	17615.5	-4.450	0.000
places of entertainment	3.773	4.908	12373.5	-8.085	0.000
cultural events	4.466	5.020	17069.5	-4.434	0.000
places to shop	4.343	4.660	18152	-2.916	0.004
festivals & social events	5.097	5.307	20335	-1.388	0.165
short trips/itineraries	5.281	5.256	22352	-0.095	0.925
sport activities	4.130	4.493	18550.5	-3.031	0.002
photos of attractions	4.659	4.646	22032	-0.263	0.792
places to stay	5.498	5.607	22216	-1.057	0.290
places to eat	5.119	5.450	19348.5	-3.163	0.002
how to tip & how much	4.164	5.270	12853	-8.361	0.000
how to meet local people	4.730	4.799	21814	-0.541	0.589
language phrases	4.700	5.136	17875	-3.774	0.000
local customs and beliefs	4.101	5.251	11220.5	-9.512	0.000
avoiding arguments	3.926	4.733	14785.5	-6.377	0.000
legal help	3.612	4.038	19146.5	-2.981	0.003
electricity supply	4.055	4.048	22505	-0.051	0.960
time differences	4.244	4.548	19809.5	-2.396	0.017
telephone prefixes	4.523	4.606	21445.5	-0.834	0.404
mobile phones coverage	3.385	3.678	20072.5	-1.835	0.066
personal risks	4.949	5.102	21478.5	-0.483	0.629

Internet cafes	4.581	4.679	21728.5	-0.772	0.440
currency & exchange rates	5.124	4.918	20957.5	-1.448	0.148
dangerous places to visit	5.208	5.238	22158.5	-0.454	0.650
practical hints for women	5.135	4.883	21073	-0.933	0.351
practical hints for children	4.653	4.291	19992	-1.622	0.105
maps	5.551	5.631	22023	-0.020	0.984

Appendix 5

Table 1. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between first time and repeat visitors

Items of information	Mean first time	Mean repeat visitors	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	4.974	4.989	82519.5	-0.478	0.633
history	4.272	4.147	83305	-0.775	0.438
physical landscape	4.376	4.341	85086	-0.027	0.979
climate	4.869	4.627	77831.5	-2.372	0.018
flora and fauna	3.850	3.567	75141	-2.949	0.003
local arts	4.178	3.968	80315.5	-1.923	0.054
local economy	3.848	3.682	81031.5	-1.450	0.147
government and politics	3.734	3.745	85214.5	-0.279	0.780
bus and train	5.448	5.282	82513	-1.485	0.138
air routes and fares	4.915	4.986	82195	-1.074	0.283
taxi tips and costs	4.832	4.694	82591.5	-1.185	0.236
car hire	4.052	3.799	77839.5	-1.919	0.055
driving rules and habits	4.386	4.132	77132	-2.105	0.035
info on hitchhiking	3.695	3.673	83879.5	-0.061	0.951
local public transports	5.206	4.940	76861.5	-2.434	0.015
banks	4.648	4.432	79700.5	-2.064	0.039
tourist information centres	5.056	4.855	77284.5	-2.511	0.012
travel agencies	4.250	4.373	82625.5	-1.174	0.240
embassy and consulate	4.489	4.392	83141	-0.920	0.357
post office	4.123	3.833	75965	-2.956	0.003
TV channels & radio	2.745	2.962	80364.5	-1.914	0.056
newspapers and magazines	3.206	3.193	85019	-0.199	0.842
local food / drinks	4.895	4.934	84139	-0.317	0.751
health hazards	4.983	4.838	78866.5	-1.793	0.073
medical/hospital service	4.853	4.745	80882	-1.038	0.299
emergency numbers	5.053	4.950	79106	-0.970	0.332
environmental hazards	4.540	4.272	72957.5	-2.405	0.016
real estate market prices	2.328	2.528	76171	-2.064	0.039
employment availability	2.810	2.765	80239	-0.534	0.593
museums	4.813	4.374	70199.5	-4.599	0.000
churches/ temples	4.458	4.216	78163.5	-2.273	0.023
historic sites	5.015	4.742	75180.5	-3.111	0.002
places of entertainment	4.325	4.377	82288.5	-0.473	0.636
cultural events	4.606	4.410	75311.5	-2.048	0.041
places to shop	4.694	4.665	81066.5	-0.440	0.660

festivals & social events	5.133	4.835	73049.5	-2.948	0.003
short trips/itineraries	5.104	4.852	73733	-2.890	0.004
sport activities	4.193	4.003	77166.5	-1.895	0.058
photos of attractions	4.701	4.419	74885.5	-2.483	0.013
places to stay	5.536	5.356	81913.5	-1.592	0.111
places to eat	5.274	5.207	84934.5	-0.120	0.905
how to tip & how much	4.779	4.410	73113.5	-3.714	0.000
how to meet local people	4.680	4.472	76471.5	-2.099	0.036
language phrases	4.904	4.749	76408.5	-1.755	0.079
local customs and beliefs	4.729	4.657	81699.5	-0.891	0.373
avoiding arguments	4.363	4.252	81439	-0.806	0.421
legal help	3.844	3.983	80219.5	-1.353	0.176
electricity supply	4.091	3.895	78163.5	-1.743	0.081
time differences	4.513	4.169	74011.5	-3.108	0.002
telephone prefixes	4.663	4.310	72760.5	-3.291	0.001
mobile phones coverage	3.703	3.798	81258	-0.799	0.425
personal risks	5.093	5.044	83112.5	-0.146	0.884
Internet cafes	4.526	4.513	82660	-0.192	0.848
currency & exchange rates	5.047	5.041	83962	-0.081	0.936
dangerous places to visit	5.178	5.000	78579	-1.647	0.100
practical hints for women	4.981	4.760	76745.5	-1.956	0.051
practical hints for children	4.459	4.387	79599.5	-0.777	0.437
maps	5.632	5.494	78536.5	-1.619	0.105

Table 2. Variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of first time visitors

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean
maps	462	11	5.632
places to stay	470	3	5.536
bus and train	467	6	5.448
places to eat	470	3	5.274
local public transports	462	11	5.206
dangerous places to visit	465	8	5.178
festivals & social events	460	13	5.133
short trips/itineraries	463	10	5.104
personal risks	463	10	5.093
tourist information centres	467	6	5.056
emergency numbers	455	18	5.053
currency & exchange rate	464	9	5.047
historic sites	469	4	5.015

health hazards	464	9	4.983
practical hints for women	463	10	4.981
how to reach the destination	468	5	4.974
air routs and fares	468	5	4.915
language phrases	458	15	4.904
local food / drinks	468	5	4.895
climate	467	6	4.869
medical/hospital service	463	10	4.853
taxi tips and costs	469	4	4.832
museums	470	3	4.813
how to tip & how much	467	6	4.779
local customs and beliefs	465	8	4.729
photos of attractions	461	12	4.701
places to shop	457	16	4.694
how to meet local people	463	10	4.680
telephone prefixes	463	10	4.663
banks	471	2	4.648

Table 3. Variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of repeat visitors

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean
maps	358	16	5.494
places to stay	368	6	5.356
bus and train	372	2	5.282
places to eat	363	11	5.207
personal risks	361	13	5.044
currency & exchange rate	363	11	5.041
dangerous places to visit	360	14	5.000
how to reach the destination	359	15	4.989
air routs and fares	366	8	4.986
emergency numbers	361	13	4.950
local public transports	366	8	4.940
local food / drinks	364	10	4.934
tourist information centres	366	8	4.855
short trips/itineraries	358	16	4.852
health hazards	365	9	4.838
festivals & social events	358	16	4.835
practical hints for women	358	16	4.760
language phrases	358	16	4.749
medical/hospital service	364	10	4.745
historic sites	364	10	4.742
taxi tips and costs	369	5	4.694
places to shop	361	13	4.665

local customs and beliefs	364	10	4.657
climate	367	7	4.627
Internet cafes	359	15	4.513
how to meet local people	360	14	4.472
banks	368	6	4.432
photos of attractions	360	14	4.419
cultural events	361	13	4.410
how to tip & how much	366	8	4.410

Appendix 6

Table 1. 58 items of information – Mann Whitney U test between experienced travellers and travellers with no experience

Items of information	Mean experienced	Mean no experience	Mann Whitney	Z	Sig.
how to reach the destination	4.996	5.014	69977.5	-0.731	0.465
history	4.359	4.007	62607.5	-3.539	0.000
physical landscape	4.365	4.355	72433	-0.070	0.944
climate	4.754	4.828	70718.5	-0.731	0.465
flora and fauna	3.724	3.801	70464.5	-0.694	0.488
local arts	4.151	4.034	69856.5	-1.302	0.193
local economy	3.868	3.699	67480	-1.867	0.062
government and politics	3.836	3.655	68320	-1.661	0.097
bus and train	5.359	5.461	69717	-1.579	0.114
air routs and fares	4.866	5.117	64772.5	-2.819	0.005
taxi tips and costs	4.813	4.769	73225	-0.190	0.849
car hire	3.952	3.966	71335	-0.242	0.809
driving rules and habits	4.293	4.322	71714	-0.039	0.969
info on hitchhiking	3.646	3.806	67838.5	-1.224	0.221
local public transports	5.092	5.131	70095	-0.658	0.510
banks	4.550	4.630	71075	-0.876	0.381
tourist information centres	4.946	5.017	70155.5	-0.921	0.357
travel agencies	4.256	4.457	67482	-2.081	0.037
embassy and consulate	4.480	4.450	71461.5	-0.617	0.537
post office	4.052	3.983	71254.5	-0.667	0.505
TV channels & radio	2.808	2.884	70720	-1.109	0.268
newspapers and magazines	3.174	3.284	69702.5	-1.128	0.259
local food / drinks	4.992	4.780	66498	-2.169	0.030
health hazards	5.012	4.844	67028	-1.710	0.087
medical/hospital service	4.828	4.857	70777	-0.332	0.740
emergency numbers	4.984	5.117	65349.5	-1.531	0.126
environmental hazards	4.498	4.359	64617	-1.424	0.154
real estate market prices	2.373	2.521	66233.5	-1.683	0.092
employment availability	2.694	3.007	62369.5	-2.559	0.010
museums	4.707	4.562	69502	-1.260	0.208
churches/ temples	4.428	4.280	69005.5	-1.491	0.136
historic sites	4.992	4.805	68703.5	-1.505	0.132
places of entertainment	4.482	4.241	65743	-2.145	0.032
cultural events	4.591	4.493	67938.5	-0.778	0.437
places to shop	4.671	4.766	67374.5	-1.073	0.283

festivals & social events	5.055	4.990	70898.5	-0.037	0.970
short trips/itineraries	5.050	4.983	68583	-0.957	0.339
sport activities	4.109	4.163	70529	-0.299	0.765
photos of attractions	4.484	4.808	63174.5	-2.715	0.007
places to stay	5.535	5.420	70594	-1.323	0.186
places to eat	5.279	5.236	70213	-1.051	0.293
how to tip & how much	4.725	4.524	66513.5	-2.257	0.024
how to meet local people	4.614	4.668	70154.5	-0.465	0.642
language phrases	4.928	4.778	65849.5	-1.596	0.111
local customs and beliefs	4.858	4.512	62081	-3.480	0.001
avoiding arguments	4.322	4.340	72058	-0.085	0.932
legal help	3.874	4.021	68758	-1.315	0.189
electricity supply	4.006	4.097	69086	-0.919	0.358
time differences	4.397	4.379	71921	-0.144	0.885
telephone prefixes	4.510	4.522	70478	-0.402	0.688
mobile phones coverage	3.710	3.893	67536	-1.495	0.135
personal risks	5.077	5.138	68042	-1.369	0.171
Internet cafes	4.544	4.581	70217	-0.491	0.624
currency & exchange rates	5.004	5.146	68799.5	-1.126	0.260
dangerous places to visit	5.084	5.201	67856	-1.464	0.143
practical hints for women	4.919	4.903	71061.5	-0.026	0.979
practical hints for children	4.434	4.490	69333	-0.469	0.639
maps	5.655	5.522	67112	-1.927	0.054

Table 2. Variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of travellers with no experience

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean
maps	289	6	5.522
bus and train	293	2	5.461
places to stay	293	2	5.420
places to eat	292	3	5.236
dangerous places to visit	289	6	5.201
currency & exchange rate	288	7	5.146
personal risks	290	5	5.138
local public transports	289	6	5.131
air routs and fares	291	4	5.117
emergency numbers	283	12	5.117
tourist information centres	292	3	5.017
how to reach the destination	291	4	5.014
festivals& social events	291	4	4.990

short trips/itineraries	287	8	4.983
practical hints for women	288	7	4.903
medical/hospital service	287	8	4.857
health hazards	288	7	4.844
climate	291	4	4.828
photos of attractions	287	8	4.808
historic sites	292	3	4.805
local food / drinks	291	4	4.780
language phrases	288	7	4.778
taxi tips and costs	294	1	4.769
places to shop	286	9	4.766
how to meet local people	289	6	4.668
banks	292	3	4.630
Internet cafes	289	6	4.581
museums	292	3	4.562
how to tip & how much	292	3	4.524
telephone prefixes	289	6	4.522

Table 3. Variables used for the Principal Component Analysis of experienced travellers

Items of information	Valid cases	Missing cases	Mean
maps	495	15	5.655
places to stay	505	5	5.535
bus and train	504	6	5.359
places to eat	501	9	5.279
local public transports	498	12	5.092
dangerous places to visit	498	12	5.084
personal risks	496	14	5.077
festivals & social events	488	22	5.055
short trips/itineraries	497	13	5.050
health hazards	500	10	5.012
currency & exchange range	500	10	5.004
how to reach the destination	495	15	4.996
local food / drinks	501	9	4.992
historic sites	501	9	4.992
emergency numbers	492	18	4.984
tourist information centres	499	11	4.946
language phrases	489	21	4.928
practical hints for women	494	16	4.919
air routs and fares	501	9	4.866
local customs and beliefs	501	9	4.858
medical/hospital service	500	10	4.828
taxi tips and costs	502	8	4.813

climate	501	9	4.754
how to tip & how much	502	8	4.725
museums	502	8	4.707
places to shop	493	17	4.671
how to meet local people	495	15	4.614
cultural events	491	19	4.591
banks	505	5	4.550
Internet cafes	496	14	4.544

Appendix 7

Table 1. Factors and indicators resulting from the principal component analysis on importance

Japanese sample:

Components							
	Health	Local living	Safety	Basics	Communication	Culture	Info
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Health hazards	.768						
Emergency numbers	.723						
Medical/hospital service	.721						
Local food/drinks	.524						
Taxi tips and costs		.745					
Bus and train		.618					
Air routes and fares		.617					
Places to shop		.617					
Short trips/itineraries		.604					
Climate		.531					
Internet cafes			.683				
Currency and exchange rates			.670				
Dangerous places to visit			.666				
Personal risks			.631				
Time differences			.583				
Places to stay				.739			
Maps				.634			
How to reach the destination				.569			
Language phrases					.819		
How to meet local people					.796		
Local customs and believes					.520		
Churches / temples						.796	
Historic sites						.788	
Festivals and social events						.541	
Tourist information centres							.674
Banks							.667

Korean sample:

Components						
	Basics	Local living	Communication	Safety	Health	Destination overview
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Places to stay	.762					
Short trips / itineraries	.688					
Maps	.685					
Places to eat	.573					
Historic sites	.558					
Dangerous places to visit	.546					
Festivals and social events	.526					
Air routes and fares		.738				
Banks		.638				
Tourist information centres		.541				
Local public transport		.539				
Currency exchange rates		.522				
Telephone prefixes		.508				
Taxi tips and costs		.503				
How to meet local people			.816			
Language phrases			.717			
Internet cafes			.482			
Practical hints for children				.631		
Medical/hospital services				.604		
Embassies and consulates				.561		
Health hazards					.689	
Local food and drinks					.589	
Physical landscape						.751
Climate						.695

Chinese sample:

Components							
	Local living	Everyday hints	Communication	Basics	Health	Safety	Reaching the destination
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Taxi tips and costs	.813						
Bus and train	.796						
Air routes and fares	.723						
Local public transport	.614						
Local food and drinks	.605						
Currency and exchange rates	.566						

Places to shop	.564						
Festivals and social events		.654					
Practical hints for women		.630					
Practical hints for children		.618					
Photos of attractions		.612					
Maps		.607					
Local customs and beliefs			.775				
Avoiding arguments			.731				
Language phrases			.678				
Places to eat				.788			
Places to stay				.725			
How to tip and how much				.591			
Medical/hospital services					.772		
Emergency numbers					.720		
Health hazards					.635		
Mobile phone coverage						.656	
Personal risks						.517	
How to reach the destination							.787

North American sample:

	Components					
	Health	Culture	Communication	Local living	Basics	Entertainment
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Emergency numbers	.753					
Environmental hazards	.746					
Practical hints for women	.707					
Health hazards	.688					
Medical, hospital service	.678					
Dangerous places to visit	.587					
Historic sites		.805				
Museums		.793				
Festivals and social events		.693				
Cultural events		.659				
Short trips/itineraries		.614				
How to meet local people			.758			
Avoiding arguments			.746			
Local customs and beliefs			.742			
Language phrases			.741			
Local public transport				.732		
Bus and train				.656		
Local food and drinks				.606		
Tourist information centres				.595		
Climate				.528		

Taxi tips and costs				.523		
How to tip and how much					.634	
Internet cafes					.545	
Places to stay					.540	
Places of entertainment						.626

Table 2. Factors and indicators resulting from the principal component analysis on satisfaction

Japanese sample:

Component					
	<i>Basics</i>	<i>Sites</i>	<i>Practical hints</i>	<i>Communication</i>	<i>General overview</i>
places to stay	.808				
places to eat	.760				
short trips/itineraries	.667				
places to shop	.637				
churches/temples		.807			
museums		.804			
historic sites		.796			
personal risks			.654		
tourist information centres			.654		
currency & exchange rates			.629		
telephone prefixes				.714	
how to tip & how much				.633	
time differences				.604	
physical landscape					.801
history					.798

Korean sample:

Component					
	<i>Sites</i>	<i>Basics</i>	<i>Events</i>	<i>Moving</i>	<i>General</i>

					<i>overview</i>
museums	.825				
churches/temples	.811				
historic sites	.771				
places to shop	.610				
bus and train		.763			
places to stay		.749			
places to eat		.702			
festivals & social events			.812		
cultural events			.763		
short trips/itineraries			.600		
maps				.697	
history				.588	
how to reach the destination				.587	
time differences					.770
climate					.554

Chinese sample:

	Component		
	<i>Attractions</i>	<i>Basics</i>	<i>General overview</i>
photos of attractions	.788		
maps	.774		
historic sites	.688		
places to shop	.669		
museums	.630		
places to eat		.863	
places to stay		.737	
churches/temples		.612	
climate			.843
physical landscape			.827
how to reach the destination			.644

North American sample:

	Component		
	<i>Attractions</i>	<i>General overview</i>	<i>Basics</i>
historic sites	.812		
museums	.800		

places of entertainment	.778		
cultural events	.772		
churches/temples	.746		
places to shop	.733		
festivals & social events	.728		
history		.742	
climate		.718	
embassy and consulate		.619	
places to eat			.879
places to stay			.819