

HOTEL ATTRIBUTES  
AS VIEWED BY THE  
MATURE AUSTRALIAN  
LEISURE TRAVELLER



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Ruys. H. F. M. (Henricus  
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Hotel attributes as viewed  
by the mature Australian

**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing**

**Faculty of Business**

**Hotel Attributes as Viewed by the Mature Australian  
Leisure Traveller**



By

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of  
Master in Business

1997

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## I DECLARATION

I, Hein F.M. Ruys, hereby declare that the presented work has not been previously submitted for any other academic award.

Signed:  .....

Date : ..... 6 . 8 . 98 .....

## II ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for the support of my employer, the University of Queensland, which gave me the opportunity to carry out the study. It would not have been possible to complete this study without the generous support and encouragement of my colleagues, family and friends. In particular I would like to acknowledge Professor Stephen Craig-Smith who stimulated me to commence, continue and finish the study, Francis Loughran who became my supervisor and Ms. Janelle McPhail, my co-supervisor. Ms. Janelle McPhail provided support, clear guidelines and direction and constructive feedback during the whole process. She has been very supportive during periods of doubt and I am very grateful for her commitment and trust in me. I would also like to acknowledge the guidance, direction and encouragement provided by Professor Brian King who offered to become my supervisor after Francis left Victoria University of Technology. The support and understanding of colleagues Yvette Wright, Paul Whitelaw, Lyn O'Brien and Dr. Sherrie Wei, who all helped in various phases of my research, was appreciated.

I thank Mrs. Y. Zardani for organising the pilot study with the members of the Queensland Pensioners and Superannuants' League, David Deans and Colin Anderson of the National Seniors Association for their permission to use the membership data base and the members of the NSA consumer panel for responding to the questionnaire. I would also like to acknowledge those people who made significant contributions to this thesis by way of participating in focus groups and in-depth interviews.

Last, but not least, I thank my family for their support and my wife for her patience.

### III ABSTRACT

The Australian population is ageing. The 'fifty plus' or 'mature' segment of the population will grow rapidly. As a result the number of mature Australians travelling can be expected to increase. Despite this increase, little is known about the travel behaviour of this market segment.

This study reviews the travel behaviour, the reasons for travel and the expectations and opinions of mature Australian domestic travellers towards hotel attributes. A review of the literature as well as exploratory research was used.

The study used an exploratory research design, including a review of the literature and focus group interviews which lead to the development of a questionnaire.

The respondents were divided into two segments: non-frequent and frequent travellers. The latter were clustered into four groups based on similar important factors. The segments and clusters were cross-tabulated with travel behaviour variables. Results from factor analysis revealed three dimensions of travel motivation of the frequent traveller segment. Hotel attributes were grouped in bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions. The results indicated that mature travellers differ in various measures of travel behaviour that can be, in part, explained by their socio-economic background. A profile and comparison of hotel attribute importance of significant cohorts of mature frequent travellers is presented. This information provides insights into how the accommodation industry could develop and present itself as an attractive product to this growing market.

## IV ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	Australian Automobile Association
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
BOMA	Building Owners and Managers Association
BTR	Bureau of Tourism Research
CHRIE	Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education
DTM	Domestic Tourism Monitor
ETC	European Travel Commission
GENIAL	Guest, Environment, Needs, Interior, Accessibility, Long-term
HCIMA	Hotel Catering International Management Association
IHA	International Hotel Association
MFYP	Mainly female younger partner traveller cluster
MFOS	Mainly female older single traveller cluster
FYS	Mainly female younger single traveller cluster
MOP	Male older partner traveller cluster
NSA	National Seniors Association
NUD*ist	Non-numerical Unstructured Data computer program
QTTC	Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation
SCOVA	Standard Classification of Visitors Accommodation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

A powerful consumer group is emerging, a group which will grow rapidly during the next twenty years. It is the group of older Australians. This group is slowly being discovered by marketers. Mature Australians, the Australians aged fifty years and older, will have a significant impact on the tourism industry as they have the means, time and propensity to travel. With the tendency towards earlier and healthier retirement, they are likely to travel for leisure purposes. Most will travel domestically, since domestic travel appears to increase relative to overseas travel as travellers age. A large proportion will use hotel accommodation to stay overnight. Given this situation, it is perhaps surprising that, as far as the author is aware, there has been little published research on the hotel accommodation attributes which the mature domestic Australian leisure traveller expects. This study attempts to address this gap. In particular, it examines the following issues: the demographics, travel behaviour and reasons for travel of mature leisure travellers and the expectations and opinions of this group towards hotel attributes. The latter will be explored from the bio-physical and psycho-social perspective, drawing on the theoretical literature from the health sciences area, as well as hospitality and tourism. The study reviews the literature on travel behaviour, reasons for travel and guest expectations towards hotel attributes, proceeds to undertake qualitative research on the needs of the Australian mature domestic traveller and then incorporates a mail survey based on a sample frame of 585 mature (fifty years and older) Australians.

Chapter one sets out the background to the study and provides a rationale for research into the travel behaviour, the reasons for travel and the expectations of, and opinions on hotel attributes of the mature Australian leisure traveller

A picture is developed which shows the significance of domestic tourism relative to overall tourism in Australia. The study objectives are specified, the relevant definitions are outlined and the structure of the study is explained.

## **1.2 Background to the research**

In 1993/94, income earned by the tourism and hospitality industry accounted for 6.6% of Australia's Gross Domestic Product. As an export industry, the tourism and hospitality industry was responsible for 10% of Australia's export earnings in 1992/93 (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1994). The level of international tourism in a country is determined by the level of domestic tourism. Vallas and Bécherel (1995) argue, in accordance with Linder's theory, that a high domestic tourism demand creates an environment and conditions favourable for the development of international tourism.

The importance of domestic tourism is demonstrated by the fact that it accounts for around 75% of all tourism activity in Australia (Commonwealth Department of Tourism, 1992). The number of domestic trips is expected to grow by a healthy average annual rate of 1.9% to 1998-99, compared with an average of less than 1% over the period 1983-1992.

Australians travelling domestically spent \$29 billion, or 79% of total tourism expenditure (Forecast, 1994). This healthy change is partly the result of a recognition that the high volume of short term international departures by Australian residents had become a concern, prompting the need to promote Australia as a tourist destination for its own residents. In 'Keeping Australians at Home' Haigh (1993) postulates that if part of outbound tourism could be diverted to domestic travel, Australia's balance of payments position would be improved and new employment opportunities would be created. Whilst some of this growth is due to the active promotion of domestic destinations by local and State Governments, economic conditions such as the exchange rate of the Australian dollar and social trends, such as demographic changes, are other important factors favouring domestic tourism.

Several recent economic and social changes have had a significant impact on the tourism industry in Australia and are particularly relevant to mature travellers. When, in 1983, the Australian dollar was floated on the international currency market, its value dropped by up to 50% relative to stronger currencies. This improved the competitiveness of Australian exports including services supplied in Australia to overseas visitors.

Subsequently, the Federal and State Governments became actively involved in the promotion of Australia overseas, prompting Australia to emerge as a new international tourist destination, particularly for Asian tourists. The share of international tourists rose from 13% of total visitors nights in 1985 to 23% in 1992. A boom in tourism development ensued, with an emphasis on international standard hotels. Australia's share of the total world tourism market has since grown to 0.55 % and is expected to grow further, sharing the success of the Asia/Oceania tourism receiving region.

Expenditure derived from tourism was \$43.6 billion in 1993-94, of which \$19 billion was attributable to domestic trips involving an overnight stay, \$13.5 billion to domestic day trips, \$10.4 billion to inbound tourism and \$0.7 billion to the domestic component of outbound tourism (BTR, 1995). Australian residents now spend \$3350 million on accommodation as domestic travellers (Skene, 1996).

The future of Australian tourism looks secure. In 1996, the Tourism Forecasting Council published the following long term forecasts:

**Table 1.1: Long term Australian tourism forecasts.**

International visitors	6.3 million in year 2000, averaging 11.2 % annual growth from 1993 (TFC)
International visitor nights	122 million in year 2000, averaging 8.5 % annual growth from 1993 (TFC)
Tourism export earnings	\$ 21 billion in year 2000, averaging 10.6 % annual growth from 1994-95 (DoT)
Domestic trips	53.5 million in 1998-99, averaging 1.9 % annual growth from 1992-93 (TFC)
Domestic visitor nights	238 million in 1999-2000, averaging 2.0 % annual growth from 1993-94 (TFC)

Source: Forecast 1996, *The Fifth Report of the Tourism Forecasting Council*, vol. 3, no. 1, November, p. 8.

The year 1994 can be considered as a turning point for the tourism industry with prices and occupancy rates rising as a result of increased overseas visitor numbers and a revival of domestic tourism.

In 1993-94 more than forty-eight million domestic trips were undertaken. Most domestic travellers (46%) stayed overnight with family and friends, though hotels, motels and guest houses accounted for a further 20% of domestic visitors nights (almost forty-three million room nights). Given that 25% of the domestic travellers are fifty-five years and older, it can be extrapolated that the mature travellers generated at least twelve million room nights (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1995).

The following table shows the forecasted growth of domestic visitor nights in the industry segment.

**Table 1.2: Forecasted domestic visitor nights in hotels, motels and guest houses**

	<b>Business</b>	<b>Leisure</b>	<b>Total</b>
1995-96	12836	38770	51606
1996-97	13637	39801	53438
1997-98	14409	40233	54642
1998-99	15012	40580	55592
1999-20	15518	40836	56354
2000-01	15915	41096	57011
2001-02	16471	41462	57933
2002-03	17047	42061	59108
2003-04	17642	42670	60312
2004-05	18260	43289	61549
2005-06	18898	43918	62816

Source: Forecast, 1996, *The Fifth Report of the Tourism Forecasting Council*, vol. 3, no. 1, November.

It can be expected that the proportion of mature domestic travellers will increase for the following reasons:

The Australian population is ageing, with the number of people aged sixty years and over expected to increase from two million in 1981 to three million in 2001 and five million in 2021 (Kendig and McCallum, 1986). As in many other developed countries, ageing of the population is a result of improved medical technologies and healthier lifestyles. At the same time, a lower incidence of the nuclear family, a larger proportion of women participating in the workforce and delayed, smaller families has led to a decreased birth rate per capita. In Australia, immigration has been viewed as an opportunity to slow, or reverse, the rising proportion of the population in the older age bracket. New settlers tend to be younger and of child-bearing age; conversely, a decrease in immigration can affect this ageing process (Rowland, 1991).

The age density of the Australian population is now swinging towards a greater proportion of older, rather than younger, people and the fifty-plus or 'mature' segment of the population is expected to grow rapidly.

Middleton (1988, p. 37) has suggested that:

...apart from the size of the market, these retired and near retired people are quite different from any previous generation of senior citizens, in the sense that most of them are far more active, fit and affluent than before. By the year 2000 many of them will have been brought up in a civilisation accustomed to high levels of personal mobility, and most will have established patterns of leisure activities and holidays, which they are able to afford to continue into their seventies and eighties...

The stereotype suggests that as people age, they become more and more like one another and form a homogeneous group (Neugarten as quoted by Hall, 1980). Shoemaker (1989) quotes a study from Anderson and Langemeyer (1982) that treated the over fifty travellers as an homogeneous market. He argues that, in the study, no effort was made to segment the senior traveller market into smaller groups. Neugarten believes that this is an inaccurate view of the elderly, since

'they become less and less alike' (Hall 1980, p.78). The present study offers the potential to improve our understanding of the relevant differences.

According to Davis (1993), mature Australians control 75% of Australia's assets and have \$30 billion per year to spend on discretionary purposes. For many of these people, the major obligations of life have been met - they have paid for their home and car - and their children have left home and are independent (Environmetrics, 1991). It is therefore an excellent market for luxury goods and services (Davis, 1993).

'Mature Australians' constitute an increasing share of the domestic tourism market, having the means, the time and the propensity to travel (Environmetrics, 1991). They have fewer constraints on when they can travel, and their main reason for domestic travel is leisure. Research by Environmetrics (1991) has shown that soon after retirement, people tend to travel extensively for any of a wide range of reasons: some want to learn, others want to enjoy indulgences they feel they deserve. The flexibility that they enjoy in the timing of their travel is important for the accommodation industry, as the segment is able to fill the seasonal troughs, or what Hart (1994, p. 437) calls 'the deadlock of seasonality'. Domestic tourism will further benefit from this ageing process as consumers express an increasing preference for domestic destinations as they age. Additionally, the ageing population is likely to become progressively better educated and more experienced consumers of tourism and hospitality services (Lago and Poffley, 1993). As Hart (1994) has suggested, the mature traveller segment could become the most important target market for Australian tourism: He states that the young have time to travel but no money, the adult population in active employment has the money but not the time but the mature population has both.

Some in the Australian tourism and hospitality industry have already recognised the differences between the younger and older market and are establishing healthy trading practices and a loyal client base for the over 55's (Environmetrics, 1991).

For others, this 'mature' segment will create challenges and opportunities in the development and marketing of new tourism products and services. Whilst opportunities abound, it is imperative that the factors that satisfy the needs and expectations of this group are understood by suppliers if they are to serve the market effectively and efficiently.

Mature leisure travellers already make a major contribution to the revenue generated by the accommodation sector in Australia's hospitality industry and it appears worthy of nurturing and developing. Having established a profile of the group, the present study identifies the relevant hotel attributes most sought after by the mature domestic traveller group.

It is anticipated that many of the findings will also be applicable to the increasing number of mature international travellers visiting Australia. More than 0.6 million visitors to Australia in 1994 were aged fifty-five years or over (Chai and Skene, 1996). The number of international mature travellers is expected to increase, as they will come from countries which are experiencing the same ageing process. Lago and Poffley (1993) suggest that the time window from the present to 2010 is essentially the last opportunity for the hospitality industry to prepare for the onset of a truly aged society.

Although the international travel literature contains a vast array of studies on why people travel, relatively little attention has been devoted to the expectations that travellers have of accommodation attributes and even fewer studies have considered what is expected by mature travellers. Only limited research has been published on the mature leisure traveller market and on the accommodation-specific attributes which apply to them. Most recent studies on accommodation facilities have concentrated on the role of interactions between staff and guests and between guests and fellow guests as determinants of satisfaction. While not underestimating the importance of these attributes, certain researchers have suggested that the role of physical assets should not be omitted from such considerations (Goeldner, 1989; Saleh and Ryan, 1992). Although mature Australians have the desire to travel, little seems to be known about the

accommodation attributes which they expect hotels to supply. The need exists to identify and profile the physical attributes that travellers expect of hotels.

Wheatcroft and Seekings (1992, p. 66) in their report 'Europe's Senior Travel Market' for the European Travel Commission (ETC) suggest that:

...where a significant demand can be expected from seniors, it will be necessary to consider investments in special facilities and training...this involves a delicate balancing trick, judging how far to move in order to encourage seniors without, in the process, discouraging their juniors...

In other words, hotel attributes need to be 'ageing friendly' without blatantly being recognisable as such.

The expectations that travellers have when selecting a hotel have been studied in the United States by researchers including Lee and Lambert (1984), Lewis (1985), Riley and Perogiannis (1990), Knutson (1988), Cadotte and Turgeon (1988), Greathouse, Gregoire, and Shanklin (1992) and Clow, Garretson and Kurtz (1994). Others have addressed the travel behaviour and the needs and concerns of the mature traveller. The growing significance of mature aged travellers has been studied by Lago and Poffley (1993) who concentrated on the demographic variability of the elderly with regards to health status, income and family structure. They described several examples of services orientated toward significant subgroups of elderly persons. Lago and Poffley (1993) suggested that hospitality providers should carefully review their current programs in light of the ageing of their clientele and should make necessary adjustments.

McGuire, Uysal and McDonald (1988) studied the methods used by the tourism industry to attract the mature market and the sources of information actually used by consumers when making holiday decisions. The vacation patterns of mature German travellers have been studied by Romsa and Blenman (1989). They found that retirees were little different from the population as a whole, with respect to their recreational needs. Van Harssel, Rudd and Ellis-Donner (1992) explored the

lifestyle profiles of senior travellers and suggested that today's senior travel market could be characterised as being different, diverse and demanding. Schlagel and Tas (1992) addressed the needs of the elderly market, specifically looking at the common characteristics and needs of its segments. They found that elderly guests often experienced a decrease in their dexterity and perception of touch and suggested that hotel managers should respond to this loss. Shoemaker (1989) sought to develop variables that helped explain the intentions and behaviour of the senior American traveller. Travel-related life-style profiles of older women were studied by Hawes (1988) who found, amongst other, that many older women had the energy and desire to do active things during their travel.

Ananth, De Micco, Moreo and Howey (1992) researched the expectations of mature American travellers with respect to accommodation attributes and determined that price, quality and security were emphasised by respondents. Gustin and Weaver (1993) studied the underlying factors that determined hotel choice for the mature market. Baucom (1994) undertook a qualitative study on the interior design of hospitality facilities and the extent to which they matched the physical needs of an ageing population. No attempts have yet been made in Australia to study the mature traveller's expectations of hotel attributes. Environmetrics (1991), in a study conducted for the New South Wales Tourism Commission, did evaluate the 'needs and expectations of tourists aged over fifty-five years, with a view to developing travel products within New South Wales that would be suitable for this market segment. Issues considered by the study included holiday type, travel motivations, willingness to travel for holidays and the destination decision-making process. It did not, however study the specific hotel attributes expected by mature travellers. Camden (1991) studied the travel behaviours, reasons for travel and demographics of two cohorts of Australian travellers, one aged under fifty years of age, the other group aged over fifty years. Using a small convenience sample of sixty-nine persons, she found four clusters based on thirty-three destination criteria, seven of which were broadly accommodation related. Kennedy (1993) carried out an unpublished literature review on the emerging market of the mature Australian domestic traveller.

In summary, whilst accommodation is widely acknowledged as an integral part of the travel experience, the expectations that Australian mature domestic travellers have of hotel accommodation has not as yet been identified. This exploratory study seeks to add these dimensions to the studies on the mature traveller.

### **1.3 Research objectives**

The objectives of this exploratory study are

- a) to develop a profile of the mature Australian domestic leisure traveller;
- b) to ascertain the accommodation attributes which members of the mature Australian domestic traveller group consider important; and
- c) to find if there is an underlying structure to the attributes and if there is, what the underlying factors are and the relative importance of these factors.

### **1.4 Justification of the research**

The study is justified on the following grounds:

- domestic tourism is a large, mature market and is therefore only a slow growth market;
- due to the ageing of the Australian population, the mature segment of the domestic traveller is increasing in size;
- the mature segment of the population has the time, resources and propensity to travel;
- industry leaders believe that more attention should be given to the needs and expectations of the domestic traveller market relative to the international market (Hillier Parker, 1989);
- most information currently available on the expectations and opinions of travellers towards hotel attributes is insufficiently detailed to allow for differentiation between categories. The expectations and opinions of the

mature traveller need to be differentiated from the broad category of 'tourists';

- accommodation is one of the main sectors servicing the tourism market. The other main industries are transport, food services, retail and wholesale activities and attractions (Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation, QTTC 1996);
- there is a heightened awareness of the financial value of the accommodation industry, as well as the contributions it makes to a wide range of different sectors of the economy;
- the hotel, motel and guest-house sector is a major supplier of traveller accommodation;
- with the emergence of the mature market and the increasing awareness of this market by operators, there is a need for objective research that can be used by developers, designers and operators;
- limited research has been carried out on the attributes which mature domestic leisure travellers expect hotels to supply; and
- accommodation developers and providers who recognise and address the special attributes expected by the mature domestic traveller market could develop a loyal client base.

## **1.5 Definitions**

The following terms are pertinent to the scope of this study:

### ***Accommodation***

Accommodation is an element of facilities and services offered by a destination which make it possible for the traveller to stay overnight. Travellers use a broad range of accommodation options, ranging from hotels, motels, guest houses, self contained flats and units, caravans and tents, to staying with friends and relatives.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (1992) groups together the visitor nights spent in hotels, motels and guest houses. For the purpose of this study the description 'accommodation' is used to describe the establishments which are in this group and the word 'hotel' can be read interchangeably with 'accommodation'.

### *Accommodation attributes*

Earlier research in accommodation attributes tended to emphasise the tangible components of service (Saleh and Ryan, 1992). Subsequently, intangibles such as service, professionalism and friendliness were included in studies on customer perceptions of hotels (Lewis, 1984). For the purposes of this study an accommodation attribute is a quality ascribed to either a tangible or an intangible feature or object of an hotel, motel or guest house, recognised as appropriate to a customer.

### *Australian*

The description 'Australian' in this study includes both citizens and permanent residents of Australia.

### *Frequent traveller*

In this study 'frequent traveller' is used to describe someone who has used hotel accommodation at least twice during the previous twelve month period.

### *Hotel*

Historically in Australia and New Zealand, the description 'hotel' has been used to describe an establishment focusing on the supply of liquor to the public for use on the premises, with food and accommodation provisions as ancillary activities. Internationally, the main purpose of a hotel is generally regarded as the provision of overnight accommodation to the traveller with the supply of food, beverage and other services as secondary services. This has influenced the understanding of the term in Australia and the international description is now more widely accepted. In this study the word 'hotel' can be read interchangeably with 'accommodation establishments or industry' and includes motels and guest houses.

### *Mature person*

There are many labels which are used to describe the group of people aged fifty years of age and above, including popular terms such as 'grey panthers', the 'grey wave', and the 'third age'. A label common in Europe is 'senior'. Unpopular and inaccurate (but still used) labels include 'elders', 'senior citizens', 'retirees' and 'pensioners'. In the United States the term 'mature' is a common description and has wide currency (Wheatcroft and Seekings, 1992). Of all these terms, 'mature' has the most positive connotation and describes the degree of life experience a person has accumulated, rather than directly referring to their age (senior, third age) or physical attributes (grey). It is because of this positive connotation of the term that it is used in the present study.

### *Mature domestic leisure traveller*

A mature domestic traveller has been defined for the purpose of this study as any individual of fifty years or over who travels for leisure reasons away from home and stays away from home for at least one night in her/his own country. For the purpose of this study 'traveller' is synonymous to 'hotel guest'.

### *Tourism*

Burkart and Medlik (1981, p. 41) define tourism as:

...the sum of phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity...

### *Tourist*

Cohen, as cited by O'Rourke (1984), believes that the tourist role involves six dimensions. The tourist is a temporary traveller but possesses a fixed place of abode, even when travelling. Being a voluntary traveller, the tourist travels by choice. The tourist's journey is relatively long, depending upon circumstances. The journey is generally a non-recurrent one, or at least, one that is undertaken

rarely. For the tourist, the trip is non-instrumental-not a means, but an end in itself.

Morley (1990, p.5) suggests that Cohen's definition of a tourist would read that a tourist is:

...a voluntary, temporary traveller, travelling in the expectation of pleasure from experience on a relatively long and non-recurrent round trip...

In this study the word 'tourist' can be read interchangeably with 'traveller'.

### *Tourism industry*

The tourism industry is

...an amalgamation of several related industries working together to service the needs of tourist markets. The main industries are: Transport, Accommodation, Food services, Retail and Wholesale activities and Attractions. (Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation, QTTC, 1996, p. 2)...

## 1.6 Methodology

In preparing this thesis, exploratory research was undertaken, including an extensive literature review, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. This approach was used with a view to broadening the amount of experience with, and increase the knowledge about, the research issue. This was done to ensure a more rigorous and more conclusive study. A mail questionnaire was selected as the appropriate tool for the descriptive research. The questionnaire contained mainly closed questions covering individual travel behaviour, travel motivations, accommodation attributes, traveller's opinions and demographic data. After a pre-test, which resulted in some minor changes, the questionnaire was mailed to the consumer panel of the National Seniors Association. This consumer panel consisted of 585 self selected Association members, each of whom had volunteered to regularly take part in product assessments. The distribution of this panel was national but had a concentration in

the eastern states. In the present study, a cover letter and 'reply paid' envelope were included to stimulate a better response rate. A total of 393 responses were received. Eighty (80) questionnaires with large numbers of missing entries were excluded, resulting in a useable sample of 313 respondents or 53.5% response rate. Qualitative data was obtained from the responses to a wide range of statements included within the questionnaire. Consideration was given to the recency and frequency with which respondents had been exposed to accommodation attributes. It was decided that only those who had stayed in hotels in Australia on at least two different trips over the year previous to the date of completion of the questionnaire were to be considered as 'frequent domestic travellers'. A filter question was used to separate the frequent travellers from the less frequent travellers. This resulted in a sub-sample of 161 frequent travellers which was used for the subsequent statistical analysis. Variables were developed to help explain the heterogeneity of mature domestic travellers group through the study of their travel behaviour (mode of transport, reservation procedures, etc.), reasons for travel and expectations of and opinions towards hotel attributes. The variables included items used in studies by Lewis (1984), Knutson (1988), Marshall (1989), Weaver and McCleary (1991), Ananth and others (1992) and other studies, listed in tables 4.1 and 4.2. Items were added and deleted as a result of discussions with industry specialists and with members of the mature traveller focus groups.

Because of time and cost constraints it was not possible to obtain a random sample of Australian mature domestic travellers. A self-selected sample of the membership of the National Seniors Association was considered to be an acceptable alternative. However, the limitations of the sample should be recognised and inferences should only be made to the membership of the National Seniors Association.

## **1.7 Structure**

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the problem. The objectives and the justification of the study are stated. The importance of tourism for Australia, the components of tourism, the types of accommodation, the categories of clients and the need for further research on the

expectations of mature domestic travellers of accommodation attributes are briefly discussed. Important concepts used in the study are defined and a brief description of the methodology used is presented.

In chapter two an insight into the ageing of the Australian population and a review of the literature on the travel behaviour and reasons for travel of the mature traveller is presented.

Relevant literature is reviewed in chapter three on the expectations and opinions of hotel guests towards hotel attributes. A theoretical framework is developed, with its main aim being to describe the important dimensions of each construct under study. Research questions are initially developed in chapters two and three and a summary of findings of researchers in related studies is provided in the last section of each chapter.

The research methodology and design is described in chapter four. The questionnaire development process is discussed, including data sources, sampling techniques and survey instruments; the data collection and data processing procedures are described, including a description of the survey respondents and an assessment of the reliability and validity of the measures.

In chapter five, the results of the statistical analysis conducted on the survey data is presented. The links between the variables and the implications of the findings are discussed within the context of each variable. This chapter also provides a more detailed comparison of the findings. In particular, the discussion focuses on whether any differences in travel behaviour, reasons for travel, expectations of accommodation attributes and opinions of mature travellers exist between different clusters of mature domestic travellers.

In chapter six the research is summarised and the implications of the findings for the Australian accommodation industry are outlined. The limitations of the study are discussed. Finally, the conclusions from this thesis are presented, followed by suggestions for future research.

## **1.8 Summary**

The demographic determinants of domestic tourism are becoming increasingly complex. One important and growing segment of the Australian tourism industry is the mature domestic traveller segment. Further research into the needs and expectations of the mature leisure traveller, and particularly of accommodation attributes, is needed to underpin the development and management of current and new accommodation establishments. This study will seek to develop a profile of the mature Australian domestic traveller. It will also investigate whether there are differences between the expectations and opinions towards accommodation attributes by the various mature domestic traveller segments. The next two chapters give an overview of the literature on the mature traveller and on hotel attributes respectively.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PROFILING THE MATURE TRAVELLER

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the demand aspect of the mature traveller market and is based primarily on a literature review. It intends to present an introduction of the literature that deals with the perceptions of ageing, the ageing of the Australian population. This is followed by an overview of the leisure activities of this group, with an emphasis on travelling for leisure.

Issues that need examination range from the impact of ageing on the labour force, expenditure on retirement incomes, projections of health and other social expenditures, to housing needs and leisure. With ageing, non-working time expands dramatically and leisure is expected to be the dominant pastime (Dychtwald and Flower, 1989). Travelling for leisure purposes by persons over the age of fifty-five will soon comprise the majority of the travel industry (Pederson, 1994). Not only is this a result of the ageing of the population, it is also a result of the change in the propensity to travel. It is of interest to gain a proper understanding of the travel behaviour of this population and its manifestations. Some of the issues of concern are: to what extent does the ageing population wish to travel and to what extent is it able to travel; what are the characteristics of mature Australian travellers including their reasons for travel; what do mature consumers expect hotels to supply. This study will concentrate on the domestic traveller of fifty years of age and older, for which the term 'mature' will be used for reasons explained later in this chapter. It is outside the scope of this study to include the 'baby boomer' generation, although it is acknowledged that this generation is worthy of research in its own right. The results of this review will be carried forward into the second segment of the research investigation, which will concentrate on hotel attributes and is introduced in chapter three.

## **2.2 Perceptions of ageing**

Ageing is a natural process, commencing from the moment of human conception. It is also a political and economic challenge, in view of the increasing proportion of the population that falls into the mature age category. Different cultures have different perceptions of ageing. In Aboriginal and other traditional cultures, the 'elders', or older members of the community have respect and authority. They are honoured by the younger members and receive recognition for their wisdom (Berndt, R. and Berndt, C., 1984). In Western cultures on the other hand, we often believe that the older a person is, the less socially attractive he or she is (Dychtwald and Flower, 1989). Van Harssel and others (1992), in their study on the mature travel market in the United States, quote Dychtwald and Flower who suggested that people over 65 are generally perceived as being old, in poor health, not as bright as younger people, unproductive, unattractive, sexless and generally all the same. One of the earliest theories on ageing that now has been rejected was called 'disengagement theory' which assumed that, as a person ages, there is a natural 'pulling away from the rest of society' (Godbey, 1984). Bogle (1994) found that the status of the aged probably reached its lowest ebb during the youth cult of the 1960's. He notes that growing older was defined in the mind of many by 'D-words', beginning with dread - of deterioration, disability, decrepitation, dementia and, finally, the big one, death. This negative approach is not uncommon in Australian and other societies that are youth-orientated. Some mature travellers complain about a negative attitude on the part of hotel staff towards the older guest.

Those negative perceptions are based on a myth that can be easily refuted. A more recent model of ageing, known as the 'Ulyssian model of ageing' says that a person will often do the most important things in their lives in their later years; such activities that represent their being on earth in more important ways than other times in their live. The model also suggests that ageing is not a downhill path, but represents a number of paths: some downhill, some uphill and some that continue on the same plane (Godbey, 1984).

Old age and dependency are not synonymous. Being 'old' cannot be tied to a particular age, as there are no biological or psychological reasons to connect the number sixty-five to the onset of old age (Dychtwald and Flower, 1989). The majority of older Australians are in good health (Rowland, 1991). The University of the Third Age refutes the argument that older people are not as bright as younger people. Mature Australians are active in community services or are being employed in jobs historically occupied by the younger groups. The serving counters of McDonalds are an example of this. They see themselves as more productive because of their experience that they see as a valuable asset to the community (Leinberger, 1992). Advertisements in which they play an active, positive role are more common, indicating that they are not unproductive and not unattractive. Nor are they sexless as they continue to enjoy sex, often with greater pleasure than they did when they were younger (Dychtwald and Flower, 1989). Shanas as quoted by Rowland (1991, p. 3) illustrates this attitude as follows:

...old people and their families are the new pioneers of our era. They have ventured into uncharted areas of human relationships, and developed systems of exchange and interaction without help or guidance from so-called helping agencies in our industrial society... In most areas of the marketplace, in the area of work, in social intercourse, the only status the sixty-five-plus persons have, is that they are old. Sometimes they are seen as 'funny' old people who behave inappropriately in the eyes of younger persons. At other times, they are 'cute' old, bright, productive and active persons, and, thus, assumed to be like clever children...

Seedsman (1996, p. 24) agrees that:

...our cultural focus on ageing has traditionally emphasised problems, limitations and declining functions. Consequently, any mention of growth, development, including health and wellness, presents as an oxymoron in view of the usual message that projects obsolescence and ill-health as normal dimensions of ageing...

Bernice Neugarten, a highly respected gerontologist and quoted by Hall (1980) called the ageing society an 'age irrelevant society', because chronological age is becoming a poorer and poorer indicator of the way people live. Somewhere after the first 20 years, she suggests, age falls away as a predictor (Hall, 1980).

Ageing is a complex, continuous process. At a certain point in life, a person has aged to a level which is described by some as elderly. Social convention defines the elderly as those aged sixty-five (the age of retirement in Australia) and older. Current demographic data still relies on that arbitrary number. It is interesting to note that with the increase in life expectancy, the elderly group is now often being divided into two groups: the young elderly and the old elderly (Tinker, 1981).

The 'third age' is the criterion replacing retirement age. This classification is related to the view that the human life span is being divided into three distinct ages: the first being devoted to learning, the second to intense employment and the third to progressive withdrawal from employment.

The 'National Seniors Association' which is the largest organisation in Australia of those aged fifty years and over, calls its members, as the name suggests: 'seniors'.

Other sources use the terms 'older', 'aged', 'golden' and 'greying' market for approximately the same group of people (Bailey, 1989). Terms as 'pensioners', 'old age pensioners' or 'retirees' are rapidly falling out of use in the travel industry (Camden, 1991). O'Connor states that people do not want to be fussed over as 'old' or 'elderly' (Hansen, 1994). Takano (1993) argues that descriptions such as 'seniors', 'elders' or 'senior citizens' could be accepted differently by people from different cultures. The Japanese, for instance, would take those aged 60 and over into these groups. The ageing of the Japanese population is presented as 'Japan's New Silver Age'. 'Middle aged' does not have an arbitrary benchmark such as 'retirement age' to assist in setting the boundaries. The Queensland Department of Family Services, in a publication entitled 'Action for the Ageing' (1989), used the term 'the ageing' to describe the same group of fifty-five years of age and older people. Environmetrics (1991), in its study for the new

South Wales Tourism Commission, avoids a possible sensitive description and calls the group 'tourists aged over fifty-five years'. Leisure Consultants, as quoted by Calver, Vierich and Phillips (1993, p.4), define those in the forty-five to sixty-five age group as those who are 'in training for when they become elderly', and the elderly (sixty-five-plus) as 'those who are more sedate in home and leisure'.

Wallace (1993) introduces a new concept: down-ageing. She argues that people see themselves as being much younger than their parents did at the same age and that they actually feel younger than a person of the same age a generation ago. As a result, she suggests, increased life expectancy is accompanied by increased expectancy from life. Wallace (1993) calls the young-old the 'WOOFs', 'well off older folks', a group that she considers as the first generation in history that has grown up eating out. They are reliable and frequent restaurant customers, their food tastes are more sophisticated than past generations and they demand excellent service. When travelling they take advantage of special deals and early-bird specials.

An appropriate description to use in this study was 'mature'. This description was introduced by Shoemaker (1989), who included travellers of fifty-five years and over. It does not have any negative connotations that can be associated with 'elderly' and 'aged'. Bartos (in Moschis 1992) is credited with lowering the cut-off age of 'mature' consumer to fifty years of age. Moschis (1992, p. 20) warns, however, that:

...the justification for such a cut-off point is not so much the biophysical or psychosocial changes occurring round age; it is primarily an economic one coupled with life-style changes and preparation for retirement that characterise the fifty to sixty-five age group...

It is Shoemaker's description and Bartos' segment width that has been used in this study.

It is difficult to arrive at a definition that attracts the attention of older people without causing many to turn away. Travel operators in Europe fear - with some justification - that even a slight hint of welcome for the elderly will drive away more customers than it will attract (Wheatcroft and Seekings, 1992). Wheatcroft and Seekings (1992, p. 39) concluded that:

...if one single conclusion emerges from an examination of travel industry perception it is that the actual age is not a meaningful criterion. Many indeed consider that age is irrelevant. If there is one accepted criterion it is whether or not it is appropriate to provide the individual with special attention on account of physical or mental infirmity. This suggests that the terms 'third age' and 'fourth age' are particularly appropriate in analysing the senior market. It also happens that these two terms have been adopted informally by international agencies specialising in the elderly...

It is interesting to note how older persons see themselves. Moschis (1992) quotes research from the Roper Organisation which asked a representative sample of adults of all age groups, 'How old do people have to be before you think of them as old?'. Most (31%) said 'in their 70's', a smaller percentage (20%) answered 'in their 60's', and 19% said 'in their 90's'. Only 5% thought that an old person was someone in their 40's and 50's. And how do seniors see themselves? Rowe (1990, p. 55) states that seniors regard themselves as '10 - 15 years younger than their chronological age'. This is supported by the conclusions from a study quoted by Moschis (1992) which found that people aged 70 and over considered themselves as 'middle aged'.

Wheatcroft and Seekings (1992, p.38) report an identical perception suggesting that:

...although they are getting older at the rate of one year per year in terms of actual age, in terms of behaviour, life-style, attitude and even expectation, most people today continue to act as if they were middle-

aged well into what would be, in former days have been regarded as their old age...

Seedsman (1996, p.24) states that it seems that ageing is not as negatively perceived as the widely held belief:

...observation reveals, however, that far too many older people are responding intelligently to unintelligent thinking about the ageing process. These intelligent older people are flexible in their thinking, they are open to change, they adapt and experiment and by doing so, live vibrant and creative lives... Diversity rather than sameness is the promise of ageing. It is the heterogeneity factor that provides hope of a different reality beyond that portrayed by the 'ageing mystique'...

In attempting to define the older consumer market, Moschis (1992) advises that we keep several issues in mind. Firstly, chronological age is neither a reliable indicator of function, nor does it appear to be a good predictor of consumer behaviour. Furthermore, he suggests that each successive cohort is likely to be different with respect to life-styles and perception of ageing. This is because people age differently and because ageing is inherently multidimensional and dependent on a wide variability in attitudes, behaviours and abilities. He argues that, in order to reach a group as heterogeneous as the mature market, a company should match its offerings with the needs of subgroups. From his study, based on surveys obtained from more than 30,000 respondents, he was able to group them into four segments: 'Healthy Hermits', 'Ailing Outgoers', 'Frail Recluses' and 'Healthy Indulgers'.

Moschis (1992, p. 172) also introduced the term 'gerontographics' which he describes as an approach that acknowledges individual differences during the ageing process, as well as differences in type or ageing dimensions. He summarises as follows:

...gerontographics is based on the premise that the observed similarities and differences in the consumer behaviour of older adults

are the outcome of several social, psychological, biophysical, lifetime events and other environmental factors. The derivation of mature market sub-segments is based on the premiss that those older people who experience similar circumstances in later life (defined by the person's gerontographic characteristics) are likely to exhibit similar patterns of consumer behaviour, patterns that differ from those of older adults experiencing different sets of circumstances, that is, having different gerontographic characteristics...

In the previous segment an overview was presented of the different perceptions of ageing. The ageing process was introduced followed by an overview of different concepts used to describe the process. In the next section the importance of the ageing population as a growing consumer market will be introduced followed by an introduction of the leisure activities of this segment of the population..

### **2.3 The growing mature consumer market**

Marketers are frequently reluctant to target the elderly because they mistakenly believe that, in general, the elderly can not afford to buy new products and services (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1987).

Davies (1993, p.4) confirms this, stating that:

...despite the affluence, and the social and political power of mature consumers, Australian business has made little effort to understand and serve them...

This attitude is changing. The younger market is decreasing in importance, both in size and in spending power, relative to the mature market. The potential offered by the mature market is slowly being recognised. This is due to its increasing size, affluence and militancy (Ananth and others, 1992). More and more products and services are being developed and adapted for mature consumers. This is illustrated by the television commercials and advertisements that are aimed at the middle aged and older markets. These now feature mature

aged actors so that consumers in the same age group can relate to the message being disseminated.

When baby boomers, those born between 1946 and 1959, reach retirement age, having worked for most of their lives, many of them will be better off financially than 'preceding older' generations (Miller, 1993). They will be healthier, better educated, more politically aware and more accustomed to having their say. By sheer weight of their numbers, they are bound to exert influence as attitudes change towards the experience of growing older (Bogle, 1994). The ageing of the population will have consequences for education, social and health services, the work force, families and for business.

Whilst the perception of many is that older people are all alike, Neugarten opposes this myth strongly and states, in an interview with Elizabeth Hall (1980, p. 72) that:

...the stereotyping (of the elderly) has it that as people age, they become more and more like another. In truth, they become less and less alike. If you look at people's lives, they're like the spreading of a fan. The longer people live the greater the differences between them...

Leventhal (1990) advises that marketers, prior to creating any strategy, have to consider three demographic issues concerning the ageing consumer: stereotypes must be eliminated, the mature consumer is not an isolated entity, and from a psychographic and numbers standpoint, the ageing consumer of tomorrow is going to be much different from the ageing consumer of today. Members of the mature market are not homogeneous. The present 'mature' market is highly diversified: there are those who are well off financially and others who are less financially secure. Most are healthy, some are frail and vulnerable. Many are active, others live a passive and withdrawn life style.

Because of the heterogeneity of the mature market, Moschis (1992) suggests that it is easier and more practical to speak about this market in general terms using its similarities as opposed to its differences. However, when making references to

the behaviour of the mature market, this great heterogeneity has to be kept in mind.

Schiffman and Kanuk (1987) quote research of Shanas and others who suggest that people's perceptions of their age may be more important in determining behaviour than their chronological age (i.e. the number of years lived). They suggest that people may at the same time have a number of different subjective or perceived ages. Barak and Schiffman in Schiffman and Kanuk (1987), argue that many older people consider themselves to be younger than their chronological age. They do this on four perceived age dimensions which they call the '*feel age*': how old a person feels; the '*look age*': how old a person looks; the '*do age*': how involved a person is in activities favoured by members of a certain age group; and the '*interest age*': how similar a person's interests are to those of members of a certain group.

Leinberger (1992) found that mature Australians tend to be satisfied with their life (82 %) and feel in control of their life (75%). Of the fifty to sixty-four age group, 49% travels frequently for pleasure purposes, a percentage that decreases to 40% for those over sixty-five years of age. The latter findings add to a better understanding of the mature domestic traveller.

#### **2.4 The ageing of the Australian population**

To develop a profile of the mature Australian traveller it is important to understand the consequences of the ageing of the Australian population. The following segment will present population projections followed by family, gender, employment and income issues pertinent to the mature consumer market.

The Australian population is projected to grow from 17.7 million in 1993 to 19.0 million in the year 2000, 20 million about the year 2005 and 21 million some time between 2009 and 2011, depending on the assumptions made regarding future levels of fertility and overseas migration (Castles, 1994). Australia's population is ageing rapidly. Medical technology and life style factors (such as nutrition and hygiene) have ensured a longer life span for the average Australian than ever

before. Professor John Shine, of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research as quoted by Cribb (1993) suggests that in 1904 the average male lived to 55, the average female to 58; for a child born today, those figures are 74.4 and 80.3 respectively. It is inevitable that many people will live to 100 by 2100.'

Rowland (1991, p. 18) argues that the reasons for this ageing process are due mainly to the decline in family size and therefore is 'largely a consequence of events affecting the base, rather than the apex of the population pyramid.'

Rowland (1991, p. 22) further observes that

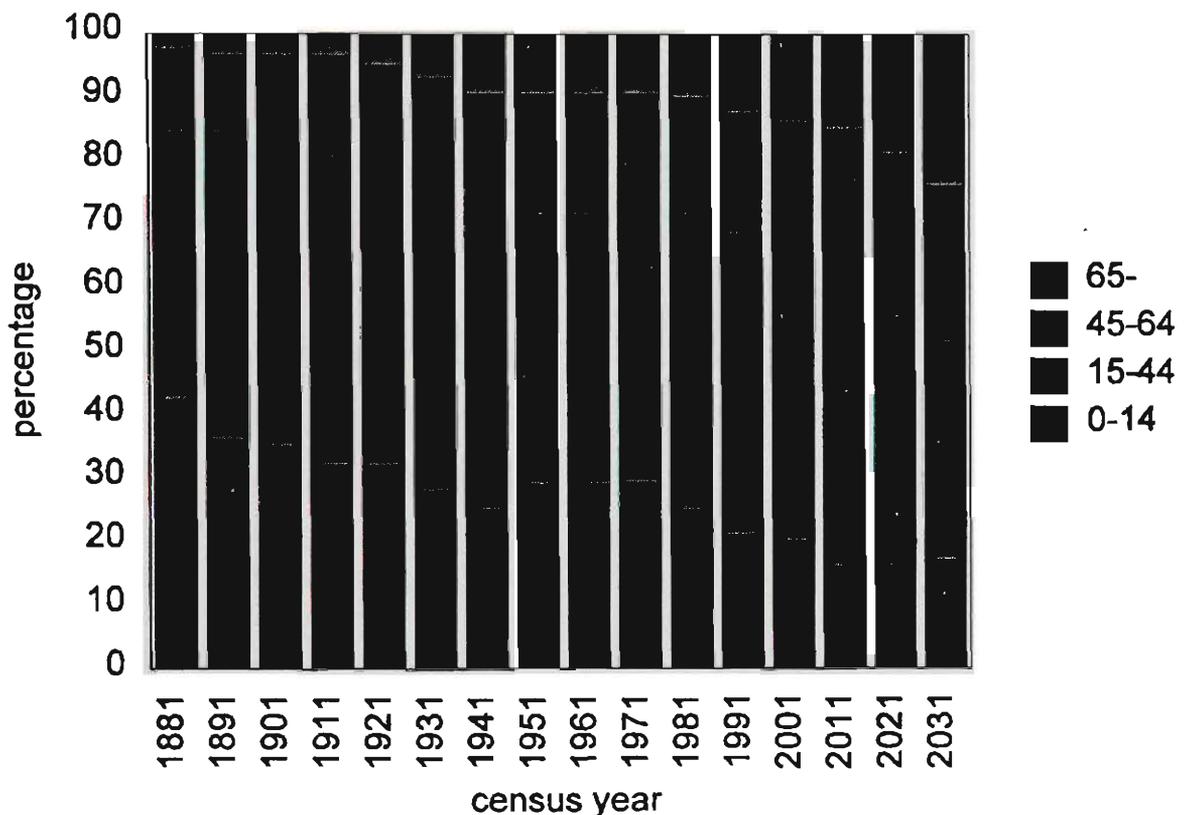
...population ageing, measured in percentage terms, occurs principally when there is a decrease in the representation of the young, a change brought about through lower fertility. If fertility is high, the largest age groups in the population will always be at the base of the population structure, because children outnumber their parents...

Clare and Tulpulé (1994) support Rowland and argue that the net reproduction rate of the Australian population for more than a decade now has been below replacement level, at around 0.8 to 0.9 percent. Kendig and McCallum (1986) add to Rowland's observation that the increase in median age is a result of movements in birth, death and migration rates. Increasing proportions of elderly people and decreasing proportions of children in the population result thus in a rising median age which, from 33 years in 1993, climbs to between 39.4 and 41.8 years in 2041 (Castles, 1994). The shape of the age pyramid, he suggests, will change noticeably with the middle-aged and elderly age groups showing the greatest growth, with a tapering of younger ages becoming more clearly delineated.

Whilst the fertility of the population is the major factor of the ageing population, life style changes have had a significant impact on a decreasing mortality rate. People live longer lives due to better medical services, a lower risk of acute and infectious diseases, better hygiene, healthier life styles and better nutrition. Many ageing people use preventative medications, exercise regularly and avoid smoking and alcohol. Healthier lifestyles include stimulating environments and enriching experiences,

examples of which include the University of the Third Age, employment and travel. Other studies that support this ageing of the Australian population include those by Kendig and McCallum (1986) and by Davis (1993). The following table illustrates the changing age profile of the Australian population.

**Table 2.1 Age Structure Changes of the Australian Population, 1881 - 2031.**



Source: Rowland, D., 1991, *Ageing in Australia*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, p. 17.

The ageing of the population will continue to have an impact. Heenan (1991, p. 48) expects that 'people will live longer than they now expect - possibly much longer - as science brings the ageing process under control.'

Heenan (1991, p.48) continues, suggesting that in future people may

...stop working in their forties or fifties to go back to school, raise a second (or third) family, enter a new business or simply take a couple of years to travel and enjoy themselves. They may go back to work in their sixties, seventies or even eighties...

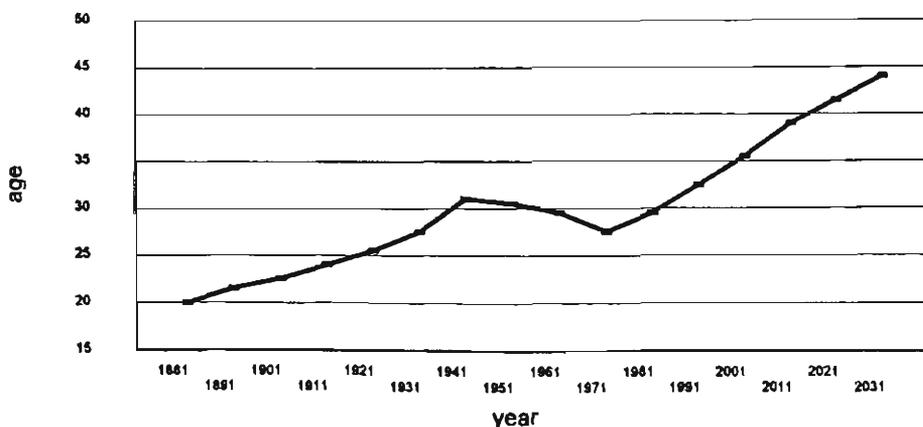
However, the vast majority of these older people will be consumers, not producers (Beck, 1996). As the older market grows and the younger market declines, many industries, including the accommodation industry, could benefit from recognising the potential offered by the mature market. Creating new products and adapting existing products and services for this market is one of the challenges of the near future.

Heenan (1991) recognises travel as being an important part of the lifestyle of the mature Australian. It can be expected that this will influence the type of hotel attributes expected by this market. Does the mature traveller expect the benefits of the life-style changes that have had such a positive impact on their health and well-being to be reflected in the hotel products offered to them? Are special diets important and is smoking to be avoided? How important is security? And is travel a means to experience new things? These are some of the many questions for which answers need to be found.

#### **2.4.1 Demographic forecasts for the Australian population**

The median age of the Australian population in 1989 was 31.9 years. This is expected to rise to between 38.2 and 39 years by the year 2011 and to between 41.5 and 43.5 years in 2031 (Castles, 1990). This is illustrated in the following graph.

**Table 2.2: Projection of Median Age of the Population of Australia**



Source: Rowland, D., 1991, *Ageing in Australia*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, p. 19.

The fifty to sixty-four year group (the 'old working age') will increase by over 40% between 1991 and 2000 (Davis, 1993). This group is expected to grow from approximately 2.2 million in 1989 to 4.2 million in 2011, to just under 5 million in 2031 (Castles, 1990). The 65 + group will increase over the same periods from 11 percent of the population in 1989 to between 12.1 and 12.3 percent in 2001 to between 20.1 percent and 21.8 percent in 2031, with the highest projected rate of increase expected to occur between 2011 and 2021 (Castles, 1990). The fastest growing market of all will be the eighty-plus age group: from 2.1% of the population to an estimated 3% in 2001 to between 5.4 and 6% in 2031. The most dramatic growth of this group is expected to be between 2021 and 2031.

In summary, the numbers of Australians of pensionable age will increase from 2.2 million in 1989 to between 5.8 and 6 million in 2031 (Castles, 1990). This will create significant opportunities for the domestic accommodation industry, both in the tourism and in the institutional sector. Since the present study concentrates on tourism accommodation, institutional accommodation needs fall outside the scope of this work.

#### **2.4.2 Family and gender issues**

Ageing forces changes in family characteristics, producing changes in lifestyle and consumer behaviour. Moutinho (1987) uses the family life cycle to classify family units into certain groups and stages of development. He suggests that the family life cycle has an influence on the travel decision-making process: an increase in role specialisation occurs over the stages of the family life cycle which is reflected by the decline in the degree of joint decision-making. His findings suggest that the husband tends to dominate in the selection of the type of accommodation and the holiday destination. The study 'An Attitudinal Segmentation of the Australian Domestic Holiday Market' published by the Bureau of Tourism Research in 1991, reports on the decision-making process of domestic travellers. The results showed that women tend to shop around when they plan their holidays and that the accommodation they use is as important as the location. Older women appear to agree that luxury is really important on

holidays. Their destination orientation includes statements such as 'on holidays I want to go and see what the rest of the world is like' to 'taking holidays within Australia isn't sufficiently different from what life at home is like'.

Gender has an impact on income and therefore on travel. Females now have greater equality in the workforce and have expanded their role in management, politics and ownership of enterprises. Many in the mature age bracket will have travelled more than their predecessors, creating an impact on their expectations of hotel attributes.

Based on current labour force patterns and prospective patterns of superannuation contributions, most women can expect their superannuation benefits being a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, the age pension (Clare and Tulpulé, 1994). Leitner and Leitner (1985) found that on recreation programs for the elderly there is a higher proportion of females than males. Older women will continue to outnumber older men in the future, due to life expectancy differences. Tinker (1981) suggests that it is a matter of debate whether this imbalance will continue because no-one knows why women live longer. She argues that women in the past tended to drink and smoke less and were exposed to less stress. In the future, this situation could well be reversed. It is an issue about which future marketers should be aware.

Lewis (1984) suggests that gender has an influence on the perceptions of hotel services. Cross tabulation showed that 'cleanliness' and 'good housekeeping' were factors more likely to satisfy women than men.

Another phenomenon which Tinker (1981) postulates is the increase of older people who live alone. This could have an impact on the need for companionship, a reason for travel that will be discussed later.

A gender and family issue is the 'left alone single' traveller, the great majority of whom are women (Lago and Poffley, 1993). They tend either to look for travel opportunities appropriate to single persons and to travel either alone or as part of an organised tour (Watkins 1990). Traditionally, the accommodation industry has

not been sensitive to the needs of the single traveller. Room rates are commonly based on double occupancy. Whilst the policy of charging supplementary fees for singles can be understood from the hotel's viewpoint, it may also be regarded as discriminatory and unfair. As far as special needs are concerned, safety and security issues are more important for the single traveller. Generally the issue of how gender influences the expectations of mature travellers of hotel attributes is misunderstood. It is hoped that the present study will help to illuminate this issue.

Viant (1993) found that single women are a large but neglected segment of the senior market and suggests that the travel industry must find ways to reduce the obstacles that make older single women reluctant to travel. Women travelling on their own report that they are often treated as second class citizens on planes, in restaurants and hotels. They also fear for their personal safety (McCleary and others, 1994). An issue for this study is whether gender has an impact on travel behaviour and expectations of hotel attributes.

A U.S. study by Nadkarni and O'Leary as cited by Van Harssel and others (1992) explored the potential of the senior travel market by examining the differences between male and female seniors travelling for business and pleasure purposes. The results show distinct differences in their socio-demographic characteristics, as well as trip and stay details. More women take trips however men travel more often and have a higher propensity to be frequent travellers than women. Accommodation expectations differ, depending on the purpose for travel. This suggests the need for different types of marketing and the need for strategies tailored to mature male and mature female traveller groups. Both group types have a preference for mid-price and budget hotel properties. This could be seen as an opportunity for good quality accommodation within these categories. The same study concluded that females have a stronger preference for using travel agents and travel organisations to plan their trips. Males (particularly when travelling for business purposes) tend to stay in up-market hotels. Both groups use regular users of airline frequent flyer programs but not of the equivalent hotel programs. Most senior male travellers are married, which signifies a potential to target the male and his partner, whether they are travelling for business or pleasure. Van Harssel and others (1992) cite Nadkarni and O'Leary who found that mature travellers are frequent users of credit cards.

### **2.4.3 Employment and income issues**

Australia has operated a national aged pension scheme since 1909, and was one of the first countries to initiate such an arrangement. Initially the Commonwealth perceived its role as providing a subsistence income to the aged who lived in poverty, but when pensions increased, a larger proportion of the elderly was able to take advantage of these benefits. Currently, the Commonwealth pays age pensions to men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over, subject to assets and income tests (Rowland, 1991). Before that time, older people depended on their savings or their extended family for their livelihood if they could not participate in the workforce. Pensions and superannuation schemes have improved the financial circumstances of mature people. The rigid retirement age has been adjusted, allowing people to retire at a younger age than the traditional sixty-five years. The reverse situation is also likely to occur, with mature Australians continuing to be employed after the age of sixty-five. Many will opt to continue in employment, whether in a full or part-time mode. Since this group is largely free of family commitments, a new market segment of mature Australians who not only have the time to travel, but also have the funds to spend, will be opened up.

Income is a key influence during the travel decision making process, both in the original decision about whether or not to travel away for holidays and in the choice of destination (Haigh, 1993). Increased prosperity enables most individuals to respond positively to the increased incidence of early retirement, increased life expectancy and the consequent increasingly lengthy periods spent out of the paid labour force (Clare and Tulpulé, 1994). The discretionary income of the mature Australian is proportionally higher than that of the average Australian. As mentioned previously, the more than four million mature Australian consumers control 75% of Australia's assets and have thirty billion dollars per year to spend on discretionary purchases (Davis, 1993). This is supported by Leinberger (1992), who found that significantly more older people than younger people reported their current financial situation as being 'comfortable'. The income of most people peaks in their 50s and does not

diminish until retirement. On retirement, cash income drops, but most retirees have assets such as private savings. The aged are no longer society's poor (Neugarten as quoted by Hall 1980, p.77). Davis (1993) suggests that mature Australians have an average discretionary income of \$7,200 per annum. The group with the highest household incomes, the fifty to sixty-four age group, consists of 54% of the over fifty's population. This group will increase in size to 40% between 1991 and the year 2000 (Davis, 1993). The smaller sixty-five and older age group has a lower percentage of persons below the poverty line than does the younger mature group (Gruca and Schewe, 1992).

Whilst mature consumers may need and want products and services, their ability to travel is largely dependent on their purchasing power (Poon, 1993). While for the older (sixty-five-plus) segment of the mature group has a lower disposable income, they also have fewer financial commitments in the form of mortgages, loans, school fees, cars and other outgoings (Calver and others, 1993). Mature Australians consider themselves to be financially comfortable and, at this stage of their lives are unlikely to deny themselves the fruits of their labour (Leinberger, 1992). For the majority of mature people, travel is such a major lifestyle priority that they are willing to spend on a frequent basis (Small, 1986; Chew, 1987; Environmetrics, 1991). The 50+ group has above-average financial resources and is therefore able to travel frequently.

## **2.5 Leisure activities of the mature population**

Leitner and Leitner (1985, p.13) describe leisure as 'free or unobligated time, time during which one is not working or performing life-sustaining functions'. The essence of leisure and recreation is freedom of choice, being free to do what one wants, where and with whom one wants. Barwick (1984) argues that for many older people 'leisure' is possibly the last frontier of their autonomy and sees it as the sole source through which the self esteem, dignity and independence they strive for can be achieved. By providing access for the active participation of older people in leisure activities, the likely outcome is that older people will enjoy a healthier life (Calder, Donovan, Kurowski, Nolan and Wilson, no date stated).

In recent years, many mature Australians have been able to retire at an earlier age, thereby enjoying more time for leisure activities (Kendig and McCallum, 1986). Other mature Australians, those still in the work force, who have paid off their homes and cars and their expenditure on their dependants is reduced, have time to enjoy leisure activities (Davis 1993). Hansen (1994, p.128) quotes O'Connor, who argues that people celebrate retirement by taking 'the big trip', which had been confined to a daydream when their money was tied up in mortgages or children's education.

In general, mature persons have more time available for leisure than younger, and generally working, people. Mature persons often have fewer care responsibilities (eg. their children live away from home), many are retired or have part-time jobs or jobs with more flexible schedules. Leitner and Leitner (1985, p. 20) argue that it is incorrect to assume that all older persons have time for leisure:

...for many people, advanced age brings an increase in leisure time; for some, old age brings a reduction of leisure time. Due to aforementioned factors (retirement age, adequacy of social security and private pension funds and the amount of supplementary full or part-time employment, the amount of time performing household and personal care functions)..., future aged populations might have more or less leisure time than our present day older population...

In future the mature aged person is likely to become still more leisure orientated. The Leitner and Leitner study (1985, p. 19) suggests that the youth of today are 'more leisure-orientated than the youth at the turn of the twentieth century, and that the aged of tomorrow (today's youth) will be more leisure orientated than the aged of today.'

This suggests that leisure patterns will change, possibly with the younger group of the mature Australians devoting a larger proportion of their time to leisure than their older counterparts.

### **2.5.1 The mature domestic traveller**

To understand the mature consumer, a knowledge of their lifestyle is useful. Moschis (1992, p. 153) describes lifestyles as follows:

...lifestyles refer to the ways people spend their time and money, and in particular, what they value in life, the things that interest them, and their opinions about aspects of everyday life. Collectively these attitudes, activities and opinions about life and living constitute what we refer to as 'lifestyle'...

Lifestyle profiling is used frequently in travel research. In tourism research lifestyle preferences, such as destination preferences, have been used by Goodrich and Goodrich (1987). The lifestyles and attitudes of mature consumers in western economies have been influenced by several factors. Many have experienced the end of the Great Depression, wars, cultural and social upheaval and economic instability (Harris and West, 1995). Their spending habits are influenced by these experiences and many have learned from this and can be considered as good investors. Not only have they invested in the social infrastructure such as the health and education system, they have invested in securities such as real estate, trusts and saving bonds and their expendable income is unmatched by their younger counterparts. They are information rich, environmentally conscientious, interested in technology and better educated than their peers were two decades ago (Harris and West, 1995). Mature Australians enjoy their independence. They participate in more leisure activities than their parents. Their life experiences have resulted in a group which is 'down to earth', a group which is not impressed with frills, luxury and crafty marketing. They expect value for money, quality products and good, honest service.

With the tendency towards earlier and healthier retirement 'mature age' and 'old age' will become a more and more important segment of people's lives.

### **2.5.2 Travel motivation**

Motivations to travel are related to expectations, needs and wants. Maslow established in 1954 the well known range of needs of individuals, from immediate basic physical needs for food, warmth, shelter and sleep, through safety and social needs for affection and love to self esteem and status needs, and the most sophisticated level of self development needs (Middleton, 1988). Prior to the industrial revolution and the advent of mass tourism the motivation for people to travel was mostly to satisfy immediate physical needs in search for food, water and shelter, and for economic, territorial or religious reasons. Travel for reasons of self esteem, status needs and self development was rare (Burkart and Medlik, 1981). This has changed radically during since Thomas Cook facilitated the development of mass tourism. In recent times more and more people travel essentially for reasons of self esteem and self development (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). This is often supplemented with a range of additional reasons such as the desire to escape daily living and working conditions (push factors) and to experience new attractions at a destination (pull factors) (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). Vacation or leisure travel is a psychological experience (Chon, 1989). It is a means of broadening awareness and self-recognition through increasing knowledge and an exposure to different environments. In particular the globalisation of the media in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has contributed to this exposure. Its association with rest and recreation has a stimulating effect upon people's minds and can be associated with self-development (Middleton, 1988). In order to serve leisure travellers at their destination, it is essential to understand the psychological factors that motivate and satisfy the individual traveller. Motivation refers to a state of need, a condition that exerts a 'push' on the individual toward certain types of action that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction or contentment. Satisfaction associated with leisure travel includes relaxation from tension, which, as Moutinho (1987) argues, is a strong element in different desires and expectations concerning a vacation. O'Rourke (1984) suggests that individual experiences differ and that most behaviour is brought about as a result of the pursuit of certain goals. He argues that some behaviour is

brought about by people's desire to satisfy certain physiological and psychological needs and refers to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Turnbull and Uysal (1995) support O'Rourke's statement when they argue that people travel to satisfy certain psychological needs (push factors) and the search of specific benefits at the destination (pull factors). Chon (1989) suggests that Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a basis for the 'push' factors of travel, ie. the motivation for travel. The same author (1989, p. 3) quotes Hudman who stated that:

...Maslow has suggested that human needs high on the hierarchy that relate to tourism are self-preservation, which includes the need to relax, to have a change of pace, climate, environment, etc., and the "love-romance-adventure" need, which quite naturally is an important part of almost all vacations and travel. Esteem, another Maslow-defined need, involves recognition and admiration from neighbours, friends, and workers, and is an important motivational factor in travel. Even "self-actualisation" may be achieved with the culmination of a long-held dream in a certain trip...

Travellers generally have certain expectations about the logistics of the trip experience and the possible benefits they might derive from the trip. Their expectations are influenced by destination attributes – pull factors – or by activities offered by the destinations (Turnbull and Uysal, 1995). Moutinho (1987) postulates that the reason why people travel can be traced back to two sets of motivations: general and specific. General motivations imply that people travel for many reasons. He lists five examples of general travel motivations: educational and cultural, relaxation, adventure and pleasure, health and recreation, ethnic and family and social and 'competitive' reasons as examples of general travel motivations. Specific motivations, Moutinho states, are those which are related to images based on personal experience, knowledge, reports from friends, information gained directly or indirectly from mass media, advertisements, travel intermediaries and the after effects of past vacation experiences. McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) reason that an important part of the consideration of tourism psychology and motivation is the fact that people often travel for more than one

reason. They also group the basic travel motivators into four categories: physical motivators, cultural motivators, interpersonal motivators and status and prestige motivators. This is a slightly different approach from Witt and Moutinho (1990) who include natural attractions (beaches, landscape), built attractions (historic townscape), cultural attractions (theatre) and social attractions (meeting residents at their destination).

The 'pull' factors in the model that Chon (1989) includes in his study, relate to the attractiveness of the destination and the belief by the traveller that the objective will be accomplished. The attractiveness of the destination depends on five major supply components which McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) list as natural resources, infrastructure, superstructure, transportation and hospitality and cultural resources.

These 'pull factors' or 'facilitators' include the physical accommodation facility in the 'superstructure' component and the intangible services of the hotel such as courtesy and friendliness in the 'hospitality and cultural resource' component. Pizam, Neumann and Reichel (1978) reasoned that the tourist is satisfied when experiences compared to the expectations result in feelings of gratification and the tourist is dissatisfied when experiences compared with expectations result in displeasure. Hotel selection brings a set of expectations and, as Moutinho (1987) suggests 'tourists do not buy products: they buy the expectations of benefits'.

Those benefit perceptions, needs and wants of the tourist must be understood as people do not select a hotel because they travel, they select a hotel because they believe the hotel offers the benefits they expect (Lewis, 1984). A hotel environment should therefore be a place where guests should easily realise their goals be satisfied.

How well each guest's needs and wants are met will determine the guest's satisfaction. In other words: it is the function of the hotel to offer what travellers need or want at a price they are willing to pay. What the hotel should offer, the tangible and intangible attributes, will be discussed in the next chapter. As it would be impossible to expect that hotels can satisfy the needs and expectations of

all travellers this study concentrates on the attributes expected by an important segment: the mature frequent traveller.

Fridgen (1980) argues that a better understanding of how people relate to the environment should allow designers and planners the opportunity to help people create a better immediate environment. He applies this to the leisure environment from which people should gain satisfaction and benefits. It is proposed for the purpose of this study that this argument can also apply to the hotel environment. It is expected that through this study the attributes that create a better environment for the mature traveller can be found.

### **2.5.3 Travel behaviour and propensity to travel**

Poon (1994, p. 10) introduced the expression 'new consumers' into the tourism literature. She suggests that these 'new consumers' are a new driving force for tourism, and are 'more experienced, more flexible, more independent, more quality conscious and 'harder to please'. She continues with: 'the population is ageing...and changing demographics of the new tourists are creating demand for more targeted and customised holidays.'

The mature traveller is also considered to be a 'new tourist'. Their previous travel experience is one of the most important factors that will change tourist demand. They will be more discerning and will demand quality services, as well as choice and flexibility in their travel and tourism consumption. The Environmetrics report (1991, p. 43) further suggests that 'the majority of mature tourists see travel as such a major lifestyle priority that they are willing to spend on travel on a frequent basis.'

This 'leisure as an award for hard work' right is illustrated through a study of Leinberger (1992) in which mature Australians were asked which expenses they would reduce when forced to economise. Most of the respondents would better control their spending by making fewer impulse

purchases and by adhering more strictly to a budget. Reducing holiday expenditure on the other hand was only popular by 22 % of the 50 to 64 age group and 15 % of the 65 + age group (see table 2.3). Leinberger concludes that this confirms that holidays are important for the older Australian and therefore low on their list as a means of reducing expenses.

**Table 2.3: Economising on holiday expenditure.**

Question: Seriously considering or already doing: - reducing expenses		
	50-64 age group	65 + age group
Make fewer impulse purchases	55 %	47 %
Adhere more strictly to a budget	45 %	37 %
Postpone major expenses (car, redecorating)	23 %	18 %
Spend holidays at home	22 %	15 %
Economise on food	21 %	18 %

Source: Adapted from Leinberger, P. 1992, *Highlights from ARM: Quantum Mature Market Study*, Sydney.

Vacations are increasingly considered as a necessary part of people's life-styles. They have become a major category of expenditure on which a considerable proportion of the household budget is spent. The expenditure is discretionary: it can be postponed, foregone or cancelled in a situation of financial shortage (van Raaij and Francken, 1984). Small (1986) found that mature Australians appear likely to make modifications in terms of duration of their holidays or the class of their accommodation, rather than defer or abandon the trip. In recent years, many mature Australians have been able to retire at an earlier age, thereby allowing more time for leisure activities (Kendig and McCallum, 1986). Australians aged fifty-five years and over have a high and increasing incidence of domestic travel (Poole 1990). He suggests that the reason for this is their relatively high level of spending power and the amount of free time possessed by the fifty-five year and over age group. The domestic travel undertaken by Australians is largely discretionary. The highest incidence of travel occurs amongst women aged 55 years and over. Females particularly have a higher travel propensity for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1995).

Researchers in the United States (Ananth and others, 1992; Shoemaker, 1989) conclude that the hospitality industry will be one of the big winners from the travel propensities of mature travellers as they often use hotels as their travel accommodation.

Changes in disposable income tend to influence the propensity of a person to travel. A distinction must be made here between the 'ability to spend' and the 'propensity to spend'. Previously, the increasing discretionary wealth of the mature Australians was emphasised, in comparison with the younger Australians who have major financial commitments and therefore less discretionary income. It must, however, be kept in mind that although people have the money to spend on what they like, it does not necessarily mean that they will spend that money. Davis (1993) provides figures which indicate that today's thirty-five to forty-nine year age group are 'easy spenders, not savers' and 'heavy users of credit cards'. The fifty to sixty-four year age group, on the other hand, belong to a 'save some, spend some' group. The sixty-five to seventy-nine year age group can be considered savers but are still willing to spend on luxury items. The 'old old' group of eighty+ are 'reluctant to cash in assets to spend on themselves'. They are great savers 'accustomed to deferring gratification and saving for major purchases'. The 'saving' attitude of the sixty-five+ age group is consistent with their lifetime experience of growing up during the depression and war years and having learned to save to survive (Moschis, 1992). It may well be that this cautionary attitude towards saving will become less prominent when younger generations age. A word of caution is required regarding the propensity of the mature Australian to travel. Lee and Lambert (1984, p.32) warned against over-estimating the mature market by stating: 'clearly, a major portion of older persons do not have and will not have the health or resources to travel'. Moschis (1992) adds that simply because mature consumers have the means to buy, does not indicate that they are willing to buy.

The two statements just noted explain in part why the present study concentrates on those who are both able and want to travel.

#### **2.5.4 Government policies on travel**

Among the closing resolutions agreed upon during the ETC and IHA (International Hotel Association) seminar in November 1985 in Cannes on 'The Senior Tourist: Solution or Seasonality' was that the ETC and the IHA should develop closer links with [seniors] welfare. By the mid-1980's it was becoming obvious to many that there was a large unsatisfied demand for more travel among the European elderly. This resulted in many welfare organisations becoming actively involved in travel arrangements, often in partnership with a professional travel agent or tour operator. A Euro Senior Pass was developed which would allow rebated travel (including entry to tourist attractions and museums) throughout Europe (Viant, 1993). In several European Union countries, governments have been politically sensitive to the social consequences of ageing by taking steps to support the environment in which people age. Government owned and subsidised public transport systems offer 'senior citizens' special fare reductions or periods of free travel. Those discounts must be considered as a political instrument of social welfare, as they apply only to the local communities and not to the international travel scene (Wheatcroft and Seekings, 1992). A few countries subsidise the travel accommodation of seniors under the banner of 'social tourism'. Whilst these programs are on the wane in most member countries, Spain continues to support such an approach. The main welfare thrust now is in stimulating the older segment of the population by improving incomes rather than by providing subsidised services so that every individual can choose how to use the resources, instead of subsidising a particular activity (Wheatcroft and Seekings, 1992). In Australia, Federal and State Governments have developed policies dealing with leisure for the mature population. These policies primarily have a recreation and community focus. Whilst travel is an important component of leisure, few, if any, resources have been spent on stimulating the mature population to increase their leisure travel (Queensland Department of Family Services, Action for the Ageing, 1989). Governments have introduced discount travel for older people, though its use is restricted to those over sixty years of age and to those in receipt of an aged pension. The concept of social

tourism that focuses on those who would not be able to meet the cost without social intervention, is not common in Australia.

Studies by Rowland (1991), Clare and Tulpulé (1994), and Kendig and McCallum (1986), have dealt extensively with the ageing phenomenon in Australia and have emphasised the social and economic aspects of ageing and the policy implications for Governments. The travel practices of mature Australians are examined only as a seasonal migration with social and economic ramifications but not as a leisure activity. Seasonal migration is indeed practised by many mature Australians, typified by movements from south to north and to places with warmer climates (Rowland, 1991). Leisure activities are also mentioned only briefly in the studies and only in the context of social clubs as a substitute for social contact in the absence of families. Many Commonwealth Government initiatives for the Tourism industry are listed in the Tourism Assistance Guide, published by the Commonwealth Department of Tourism in 1994, but none of the initiatives referred to is related to the development of policies which could benefit the mature domestic traveller. In October 1995 the same Department published a paper 'Tourism; Australia's Passport to Growth, A National Tourism Strategy', which included a strategy to improve tourism opportunities for new market segments. No mention was made of the mature traveller segment. A notable exception to the prevailing reticence about the mature market is the report by Environmetrics (1991). This report was based on a qualitative study on the needs and expectations of tourists aged over fifty-five years. It emphasised the importance of the mature market and reported on a wide range of tourist needs and expectations and included a brief section on tourist accommodation.

It seems that exploiting the benefits of travel for mature Australians is rather a low priority for Governments.

### **2.5.5 Barriers to travel**

There are reasons for travel and there are reasons not to travel. Barriers to travel are well documented in literature. In a study in the US by Blazey (1987) found five factors or reasons for non-participation by seniors in an available travel

service: external resources, lack of time, approval, abilities/social and physical well-being. McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) lists the following barriers: costs, lack of time, professional obligations, health limitations, family stage, lack of interest and safety concerns. Murray and Sproats (1990) studied the barriers to travel by disabled persons and concluded that they fell into three areas: economic, physical and attitudinal. They argue that many mature travellers would require and enjoy the same appointments as disabled travellers. Environmetrics (1991) found three factors that would deter mature people from travelling and included Blazey's findings: economic constraints, health and the 'lack of companionship' reasons. It may be assumed that some, if not all the above reasons are applicable to the mature Australian traveller.

#### **2.5.5.1 Economic issues**

The future economic health of the mature market is not easy to measure. Whilst it has been argued previously that the mature segment of the population as a group is relatively well off, many of their group depend on economic activities which are not age specific. Labour force and retirement trends, including redundancy, can have an impact on the frequency with which mature people can travel. For some mature Australians, money and its availability is a limitation to travel (Environmetrics, 1991). Many are dependent upon under-performing assets to fund their retirement. As a result, the issue of quality and price-value is becoming increasingly important (Harris and West, 1995). Some do not go on holidays at all, others limit both the frequency and style of holidays, particularly when physical constraints force the mature traveller to select expensive accommodation. McInerney (1992) suggests that when the mature traveller feels that a product (eg. accommodation) is of good value, they will resist climbing back up the price ladder for the sake of a few amenities. In the US eight out of ten hotels offer discounted room rates to guests who are fifty-five years or older. Others have complimentary breakfasts for their senior guests (Watkins, 1990). This issue is seen to have potential importance in Australia, therefore an associated question has been included in the questionnaire in the present research. The mature

traveller is discovering the advantages of special rates and incentive programs (McInerney, 1992).

#### **2.5.5.2 Health issues**

While ageing and health concerns may begin to influence the behaviour of some mature travellers, research has shown most activity limitations and serious health concerns are for those eighty and older (Pederson, 1994). Lago and Poffley (1993) found that the most important factors of variability that influence the hospitality field are changes in the pattern of health status (such as decreasing stamina) and in types of health related to disability among the elderly. While the majority of over fifty-fives are healthy, the fear of failing health is present and can act as a spur to 'do it while you can'. It is interesting that for many mature travellers, health does not appear to be a major deterrent to taking a holiday. Recuperation from illness or recovery after major surgery is often a stimulus to travel. On the other hand, those who do not travel often make the decision for health reasons. Blazey (1987) found that 25.6% of senior travel constraints were related to 'health' issues, 19.6% were related to disability and 9% to the lack of energy to travel. Only 3% of the respondents felt that they were too old to take part. Others ignore ill health and ageing and indulge in the travel experience (Environmetrics, 1991).

It must however be recognised that while most mature travellers are relatively healthy and active, subtle variations in health often have significant effects on consumer behaviour (Pederson, 1994). Declining stamina, changes in diet, loss of sensory perceptions, and environmental negotiability are issues that are of concern to the mature traveller. Mature travellers are more concerned with comfort than younger ones. Being comfortable is a psychological need of older consumers and security and safety are central to their purchasing demands. Accessibility may be as important as the product itself (Pederson, 1994). Because of the importance of the health and comfort issues, several associated questions have been included in the questionnaire for this study.

### **2.5.5.3 Companionship**

The desire for companionship whilst holidaying is very strong and, for many mature travellers, a necessity. Some expect to find companionship during the holidays, others see a lack of companionship as an obstacle that may lead to deferring holidays. Some mature travellers may feel more secure when behaviour can be adjusted to that of companions (McIntosh and Goeldner, 1986). Some female travellers are dismissive of this as a problem; travelling alone and 'being proud of it'. It is almost a defiant gesture (Environmetrics, 1991). Because travelling with a partner is such a strong need for many mature travellers, it is of interest to this study to find if travelling with a partner has an influence on the expectations of hotel attributes.

### **2.5.6 Reasons for travel**

There is a misconception in the travel industry that all people holiday with the intention of escaping from their daily routines. This may be the case with younger people and stressed workers, but older people are looking more for 'gateways to experience and personal growth' (Stuart, 1992, p. M27). In his study, Stuart suggests that 'the older people become, the less interested they are in acquiring possessions and the more interested they become in simply 'experiencing' '. He argues that the mature traveller wishes to become 'involved' in the travel experience, while the younger traveller attempts 'to escape'. This is supported by Elliot and Johns (1993) who state that mature travellers are increasingly interested in a wide variety of holiday experiences which take them to new destinations, preferably in the sun. Lukas (1992, p. M3) suggests that 'the new 'mature' consumer wants nothing more than to participate in and to share in life - but also expects nothing less'. Environmetrics (1991, p. 28) claims that holidays by the older Australian are regarded as 'part and parcel of life, as a right and a necessity rather than as a luxury'. What are the more specific reasons, other than for travel? Poon (1994, p. 128) suggests that, in the industrial era, tourists were drawn from a population that 'lived to work'. Their vacation motivations were simple: to recover; to recuperate; to rest; to be served; to switch off; to have no duties; to

have no worries and to have no problems. She argues that, by the year 2000 only 10% of the tourists will belong to this group.

Nowadays, reasons for travel are influenced by a '*work to live*' attitude. Motives based on this attitude include: to experience something different; to explore; to have a change; to have fun; to increase enjoyment; to play and be active; to be together with others; to relax without stress; to do as one pleases and to enjoy proximity to nature and intact environment.

Poon (1993) estimates that the above motives will be applicable to 45% - 60% of the population in the developed world and will include a large proportion of the mature traveller segment. The researcher introduces a third lifestyle group, a group in which the members are looking for fulfilment throughout all sectors of life. Their motivations for travel include: to broaden their horizons; to learn something new; to encourage introspection and communication with other people; to discover the simpler things in life and nature; to foster creativity, open-mindedness and to experiment and take personal risks. Poon (1993) assumes that this category will cover 30% - 40% of the population and quotes Krippendorf that this category will have the biggest potential for growth in the 21st Century. Moutinho (1987) quotes Dichter who describes this new generation of travellers as 'searchers', not 'tourists'.

Elements seen as important to the mature traveller are interesting venues that provide learning and/or cultural experiences, good architecture, a pleasant countryside, peace and quiet, participation and opportunities to develop and support friendship, value for money and good weather experienced in a comfortable but simple environment. Indulgence and respect are further expectations (Mateer, 1991; Badinelli, Bavis and Gustin, 1991; Calver and others, 1993). Shoemaker (1989) and Badinelli and others (1991), in studies of the senior travel market in the United States, distinguish three segments of the senior travellers market according to reasons for travel and activity preferred on a trip. The behaviour of the first segment, the 'family travellers' who travel to spend time with their immediate family can be considered to conform with the

disengagement theory of ageing (Blazey, 1987). The two other segments are the 'active resters' who plan for their travel, prefer longer trips and seek many incidental activities, and the 'older set' which resembles closely the 'active resters' but are considered more affluent and older than the two other segments. Riddich and Daniel, (1984) as quoted by Vincent and De Los Santos (1990), suggest that these two segments illustrate the 'activity theory of ageing' model. Pederson (1994) supports those findings but claims that the reasons are not mutually exclusive and that travellers may seek a combination of them. From the above it could be suggested that the mature traveller does not necessarily seek luxury but rather a pleasant and memorable experience. Finding the travel reasons of mature Australian domestic leisure travellers will be part of this study.

#### **2.5.7 When to travel**

Mature travellers have the freedom to travel when they want. They do not have family commitments that reduce the choice of when to travel. They therefore become increasingly flexible. Chew (1987, p.84) confirms this when he states that:

...the older people have acquired a higher propensity to travel and take longer holidays because they have more leisure time and are able to take holidays during off-peak seasons when travel and accommodation costs are considerably lower...

This is supported by Shoemaker (1984, p.87) who writes:

...they (the mature travellers) are willing to travel in the shoulder seasons if there is enough incentive ...They can travel mid-week and arrange their travel plans in accordance with room availability...

Even those who are still full-time employed tend to enjoy more flexibility over leave arrangements than those earlier in their working life and therefore have more freedom to travel when it suits the individual (Camden, 1991; Vellas and Bécherel, 1995). Environmetrics (1991) found that the mature Australian traveller has no preference during particular seasons, apart from the fact that they wish to

avoid the 'clutter' of school holidays. What is clear, however, is that they like to 'get away to the warmth'. In Australia, a winter holiday is a holiday to the North.

This flexibility is of great importance to the travel, leisure and accommodation industry. Due to demand fluctuations, these industries often have unused capacity, which was often considered as not sellable and the cost of which had to be recovered from sales at busier times. The mature traveller market offers the potential to fill this capacity. It must however be stressed that mature travel should not be seen as a stopgap measure for breaking the deadlock of seasonality, as surveys show that mature travellers still prefer to travel in the peak season (Hart, 1994). Hotel companies should consider the findings of Shoemaker (1984, p. 87) who found that the mature travellers:

...pay in full on departure, by personal cheque.....and many are willing to pay large deposits, providing the hotel a cash flow benefit. They spend more than average on vacation travel...

What better customers for a hotel!

### **2.5.8 Where to travel**

The cost of travel is an important part of the decision-making process for mature travellers, though 'destination is still the key factor in their travel decisions' (Rowe, 1990, p. 54). Mature Australian travellers 'prefer one or two destinations rather than multiple destinations in any one trip' (Environmetrics, 1991, p. 5). They travel to their friends and relatives wherever they live. If they travel for a break or a holiday to relax, they tend to seek the coastal regions. If they travel for a more active trip or a tour, they tend to travel away from the Eastern seaboard and go to geographically remote areas (Environmetrics, 1991). The latter suggests that hotels in rural destinations could benefit from increasing interest of mature travellers in remote areas.

### **2.5.9 Means of transport**

The study of Javalgi, Thomas and Rao (1992) on the means of transport used by mature travellers in the United States indicated that most mature travellers use the private car or van, followed by plane and coach. However, the older the respondent, the more likely the traveller was to have used the coach as a means of transportation for leisure trips. Road travel is overwhelmingly important to the Australian domestic traveller, either by car (75%) or coach (7%) followed in importance by air travel (Poole, 1990). The benefits of travel by car include independence and flexibility. Kavanagh (1992) on the other hand, suggests that elderly travellers make very limited use of cars and that this group has a greater reliance on public transport. Coach tours are favoured by the mature traveller for reasons such as meeting other people, camaraderie, no worries about travel details, physical convenience and comfort and the advantage of having prepaid 'all inclusive' tours (personal communication, Cross Country Tours, 1993). For hotels this will require special demands for handling groups, which include pre-registration with assigned rooms and keys and special luggage handling arrangements to facilitate orderly rooming of the mature guests. Catering for coach tours has benefits for the hotel: one sale can mean the rental of a large number of rooms and meals sold (Shoemaker, 1989). This advantage has to be in balance with the commission the tour operator expects. Pederson (1994, p. 16), on the other hand, found that United States 'seniors dislike tour buses' and 'do not wish to travel exclusively with seniors'. Rail travel is currently not significant but has potential in Australia, particularly if very fast trains were to be introduced. It is, however, at present, not significant, despite the opinion that it would be a pleasant, relaxing means of travel and touring (Environmetrics, 1991). The mode of transport was considered an important issue by the researcher and to identify different groups of mature Australian travellers by the main type of transport used during trips, a question was inserted for that purpose in the research questionnaire.

### **2.5.10 Length of travel and duration of trips**

The availability of more leisure time allows mature travellers to enjoy more and longer trips. Poole (1990) suggests that domestic trips of four to seven nights and eight to fourteen nights are on the increase whilst the one and two night trips are static or decreasing. Romsa and Blenman (1989, p. 184) found in their study of vacation patterns of elderly Germans that:

...reduced time barriers should enable elderly individuals to partake with greater frequency in holiday outings of a short duration and in longer vacation periods than those who are still in the labour force. The tendency to partake in longer vacation periods is evident, but the expected increase in holidays of less than a week's duration did not materialise...

The length of stay in hotels varies depending on the type of holiday. McInerney (1992) argues that consumers will take shorter, less expensive trips closer to home. Poole (1990) found that in Australia the fastest growing age groups for travel in terms of the number of nights spent away from home are those aged forty to fifty-four and fifty-five and older. They are increasing on an average of more than 3.5% per annum, compared with 1.6% per annum for Australia as a whole. Poole (1990) reasons that this is a result of the demographic changes in the population and the increasing incidence of travel of the older age groups.

The previous section outlined the leisure activities of the mature population. A profile of the opportunities and challenges that mature Australians present to the travel industry was developed. In order to find this out, questions were developed to be included in the study questionnaire.

## **2.6 Summary**

In this chapter the diversity of the mature traveller group has been exposed. The literature suggests that this group appears to be as complex as other market segments. Economic, health and social issues all have an influence on their travel

motivation. For a business it is important to recognise that it should identify with the concerns and needs of the mature traveller without identifying these concerns as related to age. The literature further suggests that the travel needs and expectations of mature travellers differ only slightly from the rest of the population and that these differences are related to the ageing process. Although mature Australians clearly have the desire to travel, little seems to be known about the mature traveller market, its travel behaviour and its expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes. No Australian research has yet shown if there are differences between groups of mature domestic travellers in relation to travel behaviour, reasons for travel and expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes between. The question of whether these differences are explained by the ageing process has also been unanswered. The present study will attempt to address the gap. In the next chapter the literature review on hotel attributes will highlight those attributes that could satisfy the needs and expectations of mature travellers.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HOTELS AND THEIR ATTRIBUTES

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined how the ageing of the Australian population has been depicted in the literature, with particular reference to its impact on the domestic travel market. The present chapter provides an insight into the Australian accommodation industry and an understanding of the hotel attributes expected by mature travellers, based on existing literature. The selection procedure for the types of attributes and opinions used within the research instrument will be discussed, including the application of two 'ageing related' classifications: 'bio-physical' and 'psycho-social'.

#### **3.2 The accommodation industry and the mature traveller**

As discussed previously, people travel for different reasons. They have different expectations about the logistics of travel and the possible benefits that may be derived from the trip. According to Turnbull and Uysal (1995), their expectations are influenced by destination attributes – pull factors – or by activities offered by destinations. Of the pull factors the destination attributes are critical, with accommodation constituting a secondary 'derived' factor. With the exception of day trips, most tourism activity involves overnight accommodation. Middleton (1988) places accommodation within the destination facilities and services categories of the travel and tourism product. The other four components are cited as: destination attractions, accessibility, images and price. When contemplating an accommodation purchase, the traveller may be offered a range of alternatives including: hotels, motels, guesthouses, self contained flats and units, caravans and tents. Middleton (1988, p. 254) defines tourism accommodation as 'all establishments offering overnight accommodation on a commercial or quasi commercial basis to all types of tourists'.

He uses the term 'quasi commercial' to describe accommodation products outside the commercial sector for which a charge is made to cover costs. University

dormitories are an examples of this type of accommodation, as are accommodation outlets specifically targeted at clubs and youth hostel associations.

Middleton (1988) distinguishes between the serviced and non-serviced tourist accommodation sectors. In the latter case, the accommodation may range from furnished units to apartments and caravans. Services such as meals and daily cleaning are excluded. Generally, such accommodation includes the provision of facilities enabling clients to prepare their own meals. The Environmetrics study (1991), mentioned previously, found that Australian mature travellers use a broad range of accommodation facilities and that cabins at caravan parks are popular because of their value for money and their provision of all 'mod cons'. Guest houses offer the prospect of not only nostalgic memories but also unpleasant experiences, such as poor facilities and cold rooms. Camping was 'out', except for a few willing to compromise on comfort. Comfort is an important issue for the mature traveller. This study focuses especially on accommodation supplied to the mature travellers by the hotel, motel and guest house industry. This group of accommodation establishments is classified in different ways, as will be discussed in the next section.

### **3.2.1 The classification of hotels**

In establishing the travel behaviour of the mature domestic traveller, particularly with reference to hotel attributes, it is essential that we obtain an insight into the classification of the hotels that they are expecting to use. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) developed the Standard Classification of Visitor Accommodation (SCOVA, 1992) to improve measurement of the sector. It has been designed as a system for classifying statistics relating to both commercial and private accommodation. Whilst it is designed for purposes of statistical classification, it can be used for other relevant purposes. SCOVA is sub-divided into three categories:

1. Commercial Accommodation Establishments
2. Other commercial and Institutional Accommodation
3. Non-commercial Accommodation

The first category encompasses establishments whose primary activity is the provision of visitor accommodation and is subdivided into ten groups, ranging from hotels, motels and guesthouses to caravan parks and camping grounds. Hotels, motels and guesthouses are the focus of the present study. In Australia, hotels, motels and guesthouses are included within the 'commercial serviced' category. This category provides specialised staff who aim to satisfy the tangible needs (such as food and accommodation) and the intangible needs (such as respect, recognition and friendliness) of the traveller, for which a fee is paid. This fee may be included as part of the total price of a service arrangement or may be charged per service purchased (an 'à la carte' purchase). The commercial accommodation sector normally offers four distinct types of physical product:

**Table 3.1: The physical hotel product.**

PRODUCT TYPE	EXAMPLE
Sleeping accommodation	Rooms, suites
Food and beverage facilities	Restaurants, bars
Function space	Meeting and exhibition space
Activities facilities	Recreation, health and fitness

Source: Adapted from Brent Ritchie, J.R. & Goeldner, Charles R, Editors 1987, *'Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Research'*, John Wiley and Sons, New York.

Such goods and services do not have any lasting value in the sense that a hotel room is a perishable product; if it has not been used for an overnight occupancy, the loss can not be recouped. Consequently, most of these goods and services may be considered as 'experiences' rather than products (Kasavana, 1981). In addition to the SCOVA classification, the tourism industry employs several other classification systems, each for its particular purposes. Table 3.2 lists a variety of classifications. In the present study 'location' and 'class' are given particular emphasis.

**Table 3.2: Typical hotel classifications.**

Facility type	Hotel, motel, motor inn, lodge, inn, resort, motor inn, hostel
Size characteristics	Number of rooms, room revenue, number of rooms sold
Location	Airport, highway, city centre, suburban, remote
Guest orientation	Short term (commercial, transient) long term (residential)
Business affiliation	Independent, chain, franchise, referral
Class	Budget, moderate, intermediate, luxury
Traditional	Residential, commercial, resort

Source: adapted from Kasavana, M. 1981, *Effective Front Office Operations*, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York, USA, p. 11.

With a view to classifying hotels from a marketing perspective, a 'star' rating is used in many countries. Such ratings are often based on locally established criteria which are easily measurable and tangible. In Australia, participation in the most common classification system, namely the one operated by the Australian Automobile Association, AAA (1994), is voluntary and depends entirely on an individual property owner's wish to appear in the relevant hotel guide.

The important intangible criteria of the hotel product are much more difficult to measure and quantify. Kasavana (1981, p.10) reasons that hotel classifications are relatively arbitrary and should not be given too much credence. He suggests that:

...historically hotel managers, consultants and related service industry personnel have employed a variety of yardsticks as classification criteria..... Perhaps the main motivation behind the use of these criteria has been twofold: marketing and comparability...

Bardi (1990, p. 11) supports Kasavana by arguing that 'sometimes these concepts (*of levels of hotel-service quality*) will add confusion to the overview.'

In table 3.2 one of the classifications was listed as 'class'. This may be related to star ratings from a one star hotel at the budget or economy level to a five star hotel offering goods and services at the highest standards. Most hotels in Australia fall into the mid-price range that incorporates the three and four star properties.

Others use a more descriptive method of ranking hotels on the basis that this is better recognised by the consumer. Hotels are grouped into three overlapping

segments that are based on the cost or price of the accommodation. These are illustrated in table 3.3:

**Table 3.3: Descriptions of hotel and motel standards**

Description used by Bureau of Tourism Research (1991, p.54)	Description as understood best by focus group participants for this study
Luxury Hotel/Motel	Luxury class
Middle range Hotel/Motel	Mid Price Range
Budget Hotel/Motel	Budget or Economy class

Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

For those who travel for business and non-leisure purposes, accommodation is normally not part of the destination's attraction but is a necessity. When travelling for holiday and leisure purposes (the focus of this study), the customers' destination choices are influenced by their perceptions and expectations of the accommodation available (Middleton, 1988). Irrespective of the target market, location tends to dominate accommodation operations. 'Location' is used in marketing as a classification which customer groups will easily recognise and which they are likely to consider important in their selection of their hotel. The 'location' classification can include alternatives such as 'airport', 'highway', 'city centre', 'suburban' and 'remote (resort)'.

The location of an hotel has an impact on the number of 'chance' customers it receives (a highway hotel attracts more 'chance' customers than a remote resort). It influences the hotel's reservation system (a highway hotel has a short reservation horizon, a remote resort a long one). Certain locations may assist the hotel to gain exposure to the market (a highway hotel attracts most of its customers as impulse buyers, due to direct market exposure, whilst the remote resort attracts its guests through long term marketing efforts activated at distant locations). Wilson and Vierich (1990) note that, especially for the mature traveller who will face transport and mobility problems, hotels need to be easily accessible in terms of transport and design. The 'location' classification is thus an important element in understanding the preferences and behaviour of the mature traveller and a question in this regard has been included in the research instrument.

### **3.2.2 The hotel product**

The purpose of a hotel must be fundamentally customer oriented. This includes a philosophical as well as functional reason for the hospitality industry's existence. This basic purpose is to take care of the needs of people who require accommodation services outside their own business or personal environment (Chadwick, 1987). The goal of an hotel is product orientated; namely to generate a return on the investment of money, time and effort. A hotel should maximise profit by satisfying the needs and wants of the customers it attracts (Chadwick, 1987).

West and Purvis (1992) argued strongly for a need to develop a strategic approach to hotel design. They suggested that information from customers, potential customers and the experiences of other services industries would be needed to fulfil the potential of hotels, with physical as well as service products. The development of a hotel requires a good understanding of holiday trends, guest needs and expectations as well as guest group demographics, purchasing power and behavioural patterns. Hotels are now evolving into a number of different types, aimed at an increasing number of distinct user groups and markets, one of which could be the mature traveller.

It is widely believed that hotels should provide whatever services the customer expects. This perception may have arisen as a result of the marketing and promotion tools used by hotels which implied an ability and/or willingness to satisfy all potential guest needs. As a result, the expectations which hotels generated have resulted in the ability to satisfy the guests needs only in part. It is now recognised that needs and expectations differ for each market segment and that these change rapidly, with hotels selecting their market segments based on specific social groups. Whilst one hotel may target the mature traveller, honeymooners or families, another targets the golf enthusiast, the sports fan or the backpacker.

The hotel product comprises the physical environment in which the relevant hospitality services are provided. The building and the facilities offered include

intangible, subjective and emotive factors such as style, image, ambience, status and prestige. It further includes the provision of service at a particular standard which can range from budget or economy to luxury operations (Pannell Kerr Forster Associates (UK), 1993). Getty and Getty (1992) studied the dimensions of quality in the lodging industry and used an instrument adapted by Getty in a previous study from the SERVQUAL instrument developed by Parasuraman and others (1988). This instrument was called the 'Customer's Perception Profile of Lodging Quality' in which they narrowed down the 'quality' concept into the five following 'quality' dimensions:

**Tangibles:** Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials

**Reliability:** Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately

**Responsiveness:** Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service

**Assurance:** Possession of the required skills and knowledge to perform the service (competence), politeness, respect, consideration courtesy and trustworthiness, believability, honesty of the service provider (credibility), freedom from danger, risk or doubt (safety and security)

**Empathy:** Approachability and ease of contact (access), keeping customers informed, listening to the customers and trying to understand the customers

Clow and others (1994, p 54) suggest that

...because of these unique characteristics, consumers often will use contextual, tangible cues to evaluate the more intangible elements of a service, to develop expectations of a service, and to determine future purchasing decisions...

They list as 'intangible clues' (clues which cannot be touched, seen, heard or smelled and which are difficult to evaluate prior to the patronage decision) of hotels such issues as security, dependability, service quality, convenience, reputation and staff behaviour. 'Tangible clues' such as price, appearance of the hotel, location, advertising and past experience they suggest, are used by consumers to form opinions and attitudes about the level of service offered.

As mentioned before, several studies (Lewis, 1984-1987; Knutson, 1988; McCleary, Weaver and Lan, 1994; Saleh and Ryan, 1992; Greathouse and others, 1992; Howell and others, 1993) have, in recent years, examined the importance of the accommodation product. Some have studied the needs and expectations of the mature traveller (Ananth and others, 1992; Van Harsseel and others, 1992). The attribute variables used in the present study were largely identified in the literature or obtained from focus groups or industry specialists. The selection of 'ageing' related attributes will be discussed later.

### **3.2.3 Accommodation for the mature traveller**

Actively promoting accommodation for mature persons is not common in Australia, in contrast to the practice in Europe and the United States of America. The latter have traditions that are not as yet established in Australia, such as the spa towns in France and Germany in Europe or in the State of Virginia in the USA. In such cases, elderly tourists are the main market sources. Davies (1987) argues that adequate market research and in-depth understanding of the needs of the ageing population has given rise to a whole industry based on the fifty-five to sixty-five age group. He states that the hospitality industry in Europe has identified a demographic trend, responded to it, changed the behaviour patterns and created a new trend. Many European hotels not only actively participate in promotion to attract mature travellers, but also adapt their product by installing suitable facilities for less mobile guests, offering single rooms without surcharge and providing appropriate entertainment (Wheatcroft and Seekings, 1992). Professional associations such as the Hotel Catering International Management Association, HCIMA, (1991) supply their members with technical briefs on issues

such as 'Providing Accessible Accommodation' and recognise the elderly traveller as part of an increasing market. International hotel chains, such as Marriott, Hyatt and Choice Hotels make special arrangements for travellers over 50 years of age. Choice Hotels prepared special instructions for marketing their properties to seniors (Todd, 1994). It publishes a booklet 'Tips for Travelers over 50' and even goes so far as to having rooms designed by mature travellers for mature travellers. Hotel organisations in the USA, such as Marriott and Hyatt, have used their hospitality expertise to enter the management of residential complexes specifically designed for senior living (Selwitz, 1990; Wolff, 1990). It may be assumed that, in return, those hotel organisations will incorporate more and more 'ageing friendly' attributes in their hotels, including the ones in Australia.

Australian hotels generally welcome the mature traveller but the needs of the mature traveller have often been overlooked, with the mature traveller expected to adapt to the available product. It is interesting to note that the Commonwealth Department of Sport, Recreation and Tourism published the 'Accommodation for Disabled Travellers' guide in 1982 and the 'Accessibility guide for disabled travellers to tourist attractions in Australia' in 1985. Surprisingly, no reference or suggestion is made that many of the features proposed for people with physical or mental impairments could also be appreciated by the mature traveller (Department of Sport, Recreation and Tourism, 1985). The Council of Disabled Motorists (Vic.) has published an Accommodation Guide, listing accessible motels and hotels but also fails to mention its applicability to the mature traveller (no publication date listed).

In Australia, the development of resorts on the Gold Coast such as the Royal Pines Resort and Sanctuary Cove in Queensland have introduced a level of enhanced 'ageing friendliness'. In such cases, large hotels are integrated into developments in which (mostly older) individuals own their dwellings. They benefit from such integrated developments as being able to share all or part of the services that are supplied by the hotels to the resort community. These can include services such as support for the maintenance of their property, cleaning services by hotel staff and the opportunity to have their meals supplied by the hotel and delivered to their

premises. Mature residents are attracted to such locations for climatic and lifestyle reasons. This market segment has a special appeal to the resort developer because their presence is often continual, rather than seasonal. The importance of one segment of the mature market for the hospitality industry is thus recognised. Despite the experiences of the Royal Pines Resort and Sanctuary Cove, opportunities to develop hotel attributes in Australia for the mature domestic leisure traveller are still at an early stage.

The larger Australian hotel chains in the luxury bracket tend to cater for overseas tourists and business travellers. Mid-price, budget and economy properties, on the other hand, are more geared to the domestic traveller. The latter in particular have the opportunity to develop products that can satisfy the needs and expectations of domestic mature travellers.

Elliot and Johns (1993), in their study on 'Resort Design', briefly mention the fact that mature travellers are emerging as the largest consumer group, though they do not comment on the impact that this group will have on resort design. A study by Potter (1994) in the US investigated the provision of mature traveller services as perceived by hotel management. He found that there was no significant association between hotel type or size and the provision of services perceived as desirable by mature travellers. This could be interpreted as meaning that, with regards to the provision of services, the mature traveller fits into one homogeneous group. The reports by the European Travel Commission (1992) and Environmetrics (1992), mentioned earlier, emphasise mature specific marketing issues but fail to discuss or suggest any possible design opportunities that could benefit the mature traveller.

Design features such as specially adapted rooms for people who are physically disadvantaged, are now common. Most hotels now have special rooms for guests that use a wheelchair or guests with certain allergies. A reason for this difference could be that the mature guest is accustomed to adapting to existing design features and tries to cope with potential difficulties. In contrast, the physically impaired guest correctly regards special facilities as a basic right a right that is

supported by legislation. It is an important objective of this study to identify whether there are specific physical attributes that the mature domestic leisure traveller expects from Australian hotels.

### **3.3 Mature specific hotel attributes**

In chapter two, an overall view of the mature consumer was presented. A more detailed introduction on the ageing process is now needed to develop categories of hotel attributes that can be recognised by hotel management and hotel developers and designers as 'ageing friendly'. The attributes will be explored for their 'ageing friendly' characteristics, especially taking the bio-physical and psychosocial requirements of the mature traveller into consideration.

Carstens (1993, p. 10) quotes an unknown author as follows:

...Although the most important generalisation in gerontology may be that older people are, on the whole, pretty much like the rest of us, there is an important message: where the capabilities of older people do differ from those of younger people, unique needs requiring unique satisfiers may result. Hence the suggestion that what is good for people in general will be good for the elderly is only partly true...

This quote correctly identifies both the differences and the similarities between mature travellers and travellers in general.

Moschis (1993, p. 46) suggests an approach that acknowledges individual differences during the ageing process:

...gerontographics is based on the premise that the observed similarities and differences in the consumer behaviour of older adults is the outcome of several social, psychological, bio-physical, lifetime events and other environmental factors.

The derivation of mature market sub-segments is based on the premise that those older people who experience similar circumstances in later life (defined by the person's gerontographic characteristics) are likely to exhibit similar patterns of

consumer behaviour, patterns that differ from those of older adults experiencing different sets of circumstances, that is, having different gerontographic characteristics.

Seedsman (1996) quotes Spirduso who suggests that it is now widely agreed that four major constellations, **cognitive and emotional, health and fitness, economic and social and recreational** factors impact on the life outcomes of older adults.

Seedsman (1996, p.20) explains that

...cognitive and emotional involve feelings of well-being and life-satisfaction. Health and fitness focus on subjective and objective measurements of health status, expressions of energy and vitality and general and specific levels of physical functioning. The economic dimension impacts on lifestyle and explains much about the influence of poverty and wealth in determining an individual's life chances and choices. The social and recreational components of quality of life provide important avenues for older people to maintain and extend their social networks, thereby enabling them to enrich their lives...

Carstens (1993, p. 10) confirms this with her observation that:

...real ageing is determined by the body's loss of reserve or ability to maintain its equilibrium. Environmental variables and cultural norms, however, may hasten the ageing process.... To maximise the options for daily living for older people, design can and must respond to changes in sensory processes and perception, the central nervous system and cognitive functions, and health associated with the ageing process...

Howell (1980) states that a major problem in conceptualising design for mature people is that ageing is a process, whilst most building programs assume an essentially static use of the building by users. Carstens (1993) accentuates in her study the physiological attributes of design for the elderly and appears to place

less emphasis on the social and psychological attributes than the other authors. Seedsman (1996, p. 21) seems to agree that the physical consequences of ageing outweigh others when he concludes that 'of the preceding quality of life factors highlights the overriding importance of the physical dimension of ageing.'

Zimmer, Brailey and Searle (1995) recognised the importance of bio-physical dimensions as an issue for the mature traveller and included questions in their research tool which dealt with mobility restrictions. Respondents were asked whether they experienced mobility restrictions and were presented with statements such as 'getting in and out of the bathtub', 'getting in and out of bed', 'going up and down a flight of stairs' and 'getting in and out of a chair'. However, other ageing related issues, such as the loss of hearing, sight or stamina, were not discussed. Davies and Beasley (1988), Schlagel and Tas (1992) and Baucom (1994) are authors who have taken the total physical ageing process into consideration when studying the needs of mature travellers and their preferred accommodation attributes. Davies and Beasley (1988) proposed a range of hospitality design standards for the guest with physical impairments. They argued emphatically the applicability of their suggestions to hotels intending to attract the mature traveller market. In addressing the needs of the elderly market Schlagel and Tas (1992) listed a range of attributes related to the physiological changes brought about by the ageing process that should be of concern to the hospitality industry. They included suggestions for hotel services which would accommodate the loss of strength, dexterity and sensory abilities such as the perception of touch. Sheridan and Smith (1991) argued that the biological, psychological and sociological aspects of ageing and their effects on the senior traveller have implications for hotel design and services. They listed public areas, hotel rooms and restaurants as areas that require design considerations for the senior traveller, though they did not mention specific attributes which could increase the satisfaction of the mature traveller. Baucom (1994) developed design considerations for hotels specifically for the mature traveller based on the physical differences which might be considered between the older (65 plus) hotel guest and other age groups. He acknowledged that the mature traveller represented widely

variable levels of general health and physical abilities and that physical differences between travellers which occur with any other age group also may be considered. He particularly emphasised those features that could be used to aid people with reduced physical abilities but emphasised that those features should be unobtrusive and certainly not obvious to other travellers. Incorporating special features for the mature guest in hotel design could result in an unwanted and negative feeling of being 'special'. Ritchie (1989, p. 13) supports this point and argues that tourists with 'special needs' are only 'special' if the environment makes them so.

Many hotel surroundings have been designed for young, active people. As needs change with ageing, this environment and the facilities and products within them gradually become inappropriate and thereby more difficult to use. Davies and Beasley (1988, p.2), in their publication 'Design for Hospitality' state that

...In today's society, many guests have permanent or temporary functional impairments that may require elements of the physical environment be designed to assist them in performing basic activities...

They argue that the design of hospitality establishments is often based on the demands of technology, rather than to the needs of users. Generally speaking designers have failed to keep pace with the healthy way the population has been ageing, whereby people have continued to lead useful and productive lives. Stoneham and Thoday (1994) agreed stating that the response of the community was to adapt the elderly person, not to adapt the environment. It was assumed that if a person could no longer use something, one had to learn to do without. Stoneham and Thoday (1994, p. 16) suggest that

...Special provisions for elderly people can exaggerate their perceived deviance from the norm and reduction of general competence. At best planners and designers tend to think in terms of removing barriers without also considering means of increasing opportunities. For a design to be truly successful it is important that technical solutions neither dominate a good design nor substitute for it...

Designing for people means searching for solutions that satisfy their needs and expectations. With the demographic changes experienced in Australia, hotel designers need to be aware of the characteristics associated with the mature traveller, in particular how these characteristics influence their expectations of hotel attributes and the way they use hotel facilities. Hotel attributes should benefit and appeal not only to the mature guest but also to all hotel guests (Sheridan and Smith, 1991).

What are the hotel attributes that the guests expect? Surveys among hotel users indicate that the bedroom is considered more important than the public areas. The need to place special attention to bedroom design is clearly important (Pannell Kerr Foster Associates (UK), 1993). The design of a guest room can be described as the creation of an area with an appropriate mood or theme that takes special account of the activities which are to take place in it. This assumes two aspects of the design: the practical or functional aspects which include the ease of use by guests and hotel staff and the psychological aspects such as the user's reaction to the design.

Rutes and Penner (1985) analysed the functional space requirements of the guest room and listed sleeping, working, entertaining, bathing and dressing as the five activity zones of a guest room. Nusbaum (1989) argues that hotel guests expect a room that is psychologically warm, inviting, physically comfortable and integrated into the structure and surroundings. This is supported by Branson and Lennox (1988, p. 244), who add that the room should be 'practical in design, size etc., comfortable in use, sturdy to withstand considerable wear and tear, easy to clean and maintain'.

These needs and expectations are related to the standard of accommodation that a property offers, the length of stay of the guest and the purpose of the visit. A business guest will have different needs from holidaymakers; where one requires facilities for writing, the other requires facilities for leisure.

Some design requirements are identical for guests of all ages. Design features and hotel attributes for the mature traveller need to be considered with special requirements, such as limited mobility and agility in mind. Important 'ageing friendly' design features deal with the strength, dexterity, mobility and use of the senses of the mature guest. Davies and Beasley (1988) and Baucom (1994) list, among others,

what they call 'ageing friendly' features. These include issues such as the width and clearance at the entry, the width of connecting and bathroom doors, manoeuvring space in front of the closet, in the sleeping area and within the bathroom and clearances to use and transfer to fixtures in the bathroom. Schlagel and Tas (1992) suggest that features that are easier for the mature guest to use should be considered and could include telephone, television, automatic doors and plumbing hardware as issues which hotel management should consider. Marshall (1989) published a series of suggestions for the mature traveller which were also supported by the focus groups used in this study and were therefore included in the research instrument. Lightle (1991, p. 12) adds her suggestions that:

...architects and designers who create buildings for the elderly pay special attention to the physical changes and limitations older people tend to experience and design accordingly. Therefore environments for the ageing utilise increased levels of light intensity....steps are avoided...hand rails are placed...carpet is the preferred flooring...easy access of cabinetry and light switches...spacious bathrooms... preference for shower without a threshold and with a bench. Sound insulation is important...fire alarms to emit louder sound and a balancing need for security and safety while avoiding isolation...

In addition to possible modifications to an existing hotel property to accommodate those with limited mobility or senses, many simple amenities could encourage mature travellers. These include, to mention a few: additional blankets and pillows, bedcovers, heating pads, night lights, fire safety instructions in large print, television sets that are not complicated to operate and the availability of refrigeration facilities for medicine (Ananth and others, 1992). Barrier-free facilities, eg. facilities which allow guests that use a wheelchair to use all hotel services, on the other hand, are often seen by hospitality managers as a huge expense with the cost of providing full accessibility not warranted by the number of people that use a wheelchair using the building. Davies and Beasley (1988) argue that the cost of designing and providing accessibility into new buildings is, for all intents and purposes, nil, whilst the cost to adapt existing facilities are more imagined than real. It must be recognised that some mature

travellers may perceive asking for special 'ageing friendly' arrangements with hotels as embarrassing. Hotels that routinely have attributes and services available to make the mature traveller comfortable will be appreciated.

Many of the activities of older adults are fairly similar to those of younger adults. However, psycho-social and bio-physical changes associated with advancing age are likely to affect the performance of certain activities and the time spent on them (Mosschis, 1992). Murray and Sproats (1990) argue that many design features for the disabled traveller are also appropriate for the mature traveller. Several of their suggestions have been adopted in this study.

The 'ageing related' attributes and opinions in this thesis could be considered 'lifestyle' related and were selected for their possible impact on the bio-physical and psycho-social needs of the mature traveller. The selection procedure will be discussed in the next chapter (see tables: 4.1 and 4.2).

### **3.4 Summary**

In this chapter, an insight has been provided into the Australian accommodation industry, followed by a review of the literature on hotel attributes, with particular relevance to those for mature travellers. The literature suggests that most of the expectations of mature travellers are similar to those of other travellers. Nevertheless, it has also been made clear that certain 'mature friendly' hotel attributes will undoubtedly need to be incorporated into the hotel product with a view to providing the mature traveller with her or his expectations. To ascertain the attributes that they consider important is one of the objectives of this study. To satisfy the third objective: to find if there is an underlying structure towards hotel attributes, the bio-physical and psycho-social aspects of ageing and their possible effects on the expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes were introduced as an exploratory angle for this study. In the next chapter the research methodology is outlined.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters the literature has been studied to provide a greater understanding of the mature traveller and hotel attributes. This chapter will describe the methodology used to determine the demographics of the Australian mature domestic leisure traveller, their travel behaviour, their reasons for travel and the expectations and opinions of this group towards hotel attributes. The chapter has four sections. In the first section the procedure used for the selection of variables are explained. In the second the survey technique and the design of the research instrument are discussed. In the third section, the approach used for data collection and the procedures applied in selecting the sample frame are explained. In the fourth section, the chosen data processing procedures are discussed and justified.

### 4.2 Variable selection

For reasons discussed later in this chapter a mail questionnaire (appendix 1) was seen as the most appropriate tool to collect the primary data for this study. To satisfy the first objectives of the study: to develop a profile of the mature Australian domestic leisure traveller, variables were sourced from an analysis of the issues discussed in the previous chapters. Variables on travel behaviour included questions related to the location and class of hotel that the mature traveller favours. These two classifications were clear and were easy to answer in the context of a mail questionnaire. To learn about the level of dependency on others before and during travel, one question on group or individual travel was included, one on bookings initiatives and one on the type of transport used. Two questions on the frequency of hotel use and length of stay were included to help clarify the exposure of the traveller to hotel attributes.

The next three sections of the questionnaire were intended to measure the attitudes of the sample towards reasons for travel and their expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes. This to further develop the profile of the mature traveller and to satisfy the second objective of the study: to ascertain the accommodation attributes which members of the mature Australian domestic leisure traveller group consider important.

The intention of question 9 in the second section of the questionnaire was to select the reasons for travel most applicable to the respondents.

The question was selected based on the review of the literature, interviews and observations outlined in the previous chapter. Because a mail questionnaire does not allow for extensive explanations, the list had been discussed with the focus group members for ease of understanding. The following statements were selected for inclusion:

- to get rest and relaxation;
- to visit festivals and special events;
- to be able to experience new things;
- to engage in physical activities;
- to visit new places;
- to spend time with friends and relatives;
- to spend time with family and children;
- to meet people and socialise;
- to escape everyday routine;
- to visit museums and historical sites;
- to seek intellectual and spiritual enrichment and
- for business or professional purposes.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Barak and Schiffman (1981) as quoted by Barak and Schiffman (1987), noted the 'do age': how involved a person is in activities favoured by members of a certain age group; and the 'interest age': how similar a person's interests are to those of members of a certain group. Both the

'do age' and the 'interest age' concepts are applicable to the selected reasons for travel.

Sections three and four of the questionnaire included questions on variables related to expectations and opinions of mature travellers towards hotel attributes. Hotel choice is a reflection of the attributes desired by guests and the perception of a given hotel's ability to deliver such attributes. Individuals decide, consciously or unconsciously, which of the attributes that they must have in a hotel (Lewis, 1984). The attributes which guests expect are those to which they look forward or regard as likely to be available when staying in a hotel. They anticipate that the hotel should be able to supply the attributes as part of the product. They may, for example, expect a hotel to have rooms for non-smokers, though this does not necessarily mean that they will use the attribute. In this research, an opinion which a guest has of a particular attribute refers to what the guest thinks of a particular issue, such as 'I prefer to stay in a non-smoking room' and which would perhaps clarify more the guest's intentions. For example, a guest may expect a hotel to have a swimming pool but may also be of the opinion that this adds towards the cost of a room. Since the study aimed to identify the expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes by mature travellers, it was assumed that most attributes and opinions to be included would need to be 'ageing' friendly or 'ageing' related. The objective included finding if the expectations and opinions were salient for the mature traveller and obtaining their importance rating in relation to some other attributes and opinions. In view of the likely inexperience of some respondents in completing lengthy questionnaires, the final item pool of attributes and opinions was limited to 68 variables.

With the exception of the previously mentioned study by Environmetrics (1991), no research based literature has identified what the Australian mature domestic traveller expects from hotel attributes. A study by Murray and Sproats (1990) on the 'Disabled Traveller's needs', on the other hand, listed attributes which were considered applicable for this study and were therefore included in the research. Consequently, many items on travel behaviour and hotel attributes identified in the present study have been derived from overseas literature. This included work

by Lewis (1984), Lewis (1987), Knutson (1988), Cadotte and Turgeon (1988), Wagner (1990), Greathouse and others (1992), Ananth and others (1992), Gustin and Weaver (1993), Howell and others (1993), McCleary and others (1993) and Lutz and Ryan (1993) and others.

Lewis (1984) presented the results of a study on what guests at six hotels were looking for. He used a range of attributes to test for salience, determinance, or importance and cross-classified the findings with guests' perceptions of hotel attributes. Salient attributes from this work were included in the research instrument. In another study in 1984, he published the results on isolating differences in hotel attributes, from which some attributes were used for this study. Lewis (1987) reported on the measurement of gaps in the quality of hotel services for which he asked management and guests to evaluate forty-four hotel attributes. He found six gaps, an important one being the gap between management's perception of guest expectations and the expectations of guests. He concluded that management believes that guests expect more than the guests themselves expect. Knutson (1988) studied the attributes that were important considerations for people to select and also to return to a hotel. Several of the attributes that were inserted in the questionnaire were sourced from this study. Cadotte and Turgeon (1988) selected a range of attributes, some of which are included in this study, to determine which attributes attract most compliments and which ones attracted most complaints. Wagner (1990) made a special study on the room amenities and the bedding attributes that travellers expect. The attribute 'comfortable bed/mattress' was mentioned in 98% of cases by her respondents as the most important expectation and was therefore included in the research instrument, together with six other attributes that she used. Greathouse and others (1992) determined the importance of attributes to travellers when selecting a hotel and concluded that the basic hotel services were considered most important. Ananth and others (1992) studied the amenities required by mature travellers and determined how these differed from those preferred by younger travellers. They found that several attributes, such as security issues, were important to all travellers but that there were also attribute differences between

the two age groups. These were often attributes that were 'mature specific' and several were included for this reason in the study. 'Underlying factors that determine hotel choice by mature travellers' was the title of a study by Gustin and Weaver (1992), which resulted in findings which suggested that for mature travellers convenience, comfort and fair prices, without sacrificing ambiance or quality, were priorities. Howell and others (1993) included 'location' as an important issue in their study on hotel services desired by the female business traveller. As a large proportion of the mature traveller consists of female travellers, it supported the inclusion of 'hotel location' in the study questions. An analysis of business women's perceptions of hotel services was carried out by Lutz and Ryan (1993). Security was an issue that was a prominent finding in their work and a question on 'security locks' was inserted. Hotel selection factors as they related to the business traveller were studied by McCleary and others (1993). Several of their statements, such as 'non smoking rooms' and 'firm mattresses', were also made by members of focus groups or industry specialists and therefore included in the research instrument. The resulting list of hotel attributes was later reduced, adapted and added to as a result of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

To gain a better insight into the needs of mature travellers, the in-depth interview technique was used. People who are knowledgeable about the area to be researched are often willing to share their experiences with others (Zikmund, 1988, p. 39). In the present study, hotel managers, hotel developers, hospitality consultants, travel agents, and tour operators who specialise in servicing the mature market, were interviewed for that purpose. It was recognised that this interview technique was necessarily a very subjective and flexible procedure, with no standard approach (Parasuraman, 1986). Consequently, careful attention was given in selecting industry specialists who serviced different markets of mature travellers. Some catered mainly for the up-market, independent, older traveller, others for the mid-price tour group market and yet others for the lower income segment. They were asked to indicate which items on the list of hotel attributes they considered important enough to be included in the final

questionnaire. They were further invited to add to the list items that were based on their experiences in serving the mature travellers. It is interesting to note that the industry specialists placed an emphasis on safety features such as 'handle bars' and 'non slip bathroom floors'. Could this be that industry specialists recognise more than others the potential for litigation?

Finally, discussions were held with focus groups of mature travellers in order to gain a more complete understanding of the accommodation attributes expected by the mature Australian domestic traveller. The sampling frame constituted the members of the National Seniors Association. The four focus groups comprised of participants randomly selected from a list of volunteers by the chairperson of the social club of a retirement village near Brisbane. The respective profile and experience of the participants was considered to be representative of that of the members of the NSA. The qualifying criteria included respective age and gender, income, recent travel experience and travel characteristics. Interviews were conducted to elicit information from the participants. Focus groups with older consumers present special rewards: participants are often very eager to share a wealth of information based on a lifetime of experience (Gruca and Schewe, 1992).

The focus group technique was used because of the relatively unstructured, free flowing group sessions in which participants were brought together purposely to discuss the research subject in detail (Zikmund, 1988). Parasuraman (1986) suggests several general advantages of the focus group technique. These include the ability to provide insights into issues which one-on-one interviews may be unable to generate, the versatility of the problems which can be discussed, the ability to study special respondents and the possibility that key ideas may emerge which could be of great value for the final conclusions of the study.

The environment in which these discussions took place, a semi-formal meeting room of the social club, created an atmosphere supportive to sessions. The participants were introduced to the objectives of the research and were invited to describe what they looked for when they travelled and stayed in hotel or a similar

type of accommodation. In particular they were asked to describe what was important for them when staying in different styles of accommodation and what shortcomings they had experienced. Participants were then asked to nominate freely and at random features important to them in defining and assessing hotel attributes. The focus groups assisted the author by clarifying and prioritising factors that were obtained from the literature and from the industry specialists. The variables were related to convenience, safety, design features, meals and amenities. The interviews, which were of approximately two hours duration, were recorded on tape, with the agreement of the participants. The discussions also helped in understanding the consumer language that was to be used in the final questionnaire. At the conclusion of each focus group discussion, the participants were thanked for their input. The results of the industry surveys and of the focus group interviews were collated and the attributes were tabulated. From this list the attributes were selected that were given the highest, albeit variable, priority and these formed the base for the attributes included in the research questionnaire. The participants in both the experience surveys and the focus group interviews received a copy of the results of their input and they were asked to assess whether the results reflected their opinions and if not, to return the adapted list to the author.

Previous studies by Knutson (1988 and 1993), Saleh and Ryan (1992) and others indicate that attributes such as 'cleanliness', 'convenient location', 'prompt and courteous service', 'safe and secure environment' and 'hygiene' factors are always considered salient attributes. Because it was assumed that this would also be the case in this study, these attributes were therefore not included in the research instrument.

After removing attributes and opinions that were only mentioned once and combining attributes that had only marginal differences in emphasis, the final list of attributes and opinions determined by the study was sixty-eight. Some were retained, as the participants perceived some differences that they believed should be individually rated.

Attributes or opinions which had been used in previous research on hotel services, as well as those seen as an important issues by industry specialists and by the participants of the focus groups, are listed in tables 4.1 and 4.2. They were listed in a random manner. In some cases, the original wording has been changed or adapted to suit the understanding of the concepts by the respondents.

**Table 4.1: Attributes included in the research instrument and their sources.**

Item no	Item selected for research instrument	Source: literature	Other sources
1	Tea and coffee making facilities in the hotel room	Lutz and Ryan (1993), Weaver (1991)	Ambassador travel, Cross Country Tours, Focus groups
2	Built-in lights in closets in the hotel room	Marshall (1989), Saleh and Ryan (1992)	Focus groups
3	Pull down seats in elevator	Marshall (1989)	Focus groups
4	A set of extra pillows available in hotel room	McCleary and others (1993)	Focus groups
5	A safety bar or wall mounted support handles in the bathroom	Marshall (1989), Murray and Sproats (1990), Lightle (1991), Ananth and others (1992)	Senior travel, Focus groups, Wubben Travel, Sebel, HCIMA Technical brief.
6	A hotel room near the elevator	Marshall (1989), Shoemaker (1984)	Focus groups
7	A glass of water with the meals		Cross country tours, Wubben travel
8	Well lit public areas	Marshall (1989), Murray and Sproats (1990), Lightle (1991), McCleary and others (1993), Ananth and others (1992), Saleh and Ryan (1992)	
9	A choice between standard and smaller portions on the menu	Browne (1984), Ananth and others (1992)	Cross country tours
10	Comfortable chairs in the hotel room	Gustin and Weaver (1993)	
11	A non slip bathroom floor	Marshall (1989); Murray and Sproats (1990),	Ambassador travel, Cross Country Tours, Sebel, HCIMA Technical brief.
12	Lever action mixing taps in the bathroom		Industry specialist, HCIMA Technical brief.

Item no	Item selected for research instrument	Source: literature	Other sources
13	Rooms for non-smokers	McCleary and others (1993), McCleary and others (1994), Gustin and Weaver (1993), Ananth and others(1992), Greathouse and others (1992)	Focus groups, Wubben Travel
14	Level thresholds in all public areas	Marshall (1989), Lightle (1991), McCleary and others (1993)	Industry specialist, Focus groups, HCIMA Technical brief.
15	Dietary menus (i.e. Low salt, low cholesterol)	Browne (1984), Watkins (1990), Metz, (1990), Ananth and others(1992).	Focus groups
16	Pull down seats in shower	Lightle (1991)	
17	Illuminated light switches	Marshall (1989), Murray and Sproats (1990),	Cross Country Tours, HCIMA Technical brief.
18	Alarm indicator lamp as well as a sound alarm	Lightle (1991), Murray and Sproats (1990),	HCIMA Technical brief.
19	Golf carts for internal transport of guests in large hotel properties	Marshall (1989)	
20	Guest information in large print	Marshall (1989), Murray and Sproats (1990), Ananth and others(1992)	Focus groups, HCIMA Technical brief.
21	A double washbasin in the bathroom		Industry specialist
22	An amplifier on the telephone	Murray and Sproats (1990), Lightle (1991)	HCIMA Technical brief.
23	A magnifying mirror in the hotel room	Marshall (1989)	
24	A shower entry without raised edge for easy access	Marshall (1989), Lightle (1991)	Cross Country Tours, Sebel, HCIMA Technical brief.
25	A spacious bathroom	Lightle (1991)	Ambassador travel
26	Good, bright light in the bed side lamps	Marshall (1989), Wagner (1990), Murray and Sproats (1990), McCleary and others (1994), Gustin and Weaver (1993)	HCIMA Technical brief.
27	Firm mattresses	Wagner (1990), McCleary and others (1994), Weaver (1991), Ananth and others(1992), Saleh and Ryan (1992)	Focus groups
28	An alarm system in the hotel room and bathroom	Murray and Sproats (1990), Ananth and others(1992)	Industry specialist, HCIMA Technical brief.

Item no	Item selected for research instrument	Source: literature	Other sources
29	An emergency phone in the elevator		Focus groups
30	Seats in the elevator lobby	Marshall (1989)	
31	Breakfast room service	Gustin and Weaver (1993), Saleh and Ryan (1992), Greathouse and others (1992), Ananth and others(1992), Knutson (1988)	Cross Country tours
32	Complimentary newspaper delivered to the room	Wagner (1990), McCleary and others (1994), Weaver (1991), Gustin and Weaver (1993), Ananth and others(1992)	Cross Country tours
33	Large size beds in the hotel room	Ananth and others(1992)	Cross Country tours
34	Credit card pay facilities		Focus groups
35	Low carpet for easy walking in the hotel room	Lightle (1991), Ananth and others(1992)	
36	Breakfast included in the room price	McCleary and others (1993), Weaver (1991), Gustin and Weaver (1993), Ananth and others(1992), Knutson (1988), Watkins (1990)	Ambassador travel
37	A coffee shop in the hotel	Ananth and others(1992)	
38	A coin laundry	Lutz and Ryan (1993), Knutson (1988)	Focus groups
39	A swimming pool	Weaver (1991), Lewis (1984), Gustin and Weaver (1993), Ananth and others(1992), Saleh and Ryan (1992)	Ambassador travel, Cross Country Tours
40	Anti slip mats or strips in the bathtub	Marshall (1989), Murray and Sproats (1990)	Ambassador travel, Senior travel, Sebel, HCIMA Technical brief.
41	In-room temperature control mechanism	Ananth and others(1992)	Cross Country tours,
42	Easily manoeuvrable door handles	Ananth and others(1992),	Industry specialist
43	A recreation room in the hotel	Ananth and others(1992), Shoemaker (1984)	Focus groups
44	Extra security locks on doors and windows	Browne (1984), Lutz and Ryan (1993)	Cross Country Tours, Industry specialist

**Table 4.2: Opinions on hotel attributes included in the research instrument and their sources.**

Item no	Item selected for research instrument	Source: literature	Other sources
45	Treated with respect	Lewis (1984), Murray and Sproats (1990)	Cross Country Tours, Focus groups
46	Shower over bath is dangerous	Marshall (1989)	Industry specialist, Focus groups, Sebel.
47	Special menus for mature guests	Watkins (1990), Metz (1990), Ananth and others(1992)	Cross Country tours
48	Prefer to stay in non smoking room	Ananth and others(1992)	Senior travel, Focus groups
49	Elevator doors close to quick		Focus groups
50	Like staying with young families		Focus groups, Cross Country Tours.
51	Turn down service adds extra unnecessary costs	Knutson (1988), Wagner (1990),	Ambassador travel, Cross Country Tours.
52	Sauna/health facilities important	Lewis (1984), Ananth and others(1992), Knutson (1988)	
53	Use shower more than bath	Marshall (1989), Lightle (1991)	Industry specialist, Focus groups, Sebel, Holiday Inn Corporation
54	Room keys are difficult to turn		Industry specialist, Focus groups
55	Guests should be asked if they want non smoking room	Ananth and others(1992)	Focus groups
56	Soft floor light for going to bathroom	Marshall (1989), Ananth and others(1992)	Cross country tours
57	Room easily accessible	Marshall (1989), Ananth and others(1992), Lightle (1991), Knutson (1988)	Cross Country Tours, Focus groups, HCIMA Technical brief.
58	Free guest accessories appreciated	Knutson (1988), Gustin and Weaver (1993), Lewis (1984), Wagner (1990).	Ambassador travel, Focus groups
59	Prices should be clearly stated		Focus groups
60	Room amenities should be explained	Trice (1984)	Focus groups
61	Outside noises enter rooms	Lightle (1991), Cadotte and Turgeon (1988), Ananth and others (1992)	Cross Country Tours, Focus groups
62	Continental quilt preferred to blankets		Focus groups

Item no	Item selected for research instrument	Source: literature	Other sources
63	Luxury is important	Ananth and others (1992)	Ambassador travel, Cross Country Tours
64	Entertainment information accessible	Greathouse and others (1992)	Focus groups
65	New technology difficult to understand and use		Focus groups, Motel Design Consultants
66	Hotels should be rated for mature guests		Focus groups, Cross Country Tours
67	Luggage should be delivered to room	Ananth and others (1992), Greathouse and others (1992)	Industry specialist, Focus groups
68	Favour smorgasbord breakfast		Focus groups

To add to the development of a profile of mature domestic travellers, questions were included in section five of the questionnaire. These were selected on the basis of the literature reviewed in chapters two and three. The literature review indicated the demographic variables age, gender and marital status to predict guest expectations (Lewis, 1984). Other demographic variables such as occupation, income and employment status have been speculated about.

In the previous section the variables needed to satisfy the first two objectives were listed, in the next section the approach to find an underlying structure to the attributes and opinions is discussed.

### 4.3 'Ageing' characteristics of hotel attributes.

Travellers select hotels based on the perception of each of their choices along a set of particular dimensions or product characteristics (Lewis, 1983). Most researchers studying hotel attributes use factor analysis to reduce attributes into a more manageable number of surrogate variables or dimensions. Instead of using a quantitative method to find those dimensions, it was considered opportune in this study, for reasons discussed before, to examine the 'ageing related' characteristics of the attributes and opinions and group them into bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions. This was done at the discretion of the author but validated by Seedsman (1997) whereby it was recognised that some of the

attributes and opinions could have been included in both dimensions. Carstens (1993) developed a checklist of physiological changes with age and their implications on design. From this list the descriptions for the reasons why the attributes and opinions are included in the research instrument are taken. These reasons include sensory clues and cognitive function, muscular system, agility, strength and stamina, health and dietary needs, environmental negotiability, desire for independence, safety and security, service expectation and interaction with others. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 list those dimensions and include the reasons why the attributes and opinions were included.

**Table 4.3: Bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions of expectations towards hotel attributes.**

	Attributes, question 10	Dimension A	Reason / concerns
2	Built-in lights in closets in the hotel room	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, vision
3	Pull down seats in elevator	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
4	A set of extra pillows available in hotel room	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, tactile
5	A safety bar or wall mounted support handles in the bathroom	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
7	A glass of water with the meals	Bio-physical	Health, dietary needs
12	Lever action mixing taps in the bathroom	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
13	Rooms for non-smokers	Bio-physical	Health, susceptibility to disease
14	Level thresholds in all public areas	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
15	Dietary menus (i.e. Low salt, low cholesterol)	Bio-physical	Health, dietary needs
16	Pull down seats in shower	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
17	Illuminated light switches	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, vision
18	Alarm indicator lamp as well as a sound alarm	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, vision, hearing
19	Golf carts for internal transport of guests in large hotel properties	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
21	A double washbasin in the bathroom	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability

	Attributes, question 10	Dimension A	Reason / concerns
22	An amplifier on the telephone	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, hearing
23	A magnifying mirror in the hotel room	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, vision
24	A shower entry without raised edge for easy access	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
25	A spacious bathroom	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
26	Good, bright light in the bed side lamps	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, vision
27	Firm mattresses	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, tactile
30	Seats in the elevator lobby	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
35	Low carpet for easy walking in the hotel room	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
40	Anti slip mats or strips in the bathtub	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
41	In-room temperature control mechanism	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, temperature adaptation
42	Easily manoeuvrable door handles	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina

Dimension B			
1	Tea and coffee making facilities in the hotel room	Psycho-social	Desire for independence
6	A hotel room near the elevator	Psycho-social	Safety and security
8	Well lit public areas	Psycho-social	Safety and security
9	A choice between standard and smaller food portions	Psycho-social	Desire for independence
10	Comfortable chairs in the hotel room	Psycho-social	Service expectation
11	A non slip bathroom floor	Psycho-social	Safety and security
20	Guest information in large print	Psycho-social	Desire for independence
28	An alarm system in the hotel room and bathroom	Psycho-social	Safety and security
29	An emergency phone in the elevator	Psycho-social	Safety and security
31	Breakfast room service	Psycho-social	Service expectation
32	Complimentary newspaper delivered to the room	Psycho-social	Service expectation
33	Large size beds in the hotel room	Psycho-social	Service expectation
34	Credit card pay facilities	Psycho-social	Service expectation
36	Breakfast included in the room price	Psycho-social	Service expectation
37	A coffee shop in the hotel	Psycho-social	Interaction with others
38	A coin laundry	Psycho-social	Desire for independence
39	A swimming pool	Psycho-social	Interaction with others
43	A recreation room in the hotel	Psycho-social	Interaction with others
44	Extra security locks on doors and windows	Psycho-social	Safety and security

Table 4.4: Bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions of opinions towards hotel attributes.

OPINIONS, question 11		Dimension A	
46	Shower over bath is dangerous	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
48	Prefer to stay in non smoking room	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, olfactory
49	Elevator doors close too quickly	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
52	Sauna/health facilities important	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
53	Use shower more than bath	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
54	Room keys are difficult to turn	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
56	Soft floor light for going to bathroom	Bio-physical	Environmental negotiability
57	Room easily accessible	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina
62	Continental quilt preferred to blankets	Bio-physical	Cognitive function, sensory clues, tactile
67	Luggage should be delivered to room	Bio-physical	Muscular system, agility, strength, stamina

Dimension B			
45	Treated with respect	Psycho-social	Interaction with others
47	Special menus for mature guests	Psycho-social	Service expectation
50	Like staying with young families	Psycho-social	Interaction with others
51	Turn down service adds extra unnecessary costs	Psycho-social	Service expectation
55	Guests should be asked if they want non smoking room	Psycho-social	Service expectation
58	Free guest accessories appreciated	Psycho-social	Service expectation
59	Prices should be clearly stated	Psycho-social	Relationship to environment
60	Room amenities should be explained	Psycho-social	Relationship to environment
61	Outside noises enter rooms	Psycho-social	Relationship to environment
63	Luxury is important	Psycho-social	Service expectation
64	Entertainment information accessible	Psycho-social	Relationship to environment
65	New technology difficult to understand and use	Psycho-social	Relationship to environment
66	Hotels should be rated for mature guests	Psycho-social	Interaction with others
68	Favour smorgasbord breakfast	Psycho-social	Interaction with others

In the previous section the selection procedures of the variables required to satisfy the study objectives have been clarified. The survey technique and the selection of the research instrument will be discussed hereafter.

#### 4.4 Research design

A descriptive research design through the implementation of a survey technique was chosen as the most appropriate way to describe the mature traveller and the related expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes. Zikmund (1988) states that the selection of the most appropriate techniques to use depends on the

objectives of the study, the available data sources, the cost of obtaining the data and the urgency of the decision. To obtain the data for this study, three major methods of collecting data and communicating with respondents were assessed: personal or face to face interviews, telephone interviews, and the mail or self-administered questionnaires (Zikmund, 1988).

Because of the widely dispersed nature of the population, it was not feasible to do personal or face-to-face interviews. For reasons discussed later in the chapter, the consumer panel of the National Seniors Association was selected as an existing sample frame that could be regarded as representative of the population being studied. The National Seniors Association insisted on the confidentiality of the database of their consumer panel and no information was made available that would allow telephone interviews with the members of the panel. However, using a mail questionnaire was considered an appropriate tool. Other studies on travel behaviour and hotel attributes had successfully used mail questionnaires (Lee and Lambert, 1984; Lewis, 1984 and 1985; Riley & Perogiannis, 1990; Knutson, 1988; Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988; Greathouse and others, 1992; Clow and others, 1994).

The following advantages of a mail questionnaire were considered relevant to this study: their relative low cost, their ability to allow for large numbers of respondents to be surveyed in a relatively short period; the ability to allow respondents to take their time in answering and look up information if required; the privacy in responding; the fact that visual input, rather than merely auditory input, was possible; the opportunity for the respondents to answer questions at times that were convenient; and the fact that the respondents were able to see the context of a series of questions (Mangione, 1995).

Aaker and Day (1980) confirm the benefits of this approach and state that there is consistent evidence that mail surveys yield more accurate results because they are answered at the respondent's discretion and replies are likely to be more thoughtful. The effectiveness of mail questionnaires lies in the efficiency of the written communication, rather than that of the personal interview (Zikmund,

1988). According to Dillman (1978), a mail questionnaire requires more careful construction than does any other type of questionnaire, because, once received, it becomes the respondent's complete responsibility.

Mail questionnaires have the problem of non-response error (Kinnear and Taylor, 1991). Non-response errors occur when the final sample differs in a systematic way from the planned sample. Mail questionnaires normally have a low response rate. This does not necessarily lead to non-response error. Where respondents tend to be those who do have a lot of time to complete a questionnaire, a non-response error is evident and could make the study's inferences erroneous (Parasuraman, 1986). Zikmund (1988) suggests that, in order to identify the extent of non-response error, researchers should select a sample of non-respondents who are then re-contacted. Because of the confidentiality agreement with the National Seniors Association this option was not possible with this study. Another limitation of using a mail questionnaire was that the order and content of the questions are exposed to the respondent in total before the respondent commences answering the questions. This does not allow the funnelling of questions from general to specific, a procedure that is often beneficial in personal-interviews or telephone surveys (Aaker and Day, 1980).

For the above reasons, the mail questionnaire was seen as the most suitable tool to collect the primary data for this study.

#### **4.5 Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire (appendix 1) was designed to enable the generation of data that could potentially enhance our understanding of the mature traveller. This would help to satisfy one of the study objectives, namely to identify and measure the attributes and opinions that mature travellers expect when selecting a hotel. Parasuraman (1986, p. 371) states that

...how a questionnaire looks and how questions are laid out within it can influence the degree of respondent co-operation, as well as the

quality of the data collected. Appearance and layout are especially critical in mail surveys, because the questionnaire has to sell itself...

Special attention was given to the structure of the questions. It was decided that this should be clear and straightforward. Respondents were given instructional messages to facilitate compliance with the intention of the various questions. The aesthetics of the research tool were designed to maximise the response rate, with a view to allowing the questionnaire to look important and professional in appearance. The layout of the pages was balanced to avoid a cramped look. It was further considered important to use a font that was clear and easy to read. The font size that was selected was large enough to be read easily and printed in black and white to provide the greatest contrast, important features for the design of questionnaires for older consumers (Gruca and Schewe, 1992). The questionnaire was printed back to back to reduce the perception of size, with the intention of improving the response rate. Printing back to back could also reduce the quantity of paper and therefore the cost of postage. The structured questionnaire was a six page self-administered instrument consisting of seven sections.

With the exception of two questions (regarding the occupation of the respondent and the postcode), all questions were closed-ended, requiring a choice from a number of given alternatives. The first section contained a screening question to ensure that all respondents met the set criterion of having recently used hotel accommodation. The second section identified travel behaviour, including travel frequency, accommodation preferences, booking arrangements, length of stay and mode of transport. The third section probed the attitude of the sample on thirteen reasons for travel. The fourth section examined the attitude of the sample towards forty-four hotel attributes. In section five, the respondents were asked to give their opinion on twenty-four statements about hotel services. An attitude is usually viewed as an enduring disposition to respond consistently in a given manner to various aspects of the world, including persons, events and objects (Zikmund, 1988). To measure attitudes, a variety of techniques can be used. The summated ratings method, (or Likert scale) is extremely popular for measuring

attitudes. It is simple to administer (Zikmund, 1988). It is a technique that assumes interval qualities, thereby allowing for parametric statistical analysis. The Likert method allows for the examination and exploration of people's expectations of attributes and opinions. The resulting ratings estimate the magnitude and not the ranking of the attitude characteristics.

Likert scales consist of a series of evaluative statements concerning an attitude object. Parasuraman, (1986) states that each statement has a five point agree-disagree scale. However, some Likert scales have ranges varying from six to ten. An uneven numerical scale has a neutral centre point which does not force the respondent to give a positive or negative answer. For exploratory research, a neutral opinion is acceptable. Regarding the number of positions on the scale, Zikmund (1988, p. 370) suggests that 'the researcher must determine the number of meaningful positions that is best for the specific project.'

The researcher is expected to identify how many meaningful distributions respondents can practically make. For the sample frame used in this study, the five point scale was seen as the least complex tool in view of the type of respondents. The Likert scale was used to measure the responses of questions nine, ten and eleven.

Demographic data was included in section six. This arrangement allowed the more sensitive questions (such as age and income) to be answered at the end of the questionnaire. In the seventh and last section, the participants were invited to add any comments they wished to make which could help to better understand the mature traveller's attitudes towards accommodation attributes.

To reduce the consequences of the limitations that are inherent in mail questionnaires the following factors were seen as stimulants to response:

- The self selection of the sample group as volunteers of the consumer panel of the National Seniors Association;
- The research issues were topical and salient to the sample group;

- The care and attention which was placed on the clarity and design of the questionnaire; and
- The security the respondents received from the endorsement letter from the Chief Executive of the National Seniors Association (Appendix 2).

#### **4.5.1 Pre-testing of the questionnaire**

Parasuraman (1986) suggests that it is a worthwhile approach to first obtain feedback from expert respondents and then modify the draft questionnaire as necessary, before pre-testing it on a sample of survey respondents. The questionnaire was therefore first submitted to the scrutiny of a small group of expert respondents and industry representatives to establish face validity and content validity.

Following modifications, the questionnaire was further pre-tested to establish validity on the understanding of the respondents and to correct possible design and content errors on a convenience sample of 35 members of the Queensland Retirees and Superannuants League. This group was selected as it contained persons similar to respondents who would ultimately participate in the study (Parasuraman, 1986). The questionnaires were distributed with the conference papers during the Annual General Meeting of the group in North Queensland. A member of the Executive collected the completed questionnaires and returned them to the researcher.

An analysis of responses from the pilot study indicated that some questions were not clear to some participants and were re-phrased. The layout of the questionnaire was adapted to better suit the mature sample group. This involved changes in the type setting and the lay-out guiding the respondents with their reading. It was also found through this pilot study that the questionnaire could be completed within fifteen to twenty minutes, a time span considered acceptable. After the discussion of the research design, the collection of the data will be introduced in the next section.

## **4.6 Data collection**

### **4.6.1 Sample design**

To select a suitable sample frame to represent the Australian mature traveller, several possibilities were considered. These included:

- Actively seeking information from mature guests staying in hotels. To obtain a reasonable sample size this would require the co-operation of management and staff of many, randomly-selected hotel properties of different types and at many different locations.
- Approaching randomly selected travel agents, who specifically deal with the travel needs of mature guests, with the request to distribute the questionnaire to their customers. This approach would eliminate those who travel independently.
- Selecting a preferably national organisation, which has a membership as near as possible to the target population: the mature Australian domestic traveller.

Due to the cost involved in the execution of the first two possibilities, the last one was considered the best possible avenue for this study. The following organisations were approached and their membership assessed for their appropriateness for this study.

- The Superannuants and Retirees League, the same organisation which volunteered to take part in the pre-test procedure.
- The Queensland Council for the Ageing, which offered to include the questionnaire in one of their mailings.
- The National Seniors Association.

The first two organisations have a membership that could be considered as representing one or two cohorts of the mature segment of the mature Australian

population. The third organisation the National Seniors Association was selected as the organisation most suitable for this study, for the following reasons:

- At the time of the sampling, this association had a membership of over 30,000 and could be considered as one of the largest organisations for mature Australians.
- The organisation is recognised by governments as a major lobby group for mature Australians.
- Australian nationals and residents of fifty years and older and their partners are eligible for its membership.
- Residency and age are the only membership restrictions.
- The yearly membership fee is \$12 (which includes a monthly magazine and a wide range of discounts on special services). This cost was not considered so high as to eliminate large groups of mature Australians as possible members.
- For the purpose of this study, it was considered that possible differences between the members and those who chose not to join the Association were not essential.

It must, however, be recognised that a 'gap' may exist between the actual population of the Australian mature traveller and the sample frame used. The membership of the National Seniors Association is distributed mainly over the East coast of Australia, with a concentration in South-East Queensland. To generalise these findings to the wider population of mature travellers is not possible scientifically, but probable. The National Seniors Association has a consumer panel and as the Association supported the research, it made this panel available as the sample for this study. The panel was established specifically to assist the Association with its research on goods and services. All 30,000 members received letters inviting the main decision-maker of the household to join this panel. Of the membership 585 persons volunteered. Sudman (1976)

states that a typical sample size of individuals, when no subgroups are required, is between 200 and 500. The consumer panel (585) of the National Seniors Association adequately satisfied this requirement. The sample size satisfies the rule of thumb: item to case ratio 1:5. For previously mentioned reasons, the panel was judged as the nearest possible representation of the mature Australian.

#### **4.6.2 Non-response rate**

Dillman (1978) suggests that mail questionnaires rarely have response rates of over fifty percent. Erdos, on the other hand, a noted authority on mail surveys as cited in Zikmund (1988, p. 173) states that

...no mail survey can be considered reliable unless it has a minimum of 50% response, or unless it demonstrates with some form of verification that the non respondents are similar to the respondents...

In a mail survey, it is never really known whether a non respondent has refused to participate or is just indifferent (Zikmund, 1988). Not all the units of the planned sample returned the questionnaire. This could be for reasons such as:

- Respondent refusal. Respondents could have felt that the questionnaire was not applicable to them, for instance, because when they travel they do not stay in hotels.
- Not at home. Respondents did not receive the questionnaire due to absence.

To increase the response rate, Zikmund (1988) proposes a variety of techniques such as a cover letter, monetary incentives, follow-ups, survey sponsorships and the use of 'reply paid' envelopes.

The first and last two techniques were used for this study to stimulate responses. When asked, the participants of the focus groups considered monetary incentives as inappropriate and were therefore not used. A personalised follow-up letter was not possible, as this would not comply with the confidentiality clause of the National Seniors Association, which did not allow numbering of the questionnaires

#### **4.7 Data preparation**

Because a researcher has less control over the data collection once the questionnaire is mailed out, the role that editing can play in improving data quality is much more restricted in mail surveys than in other type of surveys (Parasuraman, 1986).

The returned questionnaires were edited. Incomplete questionnaires were eliminated, as were questionnaires in which respondents misunderstood the answering procedure (eg. where only one out of forty-four Likert scale items was answered or where all questions were answered with 'very important'). Some of the editing functions were carried out simultaneously with the coding of the information.

To allow the interpreting, classifying and recording of data, the information obtained from the questionnaires was coded by assigning numerical symbols to each answer. In order to avoid confusing the respondents, the questionnaire was not pre-coded before the data collection. Of the ninety-six possible responses on each questionnaire, ninety-four were coded numerically, the two open-ended questions were related to the respondents' occupation and the post code. Missing entries were given a coding '9'. The data was then transferred to a data set, suitable for analysis. The coding and input procedure was checked by a third person for correctness by selecting each fortieth questionnaire and comparing the information of the questionnaire with the data file for input correctness.

The data was analysed using the program 'Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS), version 6.0, a widely used computer software package for statistical analysis and data management of large data sets. Frequencies and cross-tabulations were performed on the data. The data was further subjected to factor analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and cluster analysis.

Frequency analysis allows data to be examined in a condensed form. For each variable or question asked, frequency analysis consolidates responses, indicates the number and percentage of persons who responded in a given manner or did not respond at all. It supplies the mean, median, mode, standard error and variance for testing (Lewis, 1984).

Cross tabulation is a method of compiling the joined frequencies of two or more variables, based on certain common characteristics. The variables are divided into subgroups to reveal how a variable's value changes from one subgroup to another, thereby allowing the study of the relationship among variables. Cross tabulation also provides tests of significance that measure whether a systematic relationship exists between two variables. Ordinal and nominal data can be analysed in this way. Cross tabulation describes undimensional influences and relationships, it does not give any insight on interactive effects (Lewis, 1984).

Factor analysis was used to reduce dimensions for the reasons for travel. The general purpose of factor analysis is to summarise the information contained in a large number of variables into a smaller number of factors or dimensions (Zikmund, 1988). The procedure attempts to retain as much of the information as possible and to make the remaining variables as meaningful and as easy to work with as possible (Aaker and Day, 1980).

To assess the reliability of the items within a factor, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is the most commonly used method. This is based on the average correlation of items within a test if the items are standardised (Coakes and Steed, 1996). The analysis was applied to the factors for reasons for travel.

Cluster analysis was used to identify people (or objects) that form natural groupings or clusters, e.g. which have similar characteristics. The purpose of cluster analysis is to classify individuals or objects into a small number of mutually exclusive and exhaustive groups (Zikmund, 1988). In other words: the analysis minimises variations within clusters at the same time that it maximises between clusters (Lewis, 1985). Cluster analysis was applied on the demographic properties of the respondents.

To compare the means of more than two groups or populations, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is considered the appropriate statistical tool. It seeks to establish whether observed differences among data sets are statistically significant or could have been a product of chance (Lewis, 1984). It is called 'one way' because there is only one independent variable, even though there may be several

levels of that variable (Zikmund, 1988). This technique was applied in this study on the demographic clusters of frequent travellers as grouping variables and the factors of the reasons for travel as dependent variables as well as on the demographic clusters of frequent travellers as grouping variables and the bio-physical and psycho-social hotel attributes and opinions as dependent variables.

#### **4.8 Summary**

This chapter has outlined the methodology used in the study. The first stage consisted of further exploratory research in the form of in-depth interviews with industry professionals, followed by a series of focus group discussions with mature Australian travellers that allowed for the classification of the selected hotel attributes.

Then the survey technique and the design of the questionnaire were introduced. In the third section, the collection procedure to obtain the data for the study was explained. The sampling strategy that was used was based on a sampling frame consisting of the consumer panel of the National Seniors Association. Screening questions eliminated respondents who did not conform to the definition of mature domestic leisure traveller. The analytical techniques used have been explained in some detail and the limitations of the study were outlined. The next chapter contains the results of the statistical analyses and the discussion of the results

# CHAPTER FIVE

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research methodology and design for the study was presented. In this chapter, the data is analysed, incorporating the statistical techniques that were used for testing using the SPSS PC for Windows software package. The results are presented in four sections, conforming to the objectives of the study. Firstly, the respondents are analysed in terms of response rates and sample characteristics with a view to developing a profile of the two mature traveller groups: the non frequent traveller and the frequent traveller. Secondly, clusters of the frequent traveller group are further analysed. Thirdly, the hotel attributes are analysed with respect to what was expected by the clusters of mature travellers and their opinions. Fourthly, the underlying structure of these attributes and opinions are introduced. The findings are discussed and where appropriate, the discussion is supported by qualitative statements provided by respondents to the questionnaires.

### 5.2 Response rate

The study surveyed five hundred and eighty five (585) mature Australian consumers who were sent questionnaires to determine their reasons for travel, their travel behaviour and their expectations of hotel attributes. Fifteen questionnaires were returned as not deliverable, reducing the planned sample to 570. A total of 360 responses were received within fifteen working days of the mailing, another thirty-three responses were received after fifteen days but within twenty days. This resulted in a high response rate of sixty-nine percent. This is an indication that the issues used in the questionnaire were salient to the respondents.

**Table 5.1: Breakdown of returned questionnaires.**

Questionnaires returned	Number	%
Within five working days after mailing:	139	24.4
Within the next five working days:	181	31.8
Within the next ten working days:	40	7
After fifteen working days:	33	5.8

Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

One hundred and ninety one respondents (48.6 percent) reacted positively to the invitation to provide qualitative information. They supplied additional statements related to the research (appendix 3). A total of 152 respondents (38.6 percent) indicated interest in the results of the research. Eighty questionnaires with large numbers of missing entries were excluded from the sample, resulting in a useable sample of 313 respondents or 53.5 percent. In contrast, a study by Weaver (1993) resulted in a useable response rate of only 11.7 percent, McCleary (1993) obtained a useable response rate of 13.6 percent and Shoemaker (1989) an even lower rate of 9.34 percent response rate. Thus, in comparison with these previous studies, the response rate achieved in this study was very favourable. The objectives of the study were of interest to the respondents, as is shown by the following reactions.

*'I took great interest in your questionnaire...as quite a number of questions are just what I look for when travelling.'*

Receptionist

*'You summed it up rather well'*

Nurse

*'I realise that many of the issues mentioned which are at present unnecessary, will no doubt become essential in later and more infirm years'*

Journalist

*'I have not as yet experienced the need for 'mature' extras but would appreciate some 'extras as the time goes by'*

Grazier

It was concluded that the healthy response rate of 53.5% reduced the non-response bias significantly

### **5.3 Developing a profile of the mature Australian domestic leisure traveller.**

The first objective of the study was to develop a profile of the mature Australian domestic leisure traveller. As mentioned before, in the hospitality industry, demographic variables are frequently used to define market segments (Lewis, 1984). The respondents were asked to complete six questions relating to the demographics. To develop a profile of the mature Australian domestic leisure traveller, the questions relating to demographic properties, 'travel behaviour' and 'travel reasons' of the respondents were analysed, using the following techniques.

**5.3.1 Comparison between non-frequent and frequent travellers.**

Laforge (1984) developed a profile of elderly recreational travellers, grouping her sample into frequent and non-frequent travellers. One of her findings suggested that frequent travellers are more active than non-frequent travellers.

This was considered of interest to this study: to identify whether there is a difference between the travel behaviour and the reasons for travel of frequent and non-frequent travellers. It was also reasoned that frequent travellers would be better placed to provide valid responses on questions related to hotel attributes. A filter was introduced, which had the effect of separating the sample into two groups: the non-frequent (N=152) and frequent (N=161) travellers.

As a reference for the reader, Chi-square values are reported where appropriate, be it significant or insignificant. The P-values are listed to give the reader an indication about the extend of dependence between the two variables in a table. The results of the Chi-square tests that are reported in the tables which follow later in this chapter show that the frequency of travel is not significantly related to gender, employment, hotel location, type of transport and length of stay. It is however significant in the cases of family situation, class of hotel, type of traveller and the booking method. The details are discussed in the following section and the findings are listed in tabular form.

A frequency analysis of the demographic data of both groups was carried out to select two cohorts of respondents: those of fifty to sixty-four years of age and those sixty-five years of age and older. The results are listed in the following tables.

**Table 5.2: Age characteristics of the two traveller groups\*.**

	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGE						
50-54 years	10.5			11.8		
55-59 years	10.5		46.7	22.4		62.1
60-64 years	25.7			28		
65-69 years		25.7			22.4	
70-74 years		15.1	53.3		11.8	37.9
75 years and over		12.5			3.7	
TOTAL			100.0			100.0

Chi-square = 15.39.(age and travel frequency) , d.f.= 5 , p- value = .008

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project

The results in table 5.2 show that there is a significant difference between age characteristics and travel frequency. The age distribution of the respondents varied between the two groups and between some of the cohorts of the groups. The non-frequent traveller group is considerably older than the frequent traveller group. This was expected as leisure travel decreases with increasing age. Marital status, employment and income however may also have an important effect on the frequency of travel. In both groups, the sixty - sixty-four and the sixty-five – sixty-nine cohorts were best represented with just over 50% of the sample. Only 3.7% of the frequent traveller group consisted of respondents of seventy-five years and over.

**Table 5.3: Gender characteristics of the two traveller groups\*.**

	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
GENDER 160	%	%	%	%	%	%
Female	69	70.4	69.7	70.7	50.8	63
Male	31	29.6	30.3	29.3	49.2	37
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 1.53 (gender and travel frequency), d.f.= 1, p-value = .217

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The results in table 5.3 show that there is no significant difference between gender and travel frequency. The ratio between female and male respondents differs for both groups. An interesting finding is that whilst the younger cohort for both groups has an almost identical gender distribution, the older cohort shows a much larger number of male respondents in the frequent traveller group. The balance of both total ratios suggests that the sample had an over-representation of female respondents. Despite the slight gender bias of the sample, it was considered that the sample size was large enough to permit a meaningful comparison between the genders.

**Table 5.4: Marital status characteristics of the two traveller groups\*.**

	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Single	38.6	51.3	45.3	26	47.5	34.2
Couple	61.4	48.7	54.7	74	52.5	65.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 3.99 (marital status and travel frequency), d.f.= 1 , p-value = .046

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The results of table 5.4 show that there is a significant difference between the marital status of travellers and travel frequency. Respondents who travelled as couples represented slightly over half (54.7%) of the non frequent traveller group and two-thirds (65.8%) of the frequent traveller group of the sample. This could be construed as marital status having a positive influence on travelling. With ageing, a notable though expected change can be observed; the older cohorts have an increased number of single female travellers in their midst. Being alone at an older age often goes together with loneliness and the feeling of: 'I am not counting anymore' (Oorthuys, 1992). This creates special opportunities for hotels: those which can supply a product that recognises the single female traveller can expect to benefit.

**Table 5.5: Employment status characteristics of the two traveller groups\*.**

	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Full-time or part-time employed	43.7	1.2	21.1	38	9.8	27.3
Not employed (eg retired, pensioner)	56.3	98.8	78.9	62	90.2	72.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 1.68 (employment status and travel frequency), d.f.= 1 , p-value = .196

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The results shown in the above table show that there is no significant difference between employment status and travel frequency. It is to be expected that most respondents of the older cohort had left the workforce, however it is interesting to

note the relatively low level of employment amongst the younger cohort. The frequent traveller group tends to be long-term employed. This suggests that employment has some influence on the frequency of travel.

**Table 5.6: Income characteristics of the two traveller groups\*.**

	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	65+	50 – 64	Total	65 +	50-64	Total
<b>INCOME</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%
< \$ 10,000	7.2	16.5	12.2	4.2	11.9	7.1
\$ 10,001 – 20,000	37.7	50.6	44.6	32.6	40.6	31.2
\$ 20,001 – 30,000	31.9	17.7	24.3	12.6	32.1	20.1
\$ 30,001 – 40,000	13.0	11.4	12.2	18.9	11.9	16.2
\$ 40,001 – 50,000	4.3		2.0	10.5	8.5	9.7
\$ 50,001 – 60,000	2.9	1.3	2.0	8.5	3.4	6.5
\$ 60,001 and above	2.9	2.5	2.7	11.6	5.1	9.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Blazey (1987) found ‘having not enough money’ the most important constraint to participating in senior travel programs. The findings of this study suggest the same: that income could be a real constraint to travel. Of the non-frequent traveller, 81.1 percent had a family income less than \$30,000 as opposed to 58.4% of the frequent traveller. Whilst only 6.7% of the non-frequent travellers professed to having an income of over \$40,000, the frequent traveller group had more than 25% of the survey respondents in this income bracket.

To add to the profile of the Australian domestic leisure traveller, the respondents were asked to complete seven questions related to their travel behaviour and one question on their reasons for travel. For the first group of questions, the data was collected on an itemised rating scale, whilst for the ‘travel reasons’ question, an interval scale was used.

The respondents were asked for the preferred location of their travel accommodation. The following findings were obtained.

**Table 5.7: Travel behaviour of two traveller groups: location of accommodation\*.**

LOCATION OF ACCOMMODATION	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
City centre	39.7	53.1	46.9	40.2	42.1	40.9
Suburban	23.5	20.3	21.8	23.7	17.5	21.4
Near highway	19.1	21.5	20.4	30.9	31.6	31.2
Near airport	1.5	1.3	1.4		3.5	1.3
Remote location	16.2	3.8	9.5	5.2	5.3	5.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Chi-square = 5.92 (location of accommodation and travel behaviour), d.f.= 4 , p-value =.205

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

There is no significant difference between mature travellers' choice of location of accommodation and the frequency of travel (Table 5.7). In terms of location, the 'city centre' hotel is the most popular amongst all respondents. The older group of the non-frequent traveller tends to select this type of property more than any of the others. This could be related to the greater dependence of the latter group on coach travel than any of the other groups (Table 5.11) and also to the fact that they tend to travel in groups. Highway locations are much more popular with the frequent traveller group, which is understandable when this is related to their independency and the predominant transport mode. The 'suburban' location diminishes in importance for both groups when people become older in age. 'Remote' and 'airport' locations are not popular, though it is interesting to note that a proportion of the younger cohort of the non-frequent traveller group seems to select 'remote' as the location of their stay.

The next question was intended to identify the class of accommodation as preferred by respondents.

**Table 5.8: Travel behaviour of two traveller groups: class of accommodation.\***

CLASS OF ACCOMMODATION	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Budget or economy class	55.7	33.4	43.9	31	15.0	25.0
Mid price range	42.9	62.8	53.4	58	83.3	67.5
Luxury	1.4	3.8	2.7	11	1.7	7.5
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 14.003 (class of accommodation and travel frequency), d.f.= 2 , p-value = .0009

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The results in table 5.8 show that there is a significant difference between class of accommodation and the frequency of travel. Taking the 'bargain hunter' characteristics of mature travellers and the income of respondents into consideration, it is not surprising that 97.3 percent of the non frequent travellers and 92.5 percent of the frequent travellers select 'mid-price' or 'budget' accommodation for their leisure travel. This confirms findings by Ritchie (1989) and Badinelli and others (1991) that two to four star hotels are the most popular hotels for the mature traveller who expects value for money, together with respect and service.

There is, however, a notable difference between the non-frequent traveller and the frequent traveller group: the latter is more 'mid-price' orientated than the first, an issue which could be income related. It is interesting to note the move from 'budget' to 'mid-price' accommodation with increasing age for both the non-frequent traveller and the frequent traveller groups. This corresponds with an increase in the use of 'luxury accommodation' by the non-frequent traveller group (from 1.4% to 3.8%) but a decrease for the same cohort of the frequent traveller group (from 11% to 1.7%). The first could be explained by rare occasions that non-frequent travellers travel, leading to a desire by some to 'spoil' themselves, whilst the frequent traveller could become less luxury, but more comfort, orientated with age. McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) confirm this finding,

suggesting that for mature travellers comfort may be of importance as they desire the comforts associated with the status they have achieved.

To obtain a better picture of the travel behaviour of the respondents a question was inserted which was intended to show the relative importance of the individual and group traveller segments.

**Table 5.9: Travel behaviour of two traveller groups: type of traveller\*.**

TYPE OF TRAVELLER	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Group traveller	24.3	41.8	33.6	15	20	16.9
Independent traveller	74.3	58.2	65.7	84	75	80.6
Other	1.4		.7	1	5	2.5
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 12.53 (type of traveller and travel frequency), d.f.= 2 , p-value = .0019

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The findings listed in table 5.9 show that there is a significant difference between the group- or independent type of traveller and the frequency of travel. Most mature travellers travel independently. There are, however, interesting differences between the non-frequent traveller and the frequent traveller groups. Frequent travellers appear to be more independent and continue to travel on their own as they grow older. The non-frequent traveller, on the other hand, shows a notable change from independent to group traveller between the younger and older cohort. This could be explained that those who travel infrequently want to hand over a significant proportion of their travel planning and organisation to travel professionals so that they are able to maximise the enjoyment of their rare experience. They seek not only social comparison and companionship but also have a reduced need for exploration (McIntosh and Goeldner 1986). To add to the profile of the respondents a question of booking methods was inserted resulting in the following findings.

**Table 5.10: Travel behaviour of two traveller groups: booking method\*.**

BOOKING METHOD	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Myself or my companion	64.8	54.4	59.3	72	63.3	68.8
Travel agent, tour company	32.4	45.6	39.3	23	30.0	25.6
Other	2.8		1.4	5	6.7	5.6
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 12.66 (bookings method and travel frequency), d.f.= 2 , p-value = .027

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The results listed in table 5.10 show that there is a significant difference between the bookings methods and the frequency of travel. The non-frequent traveller group makes greater use of the travel agent or tour company. This could be explained by the fact that they are less experienced or less secure in handling their own booking needs. They expect that the travel agent or tour company which is making the reservation may be more knowledgeable about the hotel. In both groups, the usage of travel agents or tour companies increases with age. This was also the conclusion of Wheatcroft and Seekings (1992), who added that even seasoned travellers are likely to favour well designed package tours. The findings of Javalgi, Thomas and Rao (1992) also support these results. It is interesting to note that a remarkable proportion of the independent travellers still use travel agents or tour operators for their bookings. This could be explained by their preference for some guarantee of certainty about logistical concerns, such as accommodation bookings during travel. Some respondents stated 'other' as a response without any additional information. Transport is also an essential part of the travel experience, with type of transport used exerting an influence over the location of accommodation that is selected. A question was included to develop a profile of the type of transport used by the members of the different clusters.

**Table 5.11: Travel behaviour of two traveller groups: type of transport used\*.**

MAIN TYPE OF TRANSPORT USED	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65+	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Plane	25.4	21.0	23.0	19.2		23.1
Bus or coach	16.8	28.5	23.0	13.2	14.8	13.8
Private motor car	45.1	40.7	42.8	62.6	47.5	56.9
Rented or hire vehicle	8.5	1.2	4.6	2.0	1.6	1.9
Train	2.8	3.7	3.3	2.0	3.3	2.5
Ship, boat or ferry	1.4		.7	1.0		.6
Other		4.9	2.6		3.3	1.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 9.53 (types of transport used and frequency of travel), d.f.= 6 ,p-value = .146

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

No significant difference exists between the main type of transport used and the frequency of travel (table 5.11). With such a large proportion of the sample consisting of independent travellers in both groups, it is not surprising that so many use the private motor car as their main type of transport. McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) suggest that the mature traveller may prefer to travel in the family car as it is considered not only more comfortable but also an extension of one's own home and thus secure and familiar. The frequent traveller is a higher car user than the non-frequent traveller. For both groups, getting older appears to lead to a decrease in the use of the private motor vehicle. It is not surprising when considering the type of traveller and the bookings methods, that the non-frequent traveller tends to move towards a more intensive use of coach travel at the expense the private car or travelling by plane. The frequent traveller, on the other hand, moves towards using air travel when getting older. Though other modes of transport were not popular, two issues are worth mentioning. Firstly, the younger non-frequent traveller tends to use rental cars more than any other segment, secondly, there is a slight increase in the use of trains by the older cohorts of both groups. The findings are not compatible with those from the Environmetrics (1991) study which found that the majority of over 55's interviewed for their study saw coach tours as the ultimate, whether it be for a trip, holiday or break.

However, they are compatible with the findings of Javalgi and others (1992) who found identical patterns of transportation modes by older travellers. A minority of travellers used alternative modes of transport. The latter could include motorbike or horseback, both of which appear to be increasing in popularity with mature traveller groups.

The question on the frequency with which mature travellers stay in hotels was considered important. Firstly, there was a need to separate the non-frequent traveller from the frequent traveller, and secondly, a need for the assumed increased ability of the respondents to answer the statements on the expectations and opinions of hotel attributes in a better informed manner. The responses resulted in the following findings:

**Table 5.12: Travel behaviour of two traveller groups: frequency of staying in hotels\*.**

	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
FREQUENCY OF STAYING IN HOTELS	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
Less than once a year	41.1	51.9	46.7			
Once a year	58.9	48.1	53.3			
Twice a year				46	54.1	49.1
Three or more times a year				54	45.9	50.9
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

It is interesting to note the almost identical numbers of respondents for each of the four variables. Both groups (the non-frequent traveller and the frequent traveller) indicate that the frequency of staying in hotels is highest in the younger of the mature age group and declines with increasing age. This feature of the mature traveller market has great importance in forecasting future directions.

The findings discussed to date illustrate some interesting differences between the non-frequent travellers and the frequent traveller groups. The non-frequent traveller group has more older members and a high proportion of female members. More of them travel as singles, a larger proportion is not employed and most have

an income below \$30,000. The frequent traveller group, on the other hand, has more younger members, has fewer female members than the non-frequent traveller group and more travel with partners. Employment is also slightly higher in the latter group, which could relate to their higher incomes. Regarding their travel behaviour, the non-frequent travellers have a slightly higher preference for centre city hotels than the frequent travellers, with the latter using more suburban accommodation. Budget or economy hotels are markedly more popular with the non-frequent traveller group. The mid-price hotels are popular for both groups and luxury accommodation is used by only a small proportion of both groups. Travelling in groups is more popular with the non-frequent travellers, who also leave more of their bookings to others. Regarding transport for their travel, the private car is used most by both groups, travelling by plane is equally popular with both, however coach travel is more popular with the non-frequent traveller.

The question 'On average how long is your stay in a hotel' can help to illustrate the intensity of exposure by the frequent traveller to hotel attributes. This question produced the following results.

**Table 5.13: Travel behaviour of two traveller groups: average length of stay in hotels\*.**

	Non-frequent travellers			Frequent travellers		
	N = 152			N = 161		
	50-64	65+	Total	50 - 64	65 +	Total
<b>AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%
One night	40.6	21.3	30.2	31	19.7	26.7
More than one night but less than one week	47.9	67.4	58.4	61	63.9	62.1
One week and more	11.5	11.3	10.4	8	16.4	11.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 1.47 (average length of stay and frequency of travel), d.f.= 2 , p-value = 689

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The findings shown in table 5.13 show that there is no significant difference between the average length of stay and the frequency of travel. The results show that mature travellers tend to stay more than one night in hotels and, with the increase in age, travellers tend to stay in hotels for longer periods. These findings are applicable to both the non-frequent traveller and frequent traveller group and

conform with the findings of Brewer, Poffley and Pederson (1995). For the accommodation industry this is a positive development as the costs per night decrease with the length of stay.

The preceding section has provided a picture of the travel behaviour of the two groups of travellers: the non-frequent traveller and the frequent traveller. The findings indicated that there are notable differences between the travel behaviour of non-frequent traveller and frequent traveller. The findings suggested that frequency of travel can be related to the level of income, employment, age, gender and marital status. Income and employment has a notable effect on the travel behaviour of the non-frequent traveller. This group selects hotels in the budget or economy class, depends more on the travel agent or tour operator and is the highest user of coach travel. Frequent travellers as a group, on the other hand, had a higher income, were slightly more employed and tended to prefer mid-price hotels, stayed longer in hotels, travelled independently and used the private car as their main mode of transport.

It has been mentioned previously in this study that frequent travellers, because of their repeated exposure to hotel attributes, were considered as being better placed than non-frequent travellers to give their opinion on hotel attributes. It has been assumed that they would be more critical, due to their frequent experience and exposure to a range of hotel attributes. In the following section of the chapter the analysis of the travel reasons and the expectations and opinions of hotel attributes of the frequent travellers will be discussed and a more complete profile of this group will be developed.

#### **5.4 Travel behaviour and reasons for travel for groups of frequent travellers**

Earlier in this chapter, differences were found between the travel behaviour of frequent and non-frequent travellers. These differences were based on demographic and other characteristics. It was considered important to find if sub-groups exist within the frequent traveller group which show a different type of travel behaviour or reasons for travel. If the sub-groups were found to have

greatly different expectations of hotel attributes, the findings could then become the basis for possible niche markets. To classify the frequent traveller group into sub-groups, cluster analysis was used, for reasons discussed in the previous chapter. Cluster analysis was applied on selected demographic characteristics: 'age', 'gender' and 'marital status'. For the purpose of cluster analysis, the variables 'household income' and 'employment status' were considered less suitable. This is because respondents' answers to questions are often unclear on these issues and can result in potentially unreliable data. 'Age' was classified into two values: 'fifty to sixty-four years of age' and 'sixty-five plus', 'gender' was classified into two values: 'female' and 'male'. Marital status was classified as 'single' and 'married or partner'. Using the above mentioned variables with the K-means cluster analysis algorithm (SPSS for Windows), four clusters were chosen. This was determined after experimenting with two, three and five test groups, none of which was considered to be satisfactory. Four groups were found after three iterations. Table 5.14 shows the number of cases in each cluster and the values of each demographic variable. The value of 1.00 is given to the age group fifty to sixty-four years of age, to the female segment of the respondents and to the single group. The value 2.00 refers to the sixty-five and older group, to the male segment and to those who travel as a couple.

**Table 5.14: Final cluster centres of the demographic properties of the respondents\*.**

	Number of cases	Age	Gender	Marital state
<b>Cluster 1</b> 'younger mature majority female partner traveller' referred to in the text as MFYP	81	1.10	1.35	2.00
<b>Cluster 2</b> 'older mature single majority female traveller' referred to in the texts as MFOS	29	2.00	1.21	1.00
<b>Cluster 3</b> 'younger mature single mostly female traveller' referred to in the text as FYS	26	1.00	1.04	1.00
<b>Cluster 4</b> 'older mature male partner traveller' referred to in the text as MOP	24	2.00	2.00	2.00

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Clusters 1, 2 and 3 are overlapping gender-wise. Cluster 4 (MOP) is a distinct non-overlapping cluster. Cluster 1 (MFYP) appears to contain a large proportion

of the younger mature group. Most of the members of this cluster are female and have a partner. Cluster 2 (MFOS) has respondents who are all in the older mature age bracket. Most are female and all are single. The members of cluster 3 (FYS) are the youngest: all are under 65 years of age and single and almost all are female. The respondents in cluster 4 (MOP) belong to the older mature age group. All are male and all have a partner.

To obtain a more precise picture of the travel behaviour of the respondents, the demographic clusters were cross-tabulated with the travel behaviour variables. For the Chi-square statistic the expected frequencies within each cell should be larger than 5. It is noted and recognised as a limitation that the frequency in some cells in the following tables is less than 5. The results are listed in the following tables.

**Table 5.15: Travel behaviour of cluster groups; location of accommodation\*.**

	Frequent Sample	Cluster 1 (MFYP)	Cluster 2 (MFOS)	Cluster 3 (FYS)	Cluster 4 (MOP)
	N=160	N=81	N=29	N=26	N=24
LOCATION OF ACCOMMODATION	%	%	%	%	%
City centre	40.5	37.2	40.7	56.0	34.9
Suburban	21.6	20.5	14.8	28.0	26.1
Near highway	31.4	37.2	33.4	12.0	30.4
Near airport	1.3	0.0	3.7	0.0	4.3
Remote location	5.2	5.1	7.4	4.0	4.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Chi-square = 11.57 (location of accommodation and travel behaviour of cluster groups), d.f. = 12., p-value = .481

Number of observations 161, missing observation 1

The findings shown in table 5.15 show that there are no significant differences between the location of the accommodation and the clusters of respondents. City centre hotels are the most popular for all the clusters, followed by 'highway' and 'suburban' properties. The 'younger mature female partner travellers' (MFYP) have slightly more interest in a highway location, as opposed to the 'younger mature single female travellers' (FYS), who have a strong preference for city centre hotels. Perhaps this may be explained by the better socialising and entertainment opportunities available in city centre locations. The 'older mature

single female traveller' (MFOS) also shows a high preference for city centre hotels. It could be assumed that this is for the same reason. If so, they benefit from longer socialising opportunities as they tend to stay longer in hotels. Howell and others (1993) found that female business travellers related the location of a hotel to 'security'. It could be that the same conclusion is applicable to both single female travellers clusters (2 and 3). The popularity of suburban hotels by the 'younger mature female partner traveller' (FYS) could be explained by the fact that members of this group are staying the shortest periods in hotels, suggesting that they are 'trekking' rather than staying put. Suburban properties are not popular with cluster two respondents, not surprising in view of their preference for city centre hotels. It is interesting to note that couples (clusters 1 and 4) have a marked lower preference for center city hotels. The same clusters do differ remarkably in their selection of suburban (a preference of cluster 4) and highway located hotels (a preference of cluster 1). Overall, remote locations are not popular with the mature traveller, though cluster 2 (MFOS) respondents show a slightly stronger preference than the others. Members of cluster 3 (FYS) show a particularly low interest in remote locations.

An important component of the travel profile was the class of hotel chosen. The respondents were asked to indicate the class of hotel they normally use. The results of the analysis were as follows:

**Table 5.16: Travel behaviour of cluster groups; class of accommodation.\***

	Frequent Sample	Cluster 1 (MFYP)	Cluster 2 (MFOS)	Cluster 3 (FYS)	Cluster 4 (MOP)
	N=160	N=81	N=29	N=26	N=24
CLASS OF ACCOMMODATION	%	%	%	%	%
Budget or economy class	25.2	27.2	7.1	42.3	20.8
Mid price range	67.9	62.9	92.9	46.2	79.2
Luxury	6.9	9.9	0.0	11.5	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Chi-square = 17.50 (class of accommodation and cluster groups), d.f. = 6., p-value = .008

Number of observations 161, missing observation 1

There is a significant difference between the class of accommodation and the clusters of respondents. Mature travellers were generally cost conscious and

staying in luxury hotels was not a common experience for most respondents. Those who did were members of the younger clusters (MFYP, FYS), a finding that is supported by Badinelli (1991). Staying in the mid price range was, on the other hand, very popular, followed by using budget or economy properties. The expectations of cluster 1 (MFYP) respondents were similar to the expectations of the total sample, though the other three clusters had distinct preferences. Cluster 2 (MFOS) was very strong in the mid-price range, while cluster 3 (FYS) looked for budget or economy accommodation and, surprisingly, also showed the highest level of interest in luxury accommodation. This could be explained by the fact that, while single female travellers are often in the lower income category, there is also a relatively large group of female high-income earners. The same reasoning could be applied to the interest shown by some of the respondents of cluster 1 (MFYP) for luxury accommodation, as they could be in the double income group. It was interesting that the older couples (cluster 4, MOP) had a higher than average preference for mid-price accommodation, but were not users of luxury hotels. This could be seen as the mid-price hotel segment being able to supply the greater comfort that the older traveller expects.

Determining who travels independently and who travels in a group is an important part of the process of profiling the mature leisure traveller. Accommodation suppliers and travel organisations can benefit from such information. For this reason, respondents were asked to indicate how they travelled: independently or as part of a group. The results are presented in the following table.

**Table 5.17: Travel behaviour of cluster groups; type of traveller\*.**

	Frequent	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
	N=160	N=81	N=29	N=26	N=24
TYPE OF TRAVELLER	%	%	%	%	%
Group traveller	17.0	9.9	27.6	30.8	13.0
Independent traveller	80.5	86.4	69.0	69.2	87.0
Other	2.5	3.7	3.4	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Chi-square = 10.60 (type of traveller and cluster groups), d.f. = 6., p-value = .106

Number of observations 161, missing observation 1

The results in the previous table show that there is no significant difference between the independent and group type of traveller and the clusters of travellers. Group travel satisfies the need for those who seek fellowship, physical convenience and security. The findings showed that single, female travellers (clusters 2 and 3) had a higher preference for group travel than couples (clusters 1 and 4). Age did not seem to be an important influence (clusters 1 and 3 represented the younger travellers, 2 and 4 the older mature travellers).

With an expected increase in opportunities for travellers to make their own travel bookings through electronic media, it is of interest to the travel industry to know which segments are likely to be most dependent on the services of travel agents and booking offices. To identify the person or organisation, participants were asked who made their travel bookings. The results are listed in the following table.

**Table 5.18: Travel behaviour of cluster groups; method of bookings\*.**

	Frequent Sample	Cluster 1 (MFYP)	Cluster 2 (MFOS)	Cluster 3 (FYS)	Cluster 4 (MOP)
	N=160	N=81	N=29	N=26	N=24
BOOKING METHOD	%	%	%	%	%
Myself or my companion	68.6	74.1	65.5	53.8	69.6
Travel agent, tour company	25.8	18.5	31.0	38.5	30.4
Other	5.6	7.4	3.5	7.7	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Chi-square = 12.75 (bookings methods of cluster groups), d.f. = 6., p-value = .387

Number of observations 161, missing observation 1

The results of table 5.18 show that there is no significant difference between the booking method and the clusters of travellers. Travel agents or tour companies were used for bookings by those who took part in group travel. This group included both the younger and older single female traveller clusters (clusters 2 and 3). Older mature respondents (cluster 4) were strong independent travellers but tended to rely on others to make their bookings. This group appeared to want secure accommodation bookings on their arrival. In general, the younger mature partner travellers, who represented a large independent traveller group tended to act

more independently in placing their bookings. The main types of transport used by the respondents resulted in the following findings.

**Table 5.19: Travel behaviour of cluster groups; type of transport used\*.**

	Frequent Sample N=160	Cluster 1 (MFYP) N=81	Cluster 2 (MFOS) N=29	Cluster 3 (FYC) N=26	Cluster 4 (MOP) N=24
MAIN TYPE OF TRANSPORT USED	%	%	%	%	%
Plane	23.3	19.8	31.0	20.0	29.1
Bus or coach	13.8	8.6	24.1	28.0	4.2
Private motor car	56.6	67.9	41.4	36.0	58.3
Rented or hire vehicle	1.9	1.2	0.0	4.0	4.2
Train	2.5	0.0	3.5	8.0	4.2
Ship, boat or ferry	0.6	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.0
Other	1.3	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Chi-square = 30.26 (type of transport used and cluster groups), d.f. = 18., p-value = .035

Number of observations 161, missing observation 1

There is a significant difference between the type of transport used and the travel behaviour of the cluster groups (table 5.19). The majority of mature travellers prefer travelling by car to any other form of transportation. Not surprisingly, independent travellers use the private car more than respondents generally. The independence of their behaviour could also be explained by the fact that the cost of travel by car is shared when travelling with a partner. The latter were over-represented in clusters 1 (MFYP) and 4 (MOP). One surprising observation was that cluster 4 respondents (MOP) did not show a stronger propensity to use bus or coach travel. They used this type of travel the least of all. The findings also showed that, with ageing, (clusters 2, MFOS and 4, MOP), plane travel increased.

The expectations and opinions held by travellers towards hotel attributes are important for the hotel industry. It may be assumed that the more frequently people use hotels, the better they are able to express their expectations and opinions. To find out whether different groups within the sample frame had different user patterns, their responses were grouped into demographic clusters. This process resulted in the following information.

**Table 5.20: Travel behaviour of cluster groups; frequency of staying in hotels\*.**

	Frequent Sample	Cluster 1 (MFYP)	Cluster 2 (MFOS)	Cluster 3 (FYS)	Cluster 4 (MOP)
	N=160	N=81	N=29	N=26	N=24
FREQUENCY OF STAYING IN HOTELS	%	%	%	%	%
Twice a year	49.4	46.9	58.6	50.0	45.8
Three or more times a year	50.6	53.1	41.4	50.0	54.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Chi-square = 1.31 (frequency of staying in hotels and cluster groups), d.f. = 4., p-value = .726

Number of observations 161, missing observation 1

The results of table 5.20 show that there is no significant difference between staying in hotels and the clusters of frequent travellers. The findings suggest that the mature traveller travelled often. Of the respondents, cluster 2 (MFOS) was the least frequent traveller, followed by cluster 3 (FYS). Couples, on the other hand, travelled more than the sample as a whole. The cost factor could have had an influence: the cost of travel for a single person is higher than that which applies to those who travel as partners. The only alternative is to share accommodation and private transport with a stranger. This is an issue which many single travellers do not readily accept.

The length of stay is likely to impact on the expectations of hotel attributes. Hotel guests who stay in a hotel for a longer period of time can be assumed to demand a higher level of hotel attributes. To find if there were differences in the average length of stay between the four clusters, the responses were cross-tabulated. This resulted in the following breakdown.

**Table 5.21: Travel behaviour of cluster groups; average length of stay\*.**

	Frequent Sample	Cluster 1 (MFYP)	Cluster 2 (MFOS)	Cluster 3 (FYS)	Cluster 4 (MOP)
	N=160	N=81	N=29	N=26	N=24
AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY	%	%	%	%	%
One night	26.9	30.9	17.2	26.9	25.0
More than one night but less than one week	61.9	61.7	65.5	53.8	66.7
One week and more	11.2	7.4	17.3	19.3	8.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

Chi-square = 9.089 (average length of stay and cluster groups), d.f. = 6., p-value = .492

Number of observations 161, missing observation 1

There is no significant difference between the average length of stay and clusters of frequent travellers (table 5.21). An interesting finding was the fact that a large proportion of mature travellers seemed to prefer staying in hotels for more than one night. Another finding was that those who travelled with a partner stayed in hotels for shorter periods than those who travelled alone. It can be understood that clusters 2 (MFOS) and 3 (FYS) respondents preferred to stay longer, as they could seek companionship which developed more readily during longer periods of stay. Another reason could be that, once settled, they did not want to change their accommodation as the effort of packing, unpacking and moving could not be shared, as was the case with those who travelled with a partner.

To give the reader an overview of the travel behaviour of the different clusters of mature travellers a summary follows.

**Table 5.22: Summary of the travel characteristics of the different clusters of mature travellers**

<b>Cluster 1 (younger mature majority female partner traveller, FYP)</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Location of accommodation	Equally interested in centre city and highway locations. Some interest in suburban locations.
Class of accommodation	Mid-price accommodation twice as popular as budget accommodation, only a minor interest in luxury hotels.
Type of traveller	Very independent.
Method of booking	Most make their own bookings.
Main type of transport	Highest users of private car, lowest users of plane travel.
Frequency of staying in hotels	More frequent users of hotel accommodation.
Average length of stay in hotels	Stay in hotels for shorter periods.

<b>Cluster 2 (older mature single majority female traveller, FOS)</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Location of accommodation	Interested in centre city properties, followed by highway locations. Some interest in remote locations.
Class of accommodation	Strongest supporters of mid-price hotels, no interest in luxury accommodation.
Type of traveller	Independence important, increased group travel.
Method of booking	Most book themselves but several use travel agents for their bookings.
Main type of transport	Largest users of plane travel, coach travel popular.
Frequency of staying in hotels	Least frequent users of hotel accommodation.
Average length of stay in hotels	Stay in hotels for longest periods.

<b>Cluster 3 (Younger mature single mostly female traveller, FYS)</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Location of accommodation	Largest number of users of centre city and suburban hotels.
Class of accommodation	Largest number of users of luxury and of budget accommodation.
Type of traveller	Largest proportion of group travellers.
Method of booking	Largest number of users of travel agents for their bookings.
Main type of transport	Largest number of coach travellers.
Frequency of staying in hotels	Average frequent users of hotel accommodation.
Average length of stay in hotels	Slightly longer than average.

<b>Cluster 4 (older mature male partner traveller, MOP)</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Location of accommodation	A balanced interest between centre city, highway and suburban locations.
Class of accommodation	Strong supporters of mid-price properties, do not use luxury accommodation.
Type of traveller	Most independent
Method of booking	Many book self but not all.
Main type of transport	Second largest private car and plane users, almost no interest in bus or coach travel.
Frequency of staying in hotels	Most frequent hotel guests.
Average length of stay in hotels	Most stay for more than one night, but less than one week.

Source: Data obtained during the thesis project.

The findings from the previous section indicate that, within the frequent traveller group, the sub-groups show some interesting differences in travel behaviour, most of which are based on demographic characteristics.

The mature frequent traveller's reasons for travel were investigated with a view to rounding out their profile. Respondents were asked to complete thirteen questions related to their reasons for travel. To obtain only the leisure reasons for travel, the responses for the variables 'travel for business or professional purposes' and 'other' were filtered out. Principal components factor analysis was performed to identify the underlying dimensions regarding why mature Australians travel for leisure. The factor scores were computed using default factor scores from SPSS that include loadings from all items. The number of reasons for travel was reduced to a small number of basic motivations or desire factors. The initial analysis revealed that the data was appropriate for factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy arrived at was .58445 (which

is moderate) and the Bartlett test of sphericity = 281.17 (significance level = .000). After Varimax rotation, three factors were extracted with an Eigenvalue > 1. These jointly accounted for 53.7 % of the variance. The three factors revealed by the factor analysis were tested for reliability or internal consistency, using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. This test reveals the extent of correlation between items within a factor. Item to total correlation scores indicated that the individual items within the three factors were either moderately or highly correlated. The three individual items of factor 1 had a correlation with the rest of the items within their respective scale between moderate and high, and a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .6892. For factor 2 the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was .5695 and for factor 3 it was .6703. Table 5.23 lists the factors, with their loadings and the cross loadings for the items > .3.

**Table 5.23: Reasons for travel by mature leisure travellers\*.**

Item	Loading	Cross loading >.3
<b>FACTOR 1: TRAVEL FOR DISCOVERING</b> (Eigenvalue 2.54356, Cronbach Alpha .6892)		
To be able to experience new things	.71897	
To visit new places	.80772	
To escape everyday routine	.63920	
To get rest and relaxation		.47895
To visit museums and historical sites		.40344
<b>FACTOR 2: TRAVEL FOR SOCIALISING AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY</b> (Eigenvalue 1.86156, Cronbach Alpha .5695)		
To meet people and socialise	.75178	
To visit museums and historical sites	.53673	
To engage in physical activities	.54861	
To seek intellectual and spiritual enrichment	.65699	
To visit festivals and special events		.42242
<b>FACTOR 3: TRAVEL FOR RELAXATION AND VISITING FAMILY AND FRIENDS</b> (Eigenvalue 1.50172, Cronbach Alpha .6703)		
To get rest and relaxation	.57326	
To spend time with friends and relatives	.83623	
To spend time with family and children	.87720	

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The reasons why mature domestic travellers travel can be classified into three factors or dimensions. The first factor may be described as 'travel for discovering', the second as 'travel for socialising and educational activity' and the third as 'travel for relaxing and visiting family and friends'.

The 'travel for discovering' factor loaded heavily on the following statements: 'to be able to experience new things'; 'to visit new places'; and 'to escape everyday routine'. This factor consists of travel motivation that is adventurous: a holiday experience that is adventurous, involving movement from one new experience to the next. They could enjoy natural wonders and national parks. This experience allows people to broaden their outlook on the world and their horizons. Less heavily (cross loading > .3) on the factor 'travel for discovering' loaded the statements 'to get rest and relaxation' and 'to visit museums and historical sites'. The first reflects the need of people to do these activities in a relaxed environment, the second fits reasonably well in the 'travel for discovery' factor.

The next factor 'travel for socialising and educational activity' loaded high on the statements 'to meet people and socialise'; 'to visit museums and historical sites'; 'to engage in physical activities' and 'to seek intellectual and spiritual enrichment'. 'To visit festivals and special events' loaded less heavily on this factor. These motivations are based on the needs of those who like meeting other people and who are pursuing cultural and intellectual interests.

The third factor, called the 'travel for relaxing and visiting family and friends', was based on the variables: 'to get rest and relaxation'; 'to spend time with friends and relatives'; and 'to spend time with family and children'. This factor reflects the needs of people to use their holidays for family orientated purposes and on those who see their holidays as a means to relax physically. This factor is based on the more traditional and secure reasons for travel.

For the accommodation industry, these findings open opportunities for market packages in which mature travellers can host family members in the hotel where they stay. Hotel management could develop facilities which not only support the

socialising expectations but also provide the relaxation needs of the mature traveller.

To understand better the different travel reasons of each cluster of mature domestic travellers, One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied on the three 'reasons for travel' factors with the demographic clusters of the respondents.

**Table 5.24: Comparing the mean scores of three factors across four clusters\*.**

Factor	Cluster	Mean score	Standard Deviation	F	p-value
1 'Travel for discovering'	1 (MFYP)	.12	.9619	4.82	.0033
	2 (MFOS)	-.26	1.1267		
	3 (FYS)	.37	.6365		
	4 (MOP)	-.74	1.0546		
2 'Travel for socialising and educational activity'	1 (MFYP)	-.14	.9834	1.95	.1249
	2 (MFOS)	.09	1.1345		
	3 (FYS)	.42	.8114		
	4 (MOP)	-.14	1.0213		
3 'Travel for relaxation and visiting family and friends'	1 (MFYP)	-.05	1.0044	1.38	.2524
	2 (MFOS)	-.08	1.0322		
	3 (FYS)	-.09	1.0124		
	4 (MOP)	.51	.8515		

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

There are three composite variables (Factor 1: 'travel for discovering', factor 2: 'travel for socialising and educational activity', and factor 3: 'travel for relaxation and visiting family and friends'). ANOVA was used to explain the composite variables by another categorical variable which has 4 categories / clusters. With the benefit of hindsight MANOVA might have been used.

From the ANOVA tables the F-test for the factor score 1 (travel for discovery) by the four clusters was significant (.0033), while the F-test factor score 2 (travel for socialising and discovery) and 3 (travelling for relaxing and visiting family and friends) were not significant (.1249 and .2524). As

factor score 1 was found significant for the four clusters, it is of interest to see where the differences are. Using Tukey's HSD post-hoc test, the differences for factor score 1 were found to be most significant between two pairs of clusters: the first pair consisting of clusters 4 and 1, the second pair consisting of clusters 4 and 3. Cluster 3 (MFYP) had the highest score (.37) for travelling for discovering. Cluster 4 (MOP) received the lowest score (-.74), which suggested that they travel less than the other three clusters with a view to discovering. Cluster 1 (MFYP) also stood out compared with group 4 and received the second highest score (.12). The F-test for factor score 2 (travelling for socialising and activity) did not show any significance among the four clusters ( $F=.12$ ). Cluster 3 (FYS) travelled slightly more for socialising and activity than the others, though the relationship was not significant. The F-test for factor score 3 (travelling for relaxing and visiting family and friends) also did not show any significance among the clusters ( $F=.25$ ). Only cluster 4 (MOP) demonstrated a stronger tendency to travel for relaxing and visiting family and friends. The different clusters do not show a high level of homogeneity as is indicated by the mean scores.

### **5.5 Mature travellers' expectations and opinions towards accommodation attributes.**

The second objective of the study was to determine the saliency of hotel attributes and opinions as perceived by the mature leisure traveller. The following analysis was applied to the bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions as they relate to the expectations and opinions of mature frequent travellers towards hotel attributes.

#### **5.5.1 Bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions .**

In chapter 4, section 4.4, the decision to examine 'ageing related' characteristics as they apply to the attributes and opinions was discussed, including the decision to group those into bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions. This is a new, and therefore exploratory, approach in hospitality research.

Factor Analysis was tried on the attribute and opinion data to develop groups of orthogonal underlying factors, however, this showed that all items were correlated. A One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was then executed on the hotel attributes with the demographic clusters as grouping variables and the hotel attributes and opinions as dependent variables. A pair-wise Tukey-HSD test with a significance level of 0.05 was applied to compare the means between the clusters. To indicate significant differences between means the Tukey-HSD multiple comparison test was applied.

**Table 5.25: Expectations of hotel attributes selected for their bio-physical properties \*.**

Expectations	Cluster 1 (FYP)		Cluster 2 MFOS)		Cluster 3 (FYS)		Cluster 4 (MOP)	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.
In-room temperature control mechanism	4.69	.49	4.48	.83	4.85	.37	4.42	.88
Firm mattresses	4.60	.69	4.52	.63	4.54	.76	4.63	.49
Rooms for non-smokers	4.38	1.02	4.28	1.13	4.54	1.03	4.29	1.04
Good, bright light in the bed side lamps	4.31	.92	4.34	.81	4.54	.58	4.21	.83
Anti slip mats or strips in the bathtub	4.15	1.19	4.21	.94	4.54	.65	4.21	.98
Easy manoeuvrable door handles	4.14	1.12	3.93	1.25	4.31	.88	4.13	.99
A set of extra pillows available in hotel room	3.99	1.26	4.00	1.65	3.85	1.54	3.75	1.19
Expectations	Cluster 1 (FYP)		Cluster 2 MFOS)		Cluster 3 (FYS)		Cluster 4 (MOP)	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.
A glass of water with the meals	3.83	1.38	3.83	1.31	<b>4.08</b>	1.16	3.79	.98
Level thresholds in all public areas	3.57	1.31	3.52	1.35	3.69	1.38	<b>4.04</b>	1.00
A spacious bathroom	3.30	1.17	<b>3.86</b>	.95	3.72	.98	3.50	1.22
Alarm indicator lamp as well as a sound alarm	3.16	1.27	3.25	1.32	<b>3.54</b>	1.10	3.25	1.36
Low carpet for easy walking in the hotel room	3.15	1.33	3.31	1.34	3.42	1.33	<b>3.58</b>	1.21
Illuminated light switches	3.14	1.16	3.25	1.29	<b>3.58</b>	.99	3.21	1.32
Dietary menus (ie. Low salt, low cholesterol)	3.12	1.41	3.07	1.44	<b>3.73</b>	1.37	3.38	1.38
A shower entry without raised edge for easy access	3.09	1.37	<b>3.45</b>	1.24	3.27	1.22	3.39	1.31
A safety bar or wall mounted support handles in the bathroom	3.05	1.44	3.45	1.40	3.00	1.38	<b>3.71</b>	1.12
Seats in the elevator lobby	2.98	1.47	3.14	1.38	<b>3.44</b>	1.04	2.95	1.33
Lever action mixing taps in the bathroom	2.84	1.15	3.00	1.28	<b>3.50</b>	1.30	2.74	1.29
A magnifying mirror in the hotel room	2.41	1.22	2.19	1.14	<b>2.72</b>	1.21	2.26	.92
Built-in lights in closets in the hotel room	2.36	1.32	3.03	1.35	<u>3.16</u>	1.21	3.04	1.43
Golf carts for internal transport of guests in large hotel properties	2.28	1.37	<b>2.57</b>	1.35	2.40	1.35	2.38	1.24
Pull down seats in shower	2.20	1.14	2.41	1.21	<b>2.76</b>	1.20	2.52	1.20
A double washbasin in the bathroom	2.18	1.08	2.14	1.13	2.36	1.08	2.57	1.27
An amplifier on the telephone	2.05	.97	2.24	1.15	2.44	1.04	<b>2.61</b>	1.12
Pull down seats in elevator	1.75	1.02	<b>2.17</b>	1.04	1.76	.88	2.04	1.26
Number of highest means	0		5		14		6	
Number of lowest means	11		7		1		6	

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The Tukey-HSD test with a significance level of 0.05 is applied.

Figure underlined indicates significant differences.

A bold figure indicates the cluster with the highest mean for an attribute.

1 = very unimportant, 5 = very important

Table 5.25 shows the ranking of respondents from the four clusters towards the hotel attributes in the 'bio-physical' dimension. The findings indicate that the respondents of the four clusters have almost identical expectations of hotel attributes. In general, attributes that were perceived as being salient by one cluster of mature travellers also seemed to be salient for the others. Only in the case of attribute 'built-in lights in closets in the hotel room' did the Tukey-HSD test show a significant difference between the expectations of the respondents from cluster 3 (3.16) and cluster 1 (2.36). Only small differences occurred between the clusters in the means found for each attribute. Within this narrow band of differences, cluster 3 (FYS) had the highest expectations of hotel attributes, based on the finding that fourteen attributes display the highest means. Cluster 1 (MFYP)), on the other hand, seemed to have the lowest expectations with eleven attributes displaying the lowest means. This suggests that for the younger mature clusters of respondents, travelling with a partner has a greater influence on expectations of hotel attributes than age and gender. In some cases, the differences between the means are larger than 0.5 and some examination is merited. This applies to the following examples:

Cluster 3 (FYS) had the highest expectations for 'dietary menus', whilst cluster 2 (MFOS) had the lowest expectations of the same. This could be a result of better education. Alternatively, the latter group may be less concerned about these issues simply because they travel less frequently. Another gap between the expectations of the two clusters was evident with respect to 'a magnifying mirror'. In this case, the younger cluster (FYS) expressed a higher need for the attribute, possibly related to the higher class of hotel preferred by this group. This group (cluster 3) differed further from cluster 1 (MFYP) in that the latter group showed much lower expectation for 'built-in lights' and 'pull down seats in shower'. Cluster 3 (FYP) also differed rather strongly in opinion from the members of cluster 4 (MOP) on 'safety bar in bathroom' and 'lever action taps'. There was not a high expectation of 'a safety bar or wall mounted support handles in the bathroom' on the part of this cluster (3), as opposed to 'lever action mixing taps'.

It may be that people who travel with a partner feel less anxious about features that demand a level of physical strength.

Previously, the reasons for the inclusion of hotel attributes for their bio-physical and psycho-social were discussed. Using the mean of the attributes of the total sample (column 'total' in appendix 4) as a guide, the rank order of the bio-physical dimension showed a preference by the respondents in general for the following reasons of inclusion: 'cognitive and sensory' related attributes, followed by 'environmental negotiability', 'health and dietary needs' and 'muscular system, agility, strength and stamina'.

**Table 5.26: Expectations of hotel attributes selected for their psycho-social properties \*.**

Expectations	Cluster 1 (MFYP)		Cluster 2 (MFOS)		Cluster 3 (FYS)		Cluster 4 (MOP)	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.
Tea and coffee making facilities in the hotel room	4.75	.64	4.48	.95	<b>4.88</b>	0.33	4.58	0.50
A non slip bathroom floor	<b>4.65</b>	.55	4.41	.87	4.58	.50	4.54	.93
Credit card pay facilities	<b>4.60</b>	.77	4.28	1.00	4.56	.87	4.58	.72
Well lit public areas	4.55	.76	4.24	1.15	<b>4.64</b>	.49	4.42	.78
Comfortable chairs in the hotel room	<b>4.47</b>	.72	4.28	.96	4.19	.94	4.46	.59
An emergency phone in the elevator	4.33	.97	4.07	1.01	<b>4.44</b>	.77	3.92	1.21
Extra security locks on doors and windows	4.12	1.11	3.83	1.28	<b>4.31</b>	.74	4.08	.93
Large size beds in the hotel room	4.07	1.08	3.50	1.35	3.92	1.02	4.08	.72
Complimentary newspaper delivered to the room	3.78	1.23	3.55	1.32	<b>4.12</b>	1.10	4.04	.69
An alarm system in the hotel room and bathroom	3.68	1.21	3.66	1.04	<b>3.88</b>	.97	3.52	1.16
A coin laundry	3.55	1.26	3.24	1.36	<b>3.68</b>	.99	3.26	1.05
A choice between standard and smaller food portions	3.48	1.35	<b>3.86</b>	1.21	3.77	1.24	3.79	1.02
Breakfast room service	3.46	1.38	3.55	1.40	<b>4.00</b>	1.19	3.67	1.20
Breakfast included in the room price	3.35	1.47	3.59	1.30	<b>3.77</b>	1.37	3.50	1.35
Guest information in large print	3.21	1.34	3.39	1.34	<b>3.50</b>	1.24	<b>3.50</b>	1.02
A coffee shop in the hotel	3.19	1.42	3.59	1.27	<b>4.08</b>	1.11	3.58	1.18
A swimming pool	<b>2.98</b>	1.41	2.76	1.48	2.80	1.63	2.79	1.18
A recreation room in the hotel	2.31	1.22	2.66	1.29	<b>3.00</b>	1.41	2.48	1.16
A hotel room near the elevator	2.14	1.25	2.48	1.33	<b>2.56</b>	1.16	2.48	1.20
Number of highest means	4		1		13		2	
Number of lowest means	8		9		1		2	

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The Tukey-HSD test with a significance level of 0.05 is applied.

Figure underlined indicates significant differences.

A bold figure indicates the cluster with the highest mean for an attribute.

1 = very unimportant, 5 = very important

The expectations of respondents concerning the 'psycho-social' aspects of hotel attributes did not differ much between the four clusters of respondents. Only in the case of attribute thirty-seven did the Tukey-HSD test shows a significant difference between the expectations of the respondents from cluster 3 (4.08) and cluster 1 (3.19). Cluster 3 (FYS) had the highest expectation of hotel attributes, whilst the cluster 2 (MFOS) seemed to be most easily satisfied. Where the differences between the cluster means of an attribute is greater than .5, it is worthwhile looking at the attribute in more detail. It is understandable that the respondents of cluster 4 (MOP) differ clearly from those of cluster 2 (MFOS) with their expectations of having large size beds in the hotel room. Cluster 3 (FYS), on the other hand, considers the large size beds as an important issue. It is evident from the results of attributes 'breakfast in room' and 'complimentary newsletter delivered to room' that this cluster clearly expects more 'pampering' than the other clusters. The same cluster (FYS) shows notably higher expectations for attributes 'coffeeshop in hotel' and attribute 'recreation room in hotel' than the members of the other clusters. Both attributes relate to social behaviour that is an important issue for this group. Using the mean of the individual attributes of the frequent traveller sample as a guide (column 'total' in appendix 4), the rank-order for the psycho-social dimension indicated a preference by mature frequent travellers for 'safety and security' issues, followed by 'service expectation' and 'desire for independence'. 'Interaction with others' ranked low as an expectation of hotel attributes. A key objective of the study was to determine the saliency of the opinions of mature travellers towards hotel attributes. A One Way ANOVA was executed on the various opinions with the demographic clusters used as grouping variables and the hotel attributes used as dependent variables. This approach was used to compare the means between the clusters. A Tukey-HSD test, with a significance level of 0.05 was the chosen statistical test.

**Table 5.27: Opinions on hotel attributes selected for their bio-physical properties\*.**

Opinions	Cluster 1 (MFYP)		Cluster 2 (MFOS)		Cluster 3 (FYS)		Cluster 4 (MOP)	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.
Use shower more than bath	4.42	1.17	<u>4.41</u>	1.05	4.50	.71	4.42	.88
Prefer to stay in non smoking room	4.39	1.01	<u>4.21</u>	1.21	<u>4.54</u>	.86	4.42	.97
Shower over bath is dangerous	4.21	1.02	3.85	1.26	<u>4.27</u>	.96	3.75	1.39
Room easily accessible	<u>4.10</u>	.98	4.28	.88	4.19	.85	4.42	.58
Soft floor light for going to bathroom	<u>4.10</u>	.93	<u>4.52</u>	.57	4.15	1.01	4.38	.65
Elevator doors close too quickly	3.20	1.19	<u>3.72</u>	1.07	3.27	1.04	3.29	1.00
Luggage should be delivered to room	<u>3.04</u>	1.34	<u>3.79</u>	1.37	3.54	1.17	3.13	1.15
Continental quilt preferred to blankets	3.00	1.40	2.72	1.44	<u>3.08</u>	1.47	<u>2.71</u>	1.23
Room keys are difficult to turn	<u>2.77</u>	1.13	2.83	1.20	<u>3.27</u>	1.12	2.91	1.64
Sauna/health facilities important	<u>2.20</u>	1.22	2.45	1.09	<u>2.46</u>	1.21	2.42	1.02
Number of highest means	0		3		6		1	
Number of lowest means	5		2		0		3	

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.

The Tukey-HSD test with a significance level of 0.05 is applied.

Figure underlined indicates significant differences.

1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

There is a broad agreement among the respondents represented by the four clusters regarding the rank-order of opinions. Whilst the means differ slightly, this implies that the issues were ranked (almost) identically. Only for opinion 'luggage should be delivered to the room', the Tukey-HSD test showed a significant difference between the expectations of the respondents from cluster 2 (3.79) and cluster 1 (3.04). The respondents of cluster 3 (FYS) had the strongest opinions regarding hotel attributes followed by those of cluster 2 (MFOS). The respondents of the two other clusters seemed to have slightly less pronounced opinions. Using the mean of the individual attributes of the frequent traveller sample as a guide as outlined in appendix 4, the rank order for the bio-physical dimension showed a preference of the respondents for 'environmental negotiability' and 'muscular systems, agility and environmental negotiability' followed by 'cognitive function, sensory clues'.

**Table 5.28: Opinions on hotel attributes selected for their psycho-social properties.**

Opinions	Cluster 1 (MFYP)		Cluster 2 (MFOS)		Cluster 3 (FYS)		Cluster 4 (MOP)	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.
Prices should be clearly stated	4.79	.41	4.59	.57	<u>4.88</u>	.33	4.58	.58
Guests should be asked if they want no smoking room	4.59	.69	4.55	.63	4.65	.63	4.71	.46
Turn down service adds extra unnecessary costs	<u>4.41</u>	.84	4.14	.99	3.73	1.12	4.04	.98
Entertainment information accessible	4.37	.75	4.14	.64	<u>4.38</u>	.64	<u>4.00</u>	.78

Opinions	Cluster 1 (MFYP)		Cluster 2 (MFOS)		Cluster 3 (FYS)		Cluster 4 (MOP)	
Treated with respect	4.35	.66	4.34	.48	4.27	.72	4.21	.66
Room amenities should be explained	4.24	.82	4.25	.70	4.58	.64	4.52	.51
Free guest accessories appreciated	4.10	.98	4.28	.88	4.19	.85	4.42	.58
Outside noises enter rooms	3.86	1.12	3.79	1.08	3.73	.96	3.83	.94
Favour smorgasbord breakfast	3.75	1.20	3.90	1.05	3.96	.77	3.58	1.14
Hotels should be rated for mature guests	3.40	1.07	3.45	1.09	3.46	1.03	3.58	1.06
Like staying with young families	2.93	1.12	2.83	1.04	3.12	1.07	2.83	1.09
Luxury is important	2.57	1.20	3.07	1.22	3.19	1.27	2.79	1.22
New technology difficult to understand and use	2.57	1.27	3.03	1.35	2.42	.99	2.42	1.02
Special menus for mature guests	2.39	1.10	2.86	1.27	2.24	1.05	2.50	1.02
Number of highest means	2		3		6		3	
Number of lowest means	4		2		3		5	

\*Source: Data collected during the thesis project.  
 The Tukey-HSD test with a significance level of 0.05 is applied.  
 Figure underlined indicates significant differences.  
 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

The opinions of the members of the different clusters showed an almost identical rank order. Only in the case of ‘turn down service adds extra unnecessary costs’ did the Tukey-HSD test show a significant difference between the expectations of the respondents from cluster 1 (4.41) and cluster 3 (3.73). The members of cluster 3 (FYS) had stronger opinions relative to members of the other clusters. There are some issues worthy of special mention. The gap between the means of ‘turn down service adds extra unnecessary costs’ could illustrate an interesting difference. The members of cluster 1 (MFYP) are quite outspoken relative to those of cluster 3. Both represent the younger mature traveller group, however the members of cluster 1 (MFYP) are more outspoken. ‘Luxury is important’ can be related to the previous statement and could support the argument that the younger mature female single traveller has stronger opinions on issues that could be related to luxury or pampering. These findings support those published in the Bureau of Tourism Research (BTR) study (1991) which also suggest that mature women consider luxury as important whilst travelling. However, when it comes to using hotel accommodation, only a small proportion selects luxury accommodation. This could indicate that opinions are not necessarily translated into actions. Using the mean of the opinions of the total sample (column ‘total’ in appendix 4) as a

guide, the rank order for the psycho-social dimension shows a preference of respondents for 'relationship to environment' followed by 'service expectations'. 'Interaction with others' is rather low on the respondents' agenda. These findings should be assessed by hotel managers and translated into products and services that accommodate the needs of the mature traveller. If successful, this will enhance the ability of hotels to compete successfully for a share of the mature traveller market.

### **5.6 The underlying structure of the expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes.**

To satisfy objective three, the attributes and opinions focused on the 'ageing factors'. Guest expectations of attributes are those that they look forward to when staying in a hotel or regard as likely to be available in the hotel of their choice. In chapter 4 it was explained that, for the purpose of this study, the attributes were grouped into bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions (Tables 4.3 and 4.4). The attributes classed as bio-physical dimensions and included for their 'cognitive functions and sensory clues' ranked high in the hierarchy of importance. These included 'in-room temperature control' (temperature adaptation, mean 4.63), 'firm mattresses' (tactile, mean 4.58), 'bright light in bed side lamps' (vision, mean 4.33), 'extra pillows' (tactile, mean 3.93), 'alarm indicator lamp as well as a sound alarm' (vision and hearing, mean 3.25), 'illuminated light switches' (vision, mean 3.24). The following supporting quotes were made by respondents;

*'Extra pillows are appreciated.'*

Grazier

*'Air conditioning control in the room is important.'*

Lawyer

*'Hotel accommodation must have good lights, including bedside lamps, be spotlessly clean and have firm mattresses.'*

Chief executive officer

Attributes that were related to 'environmental negotiability' followed in the hierarchy of importance. Those with an above average mean included 'anti slip mats in bath tub' (mean 4.23), 'level thresholds in all public areas' (mean 3.65), 'spacious bathroom' (mean 3.50), 'low carpet for easy walking' (mean 3.29) and 'shower without raised edge' (mean 3.23). Whilst 'golf carts for internal

transport' and 'pull down seats in elevator' was suggested by Marshall (1989), the respondents did not note these as important items (means 2.36 and 1.87).

*'Bathrooms leave a lot to be desired.'*

Driver

Health and dietary needs also are seen as important: 'rooms for non-smokers' has a very high mean (mean 4.38), followed by 'a glass of water with the meals' (mean 3.86) and 'dietary menus' (mean 3.25). However, these health issues did not seem to worry the mature traveller as these statements did not generate any additional qualitative support. It was however recognised that special areas had to be set aside for smokers.

*'Special areas should be provided for smokers in hotels'*

Nurse

Several of the attributes were included on the list because of their 'muscular system, agility, strength and stamina' qualities. 'Easy manoeuvrable door handles' were noted with a high mean (mean 4.13) followed by 'safety bar or wall mounted support handles in the bathroom' (mean 3.21) and 'lever action mixing taps' (mean 2.96).

*'Controls on bath and shower facilities need to be simplified. Some are complicated mixtures of handles.'*

Radio commentator

'Pull down seats in shower' as suggested by Lightle (1991) and 'pull down seats in elevator' as suggested by Marshall (1989) were not noted as important items (means 2.36 and 1.87). However there was a qualitative statement that said:

*'A flap seat for elderly people would be a boon.'*

Education officer

Of the attributes that were classed in the psycho-social dimensions, the 'safety and security' attributes were listed highest. 'A non-slip bathroom floor' (mean 4.58) was followed by 'well lit public areas' (mean 4.49), 'an emergency phone in the elevator' (mean 4.24) and 'extra security locks on doors and windows' (mean

4.09). These very high scores were a clear indication for the accommodation industry that safety and security issues are important for mature travellers.

*'Hotel accommodation must have security.'*

Chief executive officer

*'Accessible fire escapes are a must!'*

Marketing manager

'Service expectations' are second in the line of important issues for mature travellers. 'Credit card pay facilities' (mean 4.53) is a service which the mature traveller expects, as are 'comfortable chairs in the hotel room' (mean 4.39), 'large size beds' (mean 3.95) and a 'complimentary newspaper delivered to the room' (mean 3.83). 'Breakfast room service' (mean 3.60) and 'breakfast included in the room price' (mean 3.49) were attributes which were appreciated.

*'There should be easy chairs in the room, not those "sit up to the table" types.'*

Civil engineer

But, whilst large size beds are popular, not everyone can be satisfied as is indicated by the following statement.

*'I dislike being given a room with a king-sized bed.'*

Teacher

Mature travellers value their independence, they want to do their own thing. 'Tea and coffee making facilities in the hotel room' (mean 4.70) ranked as the attribute most valued by the mature domestic traveller. This attribute, together with 'a choice between standard and smaller food portions' (mean 3.64), 'a coin laundry' (mean 3.47) and 'guest information in large print' (mean 3.33) were grouped under the heading 'desire for independence'.

*'Small servings should be a choice.'*

Marriage counsellor

It was expected that 'interaction with others' would be high on the list of expectations, particularly because it was suggested that many single travellers travel for reasons of social contact. However, the hotel attributes which facilitate this need, 'a coffee shop in the hotel' (mean 3.46), 'a swimming pool' (mean 3.33) and 'a recreation room in the hotel' (mean 2.51) had means low in the ranking order.

*'(I expect a) coffee shop.'*

Union organiser

As discussed previously, a guest's opinion on a particular attribute refers to what the guest thinks of a particular issue. In their reaction to the opinion statements which are associated with the bio-physical dimensions, respondents found that the 'environmental negotiability' issues were most important. These included 'I use a shower more than a bath' (mean 4.43) followed by 'soft floor light for going to the bathroom' (mean 4.23). 'Sauna and health facilities' ranked rather low according to respondents (mean 2.32).

*'If I stay in a hotel for more than 2 days, I prefer all the comfort I can get, if I travel I need a clean, comfy bed and a clean bathroom with a shower only'*

Home maker

Second in the hierarchy of importance were statements related to 'muscular system, agility, strength, stamina'. Here 'a room easily accessible' was ranked high (mean 4.20), followed by 'luggage should be delivered to the room (mean 3.27). 'Room keys are difficult to turn' (mean 2.88) lists last in this group.

*'Luggage delivered to the room is part of the service'*

Consultant

*'Older folk are less able to carry suitcases: perhaps provide a trolley.'*

Teacher's aide

*'Baggage carts or trolleys for self handling (of luggage) could be useful.'*

Marketing consultant

The hotel experience can only be satisfactory if a measure of special assistance is provided. It could be concluded from the above remarks, that making the tools available for 'self help' purposes could provide that satisfaction. 'I prefer to stay in a non-smoking room' received much support, with a mean of 4.38 as part of a 'cognitive function, olfactory' dimension, the 'continental quilt preferred to blankets' (a tactile issue) obtained a mean of 2.92.

From the opinions grouped in the psycho-social dimension, the 'relationship with the environment' statements were considered most important. These included 'prices should be clearly stated' (mean 4.74), 'room amenities should be explained' (mean 4.34), 'entertainment information accessible' (mean 4.28) and

'outside noises enter the room' (mean 3.82). 'New technology is difficult to understand' was ranked lowest, with a mean of 2.61. Being well informed adds to a secure relationship with the environment.

*'I would like a logical explanation in simple language about the operation of the TV.'*

Teacher

*'Hotels should have information about the town, medical and pharmaceutical services available.'*

Self employed

*'I would like the prices in hotels more clearly stated'*

Clinical nurse

*'Misleading prices: 'Priced from' means only one or two rooms available for that price which are always 'just booked'.'*

Overseer

*'Even in first class places the walls between rooms are thin'*

Self employed

*'The majority of hotels are on busy highways. As I am a light sleeper the noise is intolerable'*

Marriage counselor

*'Telephone systems are often difficult to operate'*

Overseer

'Service expectation' followed with 'guests should be asked if they want a non-smoking room' (mean 4.61), 'turn down service adds extra unnecessary costs' (mean 4.20) and 'free guest accessories are appreciated' (mean 4.19). Being asked, not having to ask, is rightfully seen as good service. On the other hand some services are being seen by many as not essential, whilst others do expect them.

*'Bed turn-down is part of the service.'*

Consultant

'Interaction with others' followed and included the statements 'I am treated with respect by hotel staff' (mean 4.31), 'favour smorgasbord breakfast' (mean 3.79), 'hotels should be rated for mature guests' (mean 3.45) and 'I like staying in hotels with young families' (mean 2.92). Taking into consideration that the last statement received little support, it could be argued that the mature traveller is neither positive nor negative towards this issue. It could also mean that mature

travellers consider themselves as mainstream travellers and consider it normal to share the same facilities with other guests.

*'Staff is most helpful.'*

Home maker

*'One thing that cannot be stressed too strongly is that older people must NEVER be patronised in any way or belittled for their age. They are customers like anyone else.'*

Academic

The approach in the previous section was of a descriptive and exploratory nature. The findings reveal that using bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions to classify hotel attributes could be a realistic and viable means to learn and understand more about guests expectations. Further study using this approach could be worthwhile.

## **5.7 Discussion of the qualitative responses.**

The final question of the questionnaire solicited comments that could help to better understand the mature traveller's accommodation needs. The respondents added a large number and wide range of expectations and opinions (Appendix 3). The responses have been grouped under headings and each one has been discussed in more detail.

### **5.7.1 Pricing and discounts.**

The pricing of hospitality products and services was the source of many statements listed voluntarily by respondents. This can be understood in light of the relative high frequency of travel and the level of income of most frequent travellers. Some respondents experienced misleading pricing and 'outdated' prices (higher prices than those charged in brochures). Others considered telephone charges and prices for products from the mini bars in some hotels as outrageous. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is a common comment made by hotel guests. Hotel organisations should react by applying solutions with the potential to overcome this negative opinion. It could be achieved by educating guests that both services are expensive to supply. Some respondents felt that there should be special discounts for mature guests, an expectation that was also found

in the studies of Rowe (1990) and Knutson and Patton (1993) who reported that offering discounts is an important concern of mature travellers. Metz (1990) and Wheatcroft and Seekings (1992) state that the mature traveller is price sensitive and therefore unusually responsive to price inducements. The respondents confirm this by mentioning that they already used special discounts offered to members of the National Seniors Association.

### **5.7.2 Single occupancy.**

Single rooms with facilities were considered by some as a blessing. When young, sharing a room is not such a concern, but when one reaches a mature age, privacy is appreciated. Some respondents suggest that hotels should return to the former custom of single rooms at half the cost of a twin. The question about why single travellers should be called upon to pay supplementary charges was also raised. This important issue for many single travellers has also been mentioned in the studies of Van Harssel and others (1992) and Pederson (1994).

### **5.7.3 Standards.**

It was sometimes perceived by respondents that standards often fall far short of what is stated in accommodation guides. Ratings are often considered as being inconsistent and dubious. It was suggested that hotel chains should use regular travellers to report back on the standards of their hotels. It was further suggested that criteria for standards set by auto clubs differ from those that appeal to travellers: an untidy but centrally located motel values higher than a clean, well presented establishment a few blocks down the road.

### **5.7.4 Service.**

The statement that staff should be more aware of older folk is pertinent to this study. It was felt by mature travellers that bigger hotels provided a lot of 'show' service that is not backed up with genuine helpfulness. There was some resentment about the attention overseas travellers seemed to receive when there was a mixture of Australian and overseas travellers in the hotel. There was a feeling that management should not enter the hotel room in the absence of the guest to switch off air conditioning or lights. Respondents were further of the

opinion that hotels that specialise in tours should have sufficient staff available at the time of arrival to assist guests. It seemed that the expectation of hotel staff to receive tips is an issue that mature Australian travellers dislike. Several respondents stated that they had always received pleasant service in an Australian hotel, that Australian hotels could compete very well with those overseas and that they had never found cause for complaint.

#### **5.7.5 Room features.**

Cleanliness was, as ever, listed frequently as the most important attribute. The cleanliness of carpets and curtains was sometimes considered of a poor standard. Respondents stated that many hotels they stayed in these days were bordering on shabby and were sometimes sub-standard. Several remarks questioned the state of repair and maintenance of room attributes. A number of respondents noted that telephones, radios, TVs and VCRs were not working and that refrigerators and air-conditioners were unnecessarily noisy. Many travellers mentioned the need for larger refrigerators in the hotel room. The need for ceiling fans was mentioned. The inability to open windows was another well-documented irritation of the respondents. Some suggested that hotels should have a lending library of books, magazines and videos. Local TV programs would be appreciated. Washing, ironing and drying facilities should be available in the hotel room. Several respondents mentioned 'drying lines' in the bathroom as a necessary feature.

#### **5.7.6 Meals.**

Meal times were considered too late for the mature traveller. Fresh milk in the room was important for the mature traveller as UHT milk was stated as being "dreadful stuff". It was judged that restaurants attached to hotels were usually grossly over-priced.

#### **5.7.7 Parking.**

Handy parking, preferably undercover parking, adjacent to or near the room was mentioned several times and could be considered an important issue for the mature traveller. It also suggested that guest parking should not be used by staff and outside visitors.

### **5.7.8 Information.**

The location of, and route to, the nearest emergency exit should be prominently displayed. Staff members of hotels were mostly courteous but seemed to know little of their localities, particularly in the cities. There should be local street maps in the room, showing public spaces, churches, art galleries and other points of interest. There should also be information in the hotel on tours to significant sights and places, with costs and itineraries.

### **5.8 Summary.**

Five hundred and eighty five (585) mature Australian consumers received a questionnaire for this study. This resulted in a useable sample of 313 respondents. To develop a profile of the mature Australian domestic traveller, the respondents were first grouped into non-frequent and frequent travellers. The two groups were cross tabulated with the travel behaviour and demographic variables. It was found that the frequency of travel can be related to the level of income, employment status, age gender and marital status. Income and employment in particular have an effect on the travel behaviour of the non-frequent traveller. Frequent travellers, as a group, tended to have higher income and were slightly more employed than the non-frequent traveller. This group has a preference for mid-price hotels, travel mostly independently, use their car as the main mode of transport and tend to stay longer than non-frequent travellers in hotels.

Using the cluster analysis approach the frequent traveller respondents were grouped into four distinct clusters: the 'younger mature, majority female, partner traveller', the 'older mature, single, majority female traveller', the 'younger mature, single, mostly female traveller' and the 'older mature, male, partner traveller'.

Factor analysis revealed three 'reasons for travel' dimensions by frequent travellers: 'travel for discovering', 'travel for socialising and educational activity' and 'travel for relaxation and visiting family and friends'. Each frequent traveller cluster was cross-tabulated with the travel behaviour and reasons for travel to allow profiles of the frequent leisure traveller to be developed. The expectations

and the opinions towards hotel attributes as dependent variables were also analysed, using the clusters as grouping variables to find differences in saliency of the attributes for the different clusters of mature travellers. The variables were approached from an exploratory angle, using bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions. The findings indicate that the respondents of the four clusters have almost identical expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes. The findings also indicated some 'ageing related' preferences. This approach opens an interesting opportunity for further research.

It was found that the mature traveller group is quite consistent with regards to its travel behavior and reasons for travel. However, in the case of their expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes, the respondents tended to be largely in agreement. From this point of view the mature traveller could be considered more or less homogeneous.

In the next chapter the limitations and implications will be discussed and conclusions will be drawn from the study. Recommendations for further research will also be presented.

## CHAPTER SIX

### LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER DIRECTIONS

#### **6.1 Introduction.**

In chapter five, the various techniques used to investigate the data were discussed and the findings of the study were addressed. In this chapter, the limitations of the study are discussed and the implications of the study for the tourism industry are stated. A summary of the main findings is presented, the contribution the study makes to the body of knowledge is explained and directions for future research are identified.

#### **6.2 Limitations**

A number of limitations to the internal and external validity of the study are acknowledged. The internal validity refers to whether the experimental treatment was the sole cause of observed changes in the dependent variable, external validity is concerned with the ability to generalise the results from the experiment to the external environment (Zikmund, 1988). The internal validity of the study could be limited by order effects, this as a result of the sequencing of the questions. Due to time and cost constraints it was not possible to obtain a random sample of the Australian mature domestic traveller. Whilst a self-selected sample of the membership of the National Seniors Association was, as a convenience sample, considered an acceptable alternative, inferences may only be made to the membership of that Association. Hence, whilst the external validity was limited by the non-probability nature of the sample, every attempt was made to arrive at a representative sample. Therefore, to generalise the findings of the study to the wider population of mature leisure travellers is not possible. As mentioned previously, findings are probably not far from the mark because of the care taken with the selection of the sample frame. For the purpose of this study, only those respondents who travelled for leisure reasons and who had stayed in hotels in

Australia at least twice during the year previous to the date of completion of the questionnaire were considered to be 'frequent domestic leisure travellers'. All other respondents were considered 'non-frequent travellers'. It must, therefore, also be acknowledged that the study has not addressed the mature business traveller nor the mature international, inbound traveller, however both traveller groups are worthy of studying in more depth.

The findings must further be seen as descriptive and not predictive and no definitive explanation is provided of the traveller's motivation. The mature traveller segment that was identified in this study should be viewed as a benchmark against which future changes in their shape and composition can be assessed and progressively studied over time.

### **6.3 Profile of the mature Australian domestic leisure traveller.**

The data collected in this study allows for the development of some interesting contrasts and comparisons between the travel behaviour and reasons for travel of the non-frequent and the frequent travellers and between clusters of frequent travellers. At the empirical level, differences in travel behaviour and reasons for travel were identified between the two groups, the non-frequent and the frequent mature travellers and between four clusters of the frequent mature travellers. The clusters represented the 'younger mature female partner traveller', the 'older mature single female traveller', the 'younger mature single female traveller' and the 'older mature male partner traveller'. This approach allowed for comparisons between the selection of hotel location and class, the frequency of hotel usage, the length of stay and the reasons for travel. From there, a profile of the mature Australian leisure traveller has been developed. There were few statistically significant differences between the expectations and opinions of hotel attributes by the four clusters. It was found that the mature Australian leisure traveller is a heterogeneous group from the 'travel behaviour' and 'reasons for travel' angle, however, based on their expectations of hotel attributes and opinions they could be considered as being rather homogeneous. Clusters of frequent travellers seem

to perceive hotel attributes in the same way. Although there are some differences in the importance of the scores, the expectations and opinions of the four clusters of mature travellers could be ranked in almost the same order.

#### **6.4 Importance of hotel attributes**

From the sixty-eight expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes that are assessed, sixty-four are considered by the respondents above average ( $> 2.5$ ) in importance, with thirty-six having a mean of over 3.5.

The results of this study suggest that three underlying dimensions best explain the importance of hotel attributes as expected by mature travellers from a bio-physical perspective. 'Cognitive and sensory' issues such as 'in-room temperature control' (mean 4.63) are considered as most important, followed by issues that facilitate 'environmental negotiability' for which 'anti-slip mats in the bath tub' (mean 4.23) is a good example. These are then followed by 'health and dietary needs' eg. 'rooms for non-smokers' (mean 4.38). From the psycho-social angle, 'safety and security' attributes (eg. 'well lit public areas' (mean 4.49) were listed first, followed by 'service expectation' eg. 'credit card pay facilities' (mean 4.53), 'desire for independence' eg. 'tea and coffee making facilities in the hotel room' (mean 3.64) and 'interaction with others' eg. 'a recreation room in the hotel (mean 2.51).

The empirical research on the expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes across different clusters of mature travellers is expected to assist in further developing an awareness of and a sensitivity towards, the needs and expectations of the mature traveller. It will thus enable the accommodation industry to satisfy its consumers more consistently.

#### **6.5 Implications**

One of the more important implications of this study for the accommodation industry is that it draws up and highlights the profile of the mature traveller

market, its travel behaviour, its reasons for travel and its expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes. This growing market will, in the not too distant future, comprise a very large, if not the largest, group of the traveller market. The mature traveller group, a cluster of many distinct traveller segments, will have its specific needs and expectations and hotel management will need to develop an understanding of the mature traveller. An inhibiting factor in developing 'mature friendly' attributes could be the lack of awareness of the specific expectations of the mature market. Existing hotels can find direction for their marketing strategies from this study, capitalising on the bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions. New hotel developments also need to incorporate 'mature friendly' attributes without alienating other market segments. This is not an impossible task: most of the 'mature friendly' attributes will also be beneficial to other guests. Hotels can evaluate their operations in terms of safety and security features, features that assist travellers with limited physical abilities, comfortable beds and chairs, more spacious bathrooms, lighting and instructions in large print. However, changes in the accommodation products normally occur first in the luxury market. The mature traveller tends to select economy or mid-price hotels, a sector which is traditionally owner operated. This hotel sector would be well advised to enhance their products with 'mature friendly' attributes. The vertical branding of properties managed by 'mature sensitive' hotel management companies is a development that could further stimulate the introduction of 'mature friendly' attributes in this product group.

From a promotional angle, hotel management should make the mature traveller market aware that 'mature friendly' services and attributes need to be incorporated as standard features in the hotel product. Accommodation associations and automobile clubs should consider including in their ratings the 'mature friendliness' of hotels.

The hotel industry must be aware that the mature market consists of segments that have not only many similarities but also some differences. The findings illustrate, for instance, that single travellers, a group that consists of a growing number of

females, score higher in their expectation of certain hotel attributes than those who travel as a couple. Social contacts are an important expectation of this group and organising special activities could increase the hotel's attractiveness. This single segment needs to be nurtured by hotel marketers for its potential.

The increasing importance of the mature traveller could result in some hotels introducing new products such as 'mature guest floors' where 'mature friendly' attributes have been implemented. New initiatives need to be carefully researched and planned, as they could be well intentioned but risky, as they could alienate as many as they attract. However, with the growth of the market, this risks will diminish. On the other hand, the growth of the market is often accompanied by developments within the market and the emergence of new needs. For instance the emergence of child-accompanied mature travellers can be discerned, a development that will pose a new problem for hotels.

Mature friendly services are often intangible and depend much on the behaviour of the hotel staff. Probably more than any other group, mature travellers value the personal touch. Whilst hotel staff were considered by the respondents as friendly, helpful and able to treat mature guests with respect, hotel management need to prepare their staff to understand better this market and the services it expects. Staff need to be sensitive to the ways in which those services might be interpreted by the mature traveller. They need to be able to answer and solve questions of mature travellers on issues of security, safety and nutritional content of the menus, as well as on local attractions. Hotels should review their training procedures to make sure that their staff is attuned to the bio-physical and psycho-social expectations of the mature traveller. This includes staff using language that is not 'ageist', but sensitive to mature guests. Another issue worthy of consideration is complementing the current, mostly young, hotel staff with staff who are nearer to the age of the mature traveller, thereby increasing the comfort level of the latter.

It could be of further importance that many mature travellers need assistance with their bookings. The hotel industry should be pro-active in finding the means to increase its share of the mature market. Unconventional intermediaries, such as

Internet pages or organisations which deal with mature travellers, would be one of these opportunities.

The findings of this study can be used to develop deliberate marketing strategies which appeal to groups of mature travellers sharing similar characteristics, without alienating other segments. These strategies can include such issues as the promotion of the convenience aspects of the hotel and price-value relationships.

Mature travellers are often frequent travellers and while they enjoy travelling for discovering and socialising, travelling for family reasons will continue to be an important factor. Because the findings show that many mature travellers have a need to be independent, travel agents and tour operators should develop packages that leave some control and decision making to the client. Travel packages that combine choices and independence could be designed, while maintaining the pricing appeal of a package deal. As an example: having packages that leave the traveller to choose between a set 'tour dinner', an 'à la carte' meal, or no meal at all could be a step in that direction. With the high number of mature single travellers in mind it must be recognised by both the travel agent and the hotel industry that loadings for single occupancy is an issue that is difficult to accept. The same applies to seating arrangements for single travellers in restaurants.

Travel agents who cater for mature travellers would benefit from recommending hotels which have 'mature friendly' facilities and services, as those properties could be a possible motive for selecting their product.

Commonwealth and State Governments should initiate strategies that benefit the mature traveller and therefore improve the opportunities for the tourism industry such as the promoting of 'mature friendly' tourism facilities and supporting a hotel classification system that recognises 'mature friendly' properties.

Hospitality educators should focus the education of future staff on the full range of potential customers, including the mature traveller. This focus can have implications for course design and, in particular, for subjects such as

'Communication', 'Consumer behaviour' and 'Hotel Planning and Design'. However, when taking into consideration that 'mature friendly' attributes are well accepted by other segments of the market, this will only add to the quality of education.

Developing hotels specifically for mature travellers appears to have limited appeal. Hotel developers and designers should incorporate the 'mature friendly' attributes the mature travellers expect in their products. Developers will benefit from including these attributes, as management companies will be able to attract a growing market segment. This, in turn, will reflect in the value of the development. Designers need to advise developers about 'mature friendly' attributes and design these in such a way that they benefit and appeal not only to the mature traveller but also to other hotel guests, visitors and hotel staff. The physical hotel environment will change continuously and hotel attributes should be redesigned to accommodate a population predominantly in the middle and later years of life. This should be done in such a way that younger guests will also acknowledge the suitability of the designs to their particular needs. As an illustration of this, one issue in particular comes to mind: most respondents indicated that they use the shower more than the conventional bathtub. In new developments, why not increase the number of bathrooms with a shower and decrease the number of rooms with a bathtub? This would require less space and therefore less investment. A shower also uses less water and energy and is easier to clean. The cost savings can give the hotel the marketing edge it needs to attract the mature market.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

Awareness of the mature traveller market is relatively new for the Australian accommodation industry. However, this awareness is rapidly increasing, as it is recognised that the mature traveller is becoming an important market segment for the Australian accommodation industry. The data reported in this study provides the tourism industry with a picture of the specialised nature of this fast growing market. The mature traveller does not fit into the obsolete stereotype of the old,

frail, inactive person but is healthy, independent (both in physical and economical terms) and is keen to use that independence whilst travelling. This does mean that they have strong expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes: they expect comfort in the broadest sense, but not necessarily luxury. Caring for the mature traveller has always been present in the hotel industry to the extent that the mature traveller was expected to use the hotel facilities as they were offered. The study has provided insights into the travel behaviour and needs and expectations of mature travellers towards hotel attributes. These can be used in the development, design and marketing of product and services, such as purposely introducing 'mature friendly' attributes in hotel design by designers, developers and management.

The mature traveller market is expected to increase and an understanding of this market and its expectations and opinions towards hotel attributes is essential for the success of the accommodation industry.

#### **6.7 Recommendations for further research.**

Those involved in the accommodation, travel and leisure industries should acknowledge the need for further research in 'tourism for the mature Australian' and the benefits that can follow from such research activity. Whilst the study used the mature Australian domestic traveller as its sample base, it must be recognised that most findings and conclusions on hotel attributes are applicable to most mature travellers and these include the international mature traveller. Skene (1996b) suggests that older visitors to Australia already comprise a significant share of total foreign visitors. Further research of the 'mature traveller' has also become an important international tourism direction. This was emphasised during the recent Second International Conference on Senior Tourism that was held in the Brazilian city of Recife in September 1996. Henryk Handszuh (1996), the World Tourism Organisations' Chief of Quality Tourism Development stated that the growing diversity in the sector demanded a need for a deeper approach to senior tourism, new strategies and more specific tourism products. One of the motions accepted by the conference suggested that a research agenda is imperative in

studying senior tourism in relation to sociology, geriatrics, culture and economic development so that the tourism industry will benefit from this research in targeting markets and products.

The mature traveller could benefit from further research. This research can be approached from different angles as shown in the following list of suggestions.

- Refining the use of the bio-physical and psycho-social dimensions in research of hospitality attributes and services.
- A comparison of the needs and expectations of hotel attributes amongst mature Australian travellers and mature international travellers, particularly of Asian origin, visiting Australia.
- Are there similarities and differences between the groups? Could ethnicity have an influence on needs and expectations?
- The needs and expectations of the Australian single mature domestic traveller.
- Are there barriers or special attractions to travelling alone? What motivates single people to travel? What accommodation facilities do single travellers expect?
- The needs and expectations of grandparents travelling with their grandchildren.
- Are there any special needs and expectations on the part of either cohort?
- What are the prevailing attitudes about travelling with grandchildren among the generations and the service providers affected?
- An analysis of price reductions for mature travellers and its impact on revenue yields.
- Why do mature travellers expect discounts?
- Do hotel organisations have long or short-term policies on discounting, specifically in relation to revenue yield?
- Are discounts effective in increasing revenue?
- A study of hospitality staff attitudes towards mature travellers.

- What is the attitude towards mature travellers by staff in the accommodation industry? What is the perception of the mature traveller re: staff attitudes towards them? How are those perceptions formed?
- A large scale study of market segmentation relative to the mature domestic traveller;
- A study of the awareness of hotel management companies of the mature domestic traveller market segment.
- A study to ascertain whether the implementing of 'mature friendly' attributes is a worthwhile strategy to attract mature travellers.
- A study of design briefs of accommodation properties regarding to the incorporation of 'mature friendly' design features.
- The interaction effects of age on attitudes and expectations of hotel attributes.

Expectations may be a function of 'ageing friendliness' and this thesis has taken age effects into consideration. However, it would not be unreasonable to surmise that the next group of mature travellers (the baby boomers) may be even more demanding than the groups studied in this thesis.

This study has aimed to make the reader aware of some of the issues which must be considered when dealing with mature travellers. Mature travellers are people who are aware of their needs and expectations. Some of these needs and expectations are influenced by the ageing processes of their bodies, others by influences of their environment which changes rapidly at an ever increasing speed. Thus, the reader needs to recognise that next cohort of mature travellers will differ from those which have been studied in this project.

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# APPENDIX 1

# Hotel Accommodation Questionnaire

In this questionnaire the researcher uses the word **HOTEL** for all types of fully serviced, short term (normally less than one month) accommodation for travellers such as hotels, motels, inns, resorts, holiday units, fully serviced apartments and the like.

- Q1 Bearing in mind the above definition of the word hotel, have you stayed in a hotel within: *(PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY)*
- THE LAST SIX MONTHS .....  1
- MORE THAN SIX MONTHS BUT LESS THAN A YEAR AGO .....  2
- MORE THAN A YEAR AGO .....  3
- NEVER *(Please go to question 13)* .....  4
- 
- Q2 In which area do you normally select hotel accommodation? *(PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY)*
- CITY CENTRE .....  1
- SUBURBAN .....  2
- NEAR HIGHWAY .....  3
- NEAR AIRPORT .....  4
- REMOTE LOCATION .....  5
- 
- Q3 What class of hotel do you normally use? *(PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY)*
- BUDGET OR ECONOMY CLASS .....  1
- MID PRICE RANGE .....  2
- LUXURY CLASS .....  3
- 
- Q4 Do you normally stay in a hotel as: *(PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY)*
- A MEMBER OF A GROUP .....  1
- AN INDEPENDENT TRAVELLER .....  2
- 
- Q5 Who normally makes your hotel bookings or reservations? *(PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY)*
- MYSELF OR MY TRAVEL COMPANION(S) .....  1
- A TRAVEL AGENT, BOOKING AGENT OR TOUR COMPANY .....  2
- OTHER .....  3
- Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- Q6 What was the **main** type of transport you used during your most recent trip? *(PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY)*
- PLANE .....  1
- BUS OR COACH .....  2
- PRIVATE MOTOR CAR .....  3
- RENTED OR HIRE VEHICLE .....  4
- TRAIN .....  5
- SHIP, BOAT OR FERRY .....  6
- OTHER .....  7
- Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- Q7 How often do you stay in hotels? *(PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY)*
- LESS THAN ONCE A YEAR .....  1
- ONCE A YEAR .....  2
- TWICE A YEAR .....  3
- THREE OR MORE TIMES A YEAR .....  4

- Q8 On average how long is your stay in a hotel? (*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY*)
- ONE NIGHT ONLY .....  1
- MORE THAN ONE NIGHT BUT LESS THAN ONE WEEK.....  2
- ONE WEEK.....  3
- MORE THAN ONE WEEK.....  4

- Q9 Below is a list of reasons which may have influenced you to take your **most recent** trip. For example, some people take a trip for relaxation and to visit festivals, others travel only to visit friends or relatives. On a scale of 5 to 1, how would you rank each of the following in terms of their importance in influencing your decision to take a holiday? *PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT.*

Example:

very important      important      undecided      unimportant      very unimportant

5                       4                       3                       2                       1

My main reasons for taking my last trip were:

	VI	I	U	UN	VU
to get rest and relaxation.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to visit festivals and special events.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to be able to experience new things.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to engage in physical activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to visit new places .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to spend time with friends and relatives .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to spend time with my family and children .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to meet people and socialise.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to escape everyday routine.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to visit museums and historical sites.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
to seek intellectual or spiritual enrichment.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
for business or professional purposes.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
other.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- Q10 Here are some statements which describe what guests might perceive as necessary in hotels. Please rate each of the following features in terms of their importance to you. *PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT with 5 being very important and 1 being very unimportant.*

There is no right or wrong answer, just give your candid opinion.

Example:

very important      important      undecided      unimportant      very unimportant

5                       4                       3                       2                       1

	VI	I	U	UN	VU
1 tea and coffee making facilities in the hotel room .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
2 built-in lights in closets in the hotel room.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
3 pull down seats in elevators .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
4 a set of extra pillows available in the hotel room.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
5 a safety bar or wall mounted support handles in the bathroom.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
6 a hotel room near to the elevator .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
7 a glass of water offered with the meals .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
8 well lit public areas .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
9 a choice between standard and smaller portions on the menu.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

10	comfortable chairs in the hotel room.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
11	a non slip bathroom floor .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
12	lever action mixing taps in the bathroom .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
13	rooms for non smokers.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
14	level thresholds in all public areas .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
15	dietary menus (i.e. low salt, low cholesterol etc.) .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
16	pull down seats in the shower .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
17	illuminated light switches.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
18	alarm indicator lamp as well as a sound alarm.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
19	golf carts for internal transport of guests in large hotel properties.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
20	guest information in large print.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
21	a double washbasin in the bathroom .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
22	an amplifier on the telephone .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
23	a magnifying mirror in the hotel bathroom .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
24	a shower entry without raised edge for easy access.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
25	a spacious bathroom.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
26	good, bright light in the bed side lamps .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
27	firm mattresses .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
28	an alarm system in the hotel room and bathroom.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
29	an emergency phone in the elevator .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
30	seats in elevator lobbies.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
31	breakfast room service.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
32	complimentary newspaper delivered to the room .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
33	large size beds in the hotel room .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
34	credit card pay facilities.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
35	low pile carpet for easy walking in the hotel room .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
36	breakfast included in the room price .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
37	a coffee shop in the hotel.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
38	a coin laundry .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
39	a swimming pool .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
40	anti slip mats or strips in the bathtub.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
41	in-room temperature control mechanism .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
42	easily manoeuvrable door handles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
43	a recreation room in the hotel.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
44	extra security locks on doors and windows.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

Q11 Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. In this question a mature guest is a guest over 50 years of age.

*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT ranging from 5 if you strongly agree to 1 if you strongly disagree.*

There is no right or wrong answer, just give your opinion.

Example:

	strongly agree	agree	undecided	disagree	strongly disagree			
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1			
				SA	A	U	D	SD
1	I am usually treated with respect by hotel staff .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
2	A shower placed over a normal standard bath tub is dangerous and awkward .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
3	There should be hotels specially for mature guests .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
4	I prefer to stay in a non-smoking hotel room .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
5	Elevator doors close too quickly .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
6	I like staying in hotels together with young families.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
7	Bed turn down service would add unnecessary costs to my account .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
8	A sauna and other health facilities in a hotel are important to me .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
9	When staying in a hotel I use a shower more than a bath .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
10	Hotel room keys are difficult to turn .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
11	Hotel staff should always ask guests if they prefer a non-smoking room .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
12	A soft floor light in hotel rooms makes going to the bathroom at night easy.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
13	I like a room which is easily accessible.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
14	I appreciate the free guest accessories such as shampoo, conditioner and sewing kit .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
15	Prices should be clearly stated for all hotel services .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
16	Hotel staff should clearly explain all room amenities .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
17	Outside noises often enter hotel rooms .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
18	A continental quilt or doona is preferred over the standard sheets and blankets.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
19	Luxury is really important to me while staying in a hotel.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
20	'What's on in entertainment and regional attractions' information should be easily accessible .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
21	New technology, such as 'credit card' type hotel keys are difficult for me to understand and to use.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
22	Hotels should be rated for their adequacy in accommodating older mature guests .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
23	Luggage should be delivered to my room even if it will add to the price I pay .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		
24	I favour a smorgasbord type of breakfast service.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		

Finally, we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself to help us interpret the results.

Please turn over.

## Background Information

*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH QUESTION.*

Q12- In which age group do you fall? (*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX*)

- |                            |                          |   |                  |                          |   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Under 50 years of age..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | 65 - 69.....     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| 50 - 54.....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | 70 - 74.....     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| 55 - 59.....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | 75 and over..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |
| 60 - 64.....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |                  |                          |   |

Q13 Are you? (*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX*)

- |             |                          |   |           |                          |   |
|-------------|--------------------------|---|-----------|--------------------------|---|
| FEMALE..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | MALE..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
|-------------|--------------------------|---|-----------|--------------------------|---|

Q14 Which best describes your family situation? (*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX*)

- |  |                          |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| SINGLE (INCLUDING WIDOWED, SEPARATED, DIVORCED)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| COUPLE (MARRIED, DE FACTO, ETC.).....                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |

Q15 Are you at present: (*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX*)

- |                                |                          |   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| FULL-TIME EMPLOYED.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| PART-TIME EMPLOYED.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| RETIRED ON PRIVATE INCOME..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| PENSIONER.....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| OTHER (please specify).....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |

Q16 What is or was your occupation? (*PLEASE BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE*)

---

Q17 What is the postcode of your home address? \_\_\_\_\_

Q18 Which of the following categories best describes your total yearly household income, from all sources, before tax? (*PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY*)

- |                          |                          |   |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| \$0 - \$10,000.....      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | \$30,001 - \$40,000..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| \$10,001 - \$15,000..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | \$40,001 - \$50,000..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| \$15,001 - \$20,000..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | \$50,001 - \$60,000..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |
| \$20,001 - \$30,000..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | \$60,001 and above.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 |

# APPENDIX 2



# NATIONAL SENIORS

A S S O C I A T I O N

Dear Member

26 February 1993

## Questionnaire: Travel Facilities

When was the last time you stayed in a hotel?

Were you pleased with all facilities and services?

Would you have liked something extra or better?

We would like to find out what the mature guest expects from hotel accommodation.

The NATIONAL SENIORS ASSOCIATION is assisting and supporting research by the University of Queensland, Gatton College, into travel facilities. As you have previously indicated your preparedness to participate in our consumer panel, we have forwarded the attached questionnaire and request that you complete and return it.

We are interested in your personal view. Please be as open as possible in your answers as you may be assured of confidentiality.

It is important for us that you complete and return the questionnaire as soon as possible. Please use the FREEPOST envelope for that purpose.

If you have any questions concerning the questionnaire, please contact

Hein Ruys  
Lecturer in Accommodation Studies  
Centre for Hospitality and Tourism Management  
The University of Queensland  
(074) 601381

A summary of the results of this research will be published in "50 something".

Thank you for your support, which will help to make this study a success and have an input to improvement in this important area.

David R Deans  
Chief Executive

'Growing stronger together'

National Seniors Association Limited A.C.N. 050 523 003  
incorporating Later Years and Mature Australia

trvresch.c

# APPENDIX 3

## APPENDIX 3

## QUALITATIVE STATEMENTS FROM THE 161 FREQUENT TRAVELLER RESPONDENTS

I resent the attention overseas travellers seems to receive when there is a mixture of Australians and overseas people. *(waitress, age group 2, female, couple, Income Group 7, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

Tipping should not be expected by staff, I don't think it is necessary. *(waitress, age group 2, female, couple, Income Group 7, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

Efficiency in booking, good communications equipment, cleanliness, courtesy and quick check-in and check-out! *(investment banker, age group 6, male, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, luxury accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane)*

Cleanliness, friendliness, food preparation facilities, telephone and TV *(Clerk, age group 3, female, couple, Income Group 2, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

When in a city we choose a hotel within easy walking distance from the CBD and shopping areas. *(quarantine inspector, age group 2, male, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

I appreciate a refrigerator in room with ice and cold drinking water. *(Home maker, age group 6, female, couple, Income Group 5, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

When arriving late and departing early one should get a discount as one does not use most hotel facilities. *(registered nurse, age group 2, female, couple, Income Group 4, remote, budget type accommodation, group, makes own bookings, car)*

Some hotel staff need to be more aware of older folk often being slower movers and less able to carry suitcases: perhaps provide a trolley to move suitcases. *(teacher aide, age group 3, female, couple, Income Group 1, Center City, mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business)*

I always stay at motel chains where I receive pleasant service and a 'Later Years' discount. *(teacher aide, age group 3, female, couple, Income Group 1, Center City, mid-price accommodation independent traveller, makes own bookings, business)*

Local street maps in room. Information often hard to read as print is too small. Staff is most helpful. (*Home maker, age 3, female, couple, Income Group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, car*)

Air conditioning control in room is important (*lawyer, age 6, male, couple, Income Group 5, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller., agent, car*)

A toaster should be provided in each room. The midday meal is substantial enough that I can live on a couple of slices of toast for breakfast and dinner. It also keeps the cost down. (*home maker, age 4, female, couple, Income Group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, group, makes own bookings, car*)

Majority of hotels are on busy highways. As I am a light sleeper the noise is intolerable. (*Marriage counsellor, age 4, female, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car*)

Hotel ratings are Income Group consistent in two Eastern states (*Marriage counsellor, age 4, female, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car*)

Chains should use regular holiday travellers to report back on the standards of their hotels. (*Marriage counsellor, age 4, female, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car*)

Washing and ironing facilities should be improved such as drying lines in bathroom. (*Marriage counsellor, age 4, female, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car*)

Early dinner times would be appreciated (*Marriage counsellor, age 4, female, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car*)

Small servings should be a choice (*Marriage counsellor, age 4, female, couple, Income Group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car*)

Would like to meet with local people to learn from them. Would appreciate some action from hotels along that line (*Marriage counsellor, age 4, female, couple, income group 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car*)

Hotels lack often bedside reading lights for each individual guest. The lights are often too high placed. (*Grazier, age 4, female, couple, income group 2, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Extra pillows are appreciated (Grazier, age 4, female, couple, income group 2, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

Too much light enters the room therefore curtains are closed and AC switched on. (Grazier, age 4, female, couple, income group 2, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

Bigger hotels provide a lot of 'show' service which is not backed up with genuine helpfulness. (Grazier, age 4, female, couple, income group 2, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

I have not as yet experienced the need for 'mature' extra's but would appreciate some 'extra's' when time goes by. (Grazier, age 4, female, couple, income group 2, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

Misleading pricing: 'Priced from' means only one or two rooms available for that price, always 'just booked'. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

Prices in tourist publications should have an 'up to' date as prices are often 'out of date' only shortly after publication. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

'Star' ratings have dubious standards. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

I often find telephones, TV's and radios which do not work. Telephone systems often difficult to operate. I also find electrical appliances obviously needing maintenance. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

Hotels should give indications on possible external noise (heavy traffic, train shunting) as this is not apparent on booking. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

Providing breakfast on a tray the night before. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

I don't like management entering the room during my absence switching off air-conditioners, lights etc. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

I like ample off-floor luggage space. (overseer, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)

Some hotels don't have fresh milk. That is a problem! (*union organizer, age group 4, female, single, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, hire*)

Ironing facilities on each floor. (*union organizer, age group 4, female, single, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, hire*)

Lending library - books and magazines. (*union organizer, age group 4, female, single, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, hire*)

VCR's in each room and video library. (*union organizer, age group 4, female, single, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, hire*)

Coffee shop. (*union organiser, age group 4, female, single, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, hire*)

Information on tours to significant sights and places with costs and itinerary clearly indicated. (*administrative officer, age group 3, male, couple, income group 3, suburban, budget type accommodation, car*)

I would like to have in my room a TV, Video player, radio, biscuits (plain and sweet), milk, butter and a good table for eating snacks or breakfast. (*public servant, age group traveller 5*)

Undercover car parking (*real estate consultant, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, suburban, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

I would like a radio and TV in good order. (*age group 5, female, single, income group 2, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, group, agent, business*)

Room lights are not bright enough to read by . (*cafe proprietor, age group 3, female, single, income group one, suburban, budget type accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Motel vehicle parking is often used by staff and outside visitors. (*cafe proprietor, age group 3, female, single, income group one, suburban, budget type accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Before 9 am and after 5 pm reception often lacking. (*cafe proprietor, age group 3, female, single, income group one, suburban, budget type accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Bed lights should only shed light on one person. (*gardener, age group 4, female, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

A jug with water in the fridge. (*gardener, age group 4, female, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Mattress covers should be washed after each customer. (*gardener, age group 4, female, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

I would like the prices in hotels more clearly stated. (*clinical nurse, age group 3, female, couple, income group 5, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

In the medium priced hotels the standards vary considerably and what is stated in accommodation guides often falls far short of what is in fact sub-standard accommodation. We always ask to see the room and facilities first. (*clinical nurse, age group 3, female, couple, income group 5, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

You summed it up rather well. (*nurse, age group 5, female, couple, income group refused, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane*)

Giving my income is too personal (*nurse, age group 5, female, couple, income group refused, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane*)

An adequate overhead rosette in the shower with a generous fall of hot water would delight Australian travellers. (*radio commentator, age group 4, male, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane*)

Controls on bath and shower facilities need to be simplified. Some are complicated mixtures of handles. (*radio commentator, age group 4, male, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane*)

A toaster, along with tea making facilities should be a constant in hotel rooms. Mature tourists often require only a slice of toast and a cup of tea for breakfast. (*radio commentator, age group 4, male, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane*)

In some hotels telephone call costs are outrageous. (*radio commentator, age group 4, male, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane*)

Some of us suffer from fear of heights. Guests should be asked if they prefer to be allocated a room close to ground level. We enjoyed a very comfortable room

in a high rise hotel but were afraid to go near the balcony. (*radio commentator, age group 4, male, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, agent, plane*)

Our main requirement is accommodation is for it being clean and bright with our own bathroom facilities, a quiet location and handy parking are also important. (*science assistant, age group 4, female, couple, income group 8, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Far better trained staff in all areas of hospitality industry. (*catering manager, age group 3, male, couple, income group 5, Center City, luxury accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car,*)

More mature staff at reception of hotels. (*catering manager, age group 3, male, couple, income group 5, Center City, luxury accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car,*)

More hotel rooms with spas. (*catering manager, age group 3, male, couple, income group 5, Center City, luxury accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car,*)

I like a *makes own bookings* dialling telephone and a mini-bar. (*primary school teacher, age group 4, female, couple, income group 3, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

I hate it when room attendants keep darting in and out doing one thing at the time: the 'housework' should be done in one go! (*primary school teacher, age group 4, female, couple, income group 3, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Many hotels do not have hooks on the back of doors on which one can hang soiled and clean underclothes. (*business manager, age group 6, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

If I stay in a hotel for more than 2 days, I prefer a better class room with all the comfort I can get. If I am travelling I need a clean, comfy bed and a clean bathroom with a shower only. And an early breakfast. (*home maker, age group 4, female, single, income group one, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, group, agent, business*)

Larger more sensible refrigerators in the rooms. (*Naturopath, age group 6, male, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

More spacious rooms, more cupboard space. (*Naturopath, age group 6, male, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

Windows that open. (*Naturopath, age group 6, male, income group 3, highway location ay location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

Refrigerator raised for easier access. (*Naturopath, age group 6, male, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

Fresh fruit in rooms instead of chocolate bars. (*Naturopath, age group 6, male, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

Wines and drinks in hotel rooms are too expensive. (*Naturopath, age group 6, male, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

Prefer hotels with alternative dining room facilities. (*Naturopath, age group 6, male, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business*)

Ground floor accommodation. (*school inspector, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Under cover parking. (*school inspector, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Discounts for mature guests. (*school inspector, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Good ventilation. (*school inspector, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Away from traffic noise. (*school inspector, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Covered car space adjacent or near room. (*public servant, age group 4, female, single, income group 2, highway location, bud, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Later check out, eg 11 am. (*public servant, age group 4, female, single, income group 2, highway location, bud, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Bed turn down is part of the service (*consultant, age group 2, male, income group 8, airport, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Luggage delivered to the room is part of the service (*consultant, age group 2, male, income group 8, airport, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Smorgasbord type restaurant within hotel. (*public servant, age group 4, female, single, income group 2, highway location, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Microwave oven in room. (*journalist, age group 5, female, couple, income group one, highway location, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

A map of the location showing public spaces, churches, art galleries etc. (*journalist, age group 5, female, couple, income group one, highway location, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Even with firm mattresses a hard board underneath improves comfort. (*journalist, age group 5, female, couple, income group one, highway location, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

I realise that many of the issues mentioned in your questionnaire which are at present unnecessary will no doubt become essential in later and more infirm years. (*journalist, age group 5, female, couple, income group one, highway location, budget, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Location and route to the nearest emergency exit should be prominently displayed in all rooms. (*banker, age group 7, male, couple, income 8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, agent, plane*)

UHT milk is dreadful stuff, a decent hotel supplies a 300 ml jug of real milk at the very least. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Restaurants attached to hotels are usually grossly overpriced. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Clumsy thick tableware should be banned (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Controls for TV, light, radio and ceiling fan should be adjacent to bed. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

There should be a supply of tissues in the bathroom. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Minibar prices are exorbitant. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Rooms should have an opening window with insect screen as many dislike the noise of air-conditioners. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Ceiling fans are necessary in warm coastal areas. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Wardrobe should have at least three coat hangers per bed . (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

If there are three beds there should also be three waist high luggage racks. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Noisy refrigerators are most unwelcome. (*interviewer supervisor, age group 5, female, single, income group 4, remote, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

There should be more tea bags, sugar and coffee. (*licensed surveyor, age group 3, male, couple, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Rating of hotel should at least be checked every 12 month. (*licensed surveyor, age group 3, male, couple, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

In some hotels the cleanliness of carpets and curtains is of a poor standard although bed linen is of a very good standard. (*licensed surveyor, age group 3, male, couple, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Encouragement should be given to hotel chains which give discounts to the senior travellers. (*licensed surveyor, age group 3, male, couple, income group 5, sub, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

There should be accommodation for wheelchair confined people, including shower facilities. *(home maker, age group , female, couple, income group 4, suburb, budget, group, agent, business)*

Local television programs. *(home maker, age group traveller 6)*

Hotels should have sufficient staff available when tours arrive. *(home maker, age5, female, income group 2, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

Serving meals at 7.30 p.m. is too late, we don't get to our room till 10.30! *(home maker, age5, female, income group 2, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

I find the standards of Australian hotels equal to overseas hotels, maybe the latter are grander than ours, but ours rate very well! *(home maker, age5, female, income group 2, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

I am disabled and, though we are often told rooms are suitable for disabled: they generally are not. Mostly not enough space in room to get around in a wheelchair. Bathrooms leave a lot to be desired. *(driver, age group 2, female, single, income group 2, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, group, agent, business)*

Bath mats and face washers are not in many hotels. *(home maker, age group 6, female, single, income group one, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

Local television programs, current popular magazine available, choice of room service meals *(home maker, age grou6, female, income group 3, highway location location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

Fresh milk, not that long life or creamy substance. *(home maker, age group 6, female, single, income group one, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

Bar fridge's full of liquor, beer and soft drinks do not allow for a jug of cold fresh water. We have our own soft drink bottle with fresh water and place this in the fridge. *(home maker, age group 6, female, single, income group one, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

Prices of drinks from bar fridge far too high. *(home maker, age group 6, female, single, income group one, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

I have travelled a lot and stayed in all types of accommodation and I have never found cause for complaint. *(home maker, age group 6, female, single, income group 2, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, group, agent)*

Hotel accommodation must have security, good lights including bedside lamps, be spotlessly clean and have firm mattresses. *(chief executive officer, age group 3, female, single, inc8, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, other, plane)*

Accessible fire escapes a must! *(marketing manager, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, car)*

Recommending restaurants which are expensive and give poor service should be avoided. *(marketing manager, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, car)*

Have staff check items such as TV, radio, jugs etc. are working properly. Often knobs are missing, power points not working. *(marketing manager, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, car)*

More tea and coffee bags in rooms *(marketing manager, age group 5, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, car)*

A free laundry is preferable. Cloth lines along the bath is a must. . *(teacher, age group 4, female, single, income group 7, Center City, luxury accommodation, group, agent, business)*

Some single rooms with facilities is a blessing. I dislike being given a room with a king-sized bed. *(teacher, age group 4, female, single, income group 7, Center City, luxury accommodation, group, agent, business)*

Logical explanation in simple language about the operation of TV. . *(teacher, age group 4, female, single, income group 7, Center City, luxury accommodation, group, agent, business)*

I like a separate table and a standard lamp in the room. *(public servant, age group 4, male, married, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

I strongly disagree with the 'per person' room charge. Rooms should be available as 'singles', 'doubles', or 'twins' but not 'per person'. *(optometrist, age group 5, male, couple, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

Most motels we are staying at these days are bordering on shabby, particularly in public areas, stairways etc.. The tariffs are mostly in the seventy's but the presentation is poor. *(optometrist, age group 5, male, couple, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

Staff members are mostly courteous but seem to know little of their localities, particularly in the cities. The standard reply is "take a cab". *(optometrist, age group 5, male, couple, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

The star system applied by the auto club is apparently based on criteria other than those that most appeal to travellers eg. frequently a grotty centrally located motel values higher than a clean well presented establishment perhaps a few blocks down the road. *(optometrist, age group 5, male, couple, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

Proximity to clubs is useful. Clubs usually provide good meals at reasonable cost. Meals in hotels are invariably overpriced. *(optometrist, age group 5, male, couple, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, train)*

There should be easy chairs in the room, not those "sit up to the table" type. *(civil engineer, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business)*

Every room, every day should be checked to see that the air-conditioner, the fridge,, plumbing etc. are all in working order before the room is re-occupied. There is nothing worse than having to move a "half packed" outfit to a new room when faults are belatedly discovered. *(civil engineer, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business)*

Establishments which have neither a "license" or dining facilities should be clearly labelled as such on sign boards. *(civil engineer, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business)*

I dislike drinking in a bedroom. Prefer a "cocktail" bar adjacent to the dining room. *(civil engineer, age group 7, male, couple, income group 4, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, business)*

I would appreciate the availability of cold, purified water dispensers in foyers on each floor. *(retail manager, age group 3, male, income group six, sub, bud, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

I appreciate undercover car parking at my hotel. (*transport driver, age group 3, male, income group 3, remote, budget type accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, coach*)

Local TV guides (newspaper supplements) would be well received. (*transport driver, age group 3, male, income group 3, remote, budget type accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, coach*)

Some holiday accommodation comes without linen or towels but no allowance is made to the price. (*transport driver, age group 3, male, income group 3, remote, budget type accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, coach*)

Very little pensioner discounts available re. accommodation. (*transport driver, age group 3, male, income group 3, remote, budget type accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, coach*)

I took great interest in this questionnaire as I am an age pensioner with walking difficulties as quite a number of questions are just what I look for when travelling. (*receptionist, age group traveller 6*)

The presentation of the hotel is very important. (*age group 2, female, income group one, airport, Mid-price accommodation, group, agent, business*)

The attitude of management and staff is very important, when all cards down, without guest they would not have a job. (*age group 2, female, income group one, airport Mid-price accommodation, group, agent, business*)

I think all hotels should have hair dryers and tissues. (*age group 2, female, income group one, airport, Mid-price accommodation, group, agent, business*)

The phone charges are terrible, I use a public phone where possible. (*age group 2, female, income group one, airport, Mid-price accommodation, group, agent, business*)

Very particular attention should be given to the shower: the shower rose should be at least 1800 mm above the floor so one can stand under the shower and does not have to crouch. (*education officer, age group 6, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, budget, independent traveller, car*)

Do NOT install a hand-held "rose", they are inconvenient and often out of order. (*education officer, age group 6, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, budget, independent traveller, car*)

The shower floor must be non slippery and should have excellent drainage so that one is not standing in scum or lather. (*education officer, age group 6, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, budget, independent traveller, car*)

There must be a handy soap recess. Dry towels must be in easy reach of the shower floor, beyond the shower curtain. The shower curtain must not flap against you. The bathroom floor should not have to be moistened after a shower. *(education officer, age group 6, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, budget, independent traveller, car)*

Two bath mats should be supplied. Hot water should always be on tap and not go cold. *(education officer, age group 6, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, budget, independent traveller, car)*

A flap seat for elderly people would be a boon. *(education officer, age group 6, male, couple, income group 4, highway location, budget, independent traveller, car)*

Special areas should be provided for smokers in hotels, airports etc. *(unsure, age group 5, female, single, income group 3, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

Clean rooms are essential. Street noise should be minimal. Provided these conditions are met and breakfast is available other facilities are of little importance. *(administrator, age group 6 male, couple, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car)*

Rooms should have windows that can be opened. *(administrator, age group 6 male, couple, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car)*

In hot climates air-conditioners which can be satisfactorily regulated within the room are highly desirable. *(administrator, age group 6 male, couple, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, makes own bookings, car)*

A bright, welcoming and caring reception. *(technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

Accommodation should be clean and well maintained. *(technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

Adequate lighting and sensible switch positions. *(technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

Adequate storage in the bathroom. *(technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car)*

Tissues in the bathroom. (*technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings car*)

More thought should be given to guest parking. (*technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Cleanliness. (*technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Friendliness. (*technical teacher, age group 4, male, couple, income group 3, highway location, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, car*)

Iron and ironing board should be in the room or readily available. (*makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Bathroom should have at least a retractable line for drying cloth. (*makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Some washing detergent along with shampoo would be good. (*makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Even in first class places the walls between rooms are thin. (*makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Overnight laundry services would be a plus. (*makes own bookings mid-price accommodation, employed, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

As guests are often strangers, hotels should have information about the town, directions etc. should be easily available. (*makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation employed, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane*)

Other important information should be available: on medical and pharmaceutical services. (*makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation employed, age group 5,*

*male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

I prefer windows which can be opened, better than staying in a hermetically sealed room. *(makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation employed, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

If different rooms have aspects worth viewing, guests should be given a choice when booking into the hotel. *(makes own bookings Mid-price accommodation, employed, age group 5, male, married, income group six, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller, makes own bookings, plane)*

When young, sharing a room is not such a hassle as when one reaches a mature age and privacy is appreciated. I would strongly recommend hotels to return to the former custom of single rooms at half the cost of twin. Why should single travellers called upon to pay supplementary charges? I travel a great deal and I am aware that this single room factor is ever present in the minds of single travellers. *(free lance journalist, female, single, Income?, age?, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, independent traveller,)*

I like to get a refrigerator, toaster as well as tea making facilities (a fry pan is even better as well). *(part pensioner, age group 4, female, income group 5, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, car)*

Efficiency and courtesy of reception staff is critical from start to finish. *(marketing consultant, age group 4, male, Mid-price accommodation. income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, plane)*

Room service food should be hot when it should be hot. *(marketing consultant, age group 4, male, Mid-price accommodation, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, plane)*

Baggage carts or trolleys for *makes own bookings* handling could be useful *(marketing consultant, age group 4, male, Mid-price accommodation, income group 7, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, plane)*

One point that cannot be stressed too strongly is that older people must NEVER be patronised in any way or belittled for their age. They are customers like anyone else. *(academic, age group 5, female, single, Center City, Mid-price accommodation, business)*

Recently we arrived at noon in a hotel. The booked room was not ready. Nor at three pm. We were sent off to amuse ourselves. As we had travelled across the continent that day, we were very tired. A cup of tea or coffee and some understanding would have eliminated this bad example of public relations. *(librarian, age group 3, married, plane, mid, city, independent traveller)*

# APPENDIX 4

Question 10, bio-physical attributes				total	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
1	41	in-room temperature control mechanism	cognitive function, sensory clues, temperature adaptation	4.6375	4.6914	4.4828	4.8462	4.4167
2	27	firm mattresses	cognitive function, sensory clues, tactile	4.5813	4.6049	4.5172	4.5385	4.6250
3	13	rooms for non-smokers	health, susceptibility to disease	4.3750	4.3827	4.2759	4.5385	4.2917
4	26	good, bright light in the bed side lamps	cognitive function, sensory clues, vision	4.3375	4.3086	4.3448	4.5385	4.2083
5	40	anti slip mats or strips in the bathtub	environmental negotiability	4.2313	4.1481	4.2069	4.5385	4.2083
6	42	easy manoeuvrable door handles	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	4.1250	4.1358	3.9310	4.3077	4.1250
7	4	a set of extra pillows available in hotel room	cognitive function, sensory clues, tactile	3.9313	3.9877	4.0000	3.8462	3.7500
8	7	a glass of water with the meals	health, dietary needs	3.8625	3.8272	3.8276	4.0769	3.7917
9	14	level thresholds in all public areas	environmental negotiability	3.6519	3.5696	3.5172	3.6923	4.0417
10	25	a spacious bathroom	environmental negotiability	3.4969	3.2963	3.8621	3.7200	3.5000
11	35	low carpet for easy walking in the hotel room	environmental negotiability	3.2875	3.1481	3.3103	3.4231	3.5833
12	15	dietary menus (ie. low salt, low cholesterol)	health, dietary needs	3.2500	3.1235	3.0690	3.7308	3.3750
13	18	alarm indicator lamp as well as a sound alarm	cognitive function, sensory clues, vision, hearing	3.2484	3.1605	3.2500	3.5417	3.2500
14	17	illuminated light switches	cognitive function, sensory clues, vision	3.2405	3.1375	3.2500	3.5769	3.2083
15	24	a shower entry without raised edge for easy access	environmental negotiability	3.2264	3.0864	3.4483	3.2692	3.3913
16	5	a safety bar or wall mounted support handles in the bathroom	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	3.2138	3.0494	3.4483	3.0000	3.7083
17	30	seats in the elevator lobby	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	3.0764	2.9753	3.1379	3.4400	2.9545
18	12	lever action mixing taps in the bathroom	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	2.9623	2.8395	3.0000	3.5000	2.7391
19	2	built-in lights in closets in the hotel room	cognitive function, sensory clues, vision	2.7107	2.3580	3.0345	3.1600	3.0417
20	23	a magnifying mirror in the hotel room	cognitive function, sensory clues, vision	2.3974	2.4074	2.1852	2.7200	2.2609
21	16	pull down seats in shower	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	2.3734	2.1975	2.4138	2.7600	2.5217
22	19	golf carts for internal transport of guests in large hotel properties	environmental negotiability	2.3631	2.2750	2.5714	2.4000	2.3750
23	21	a double washbasin in the bathroom	environmental negotiability	2.2548	2.1750	2.1379	2.3600	2.5652
24	22	an amplifier on the telephone	cognitive function, sensory clues, hearing	2.2293	2.0500	2.2414	2.4400	2.6087
25	3	pull down seats in elevator	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	1.8734	1.7531	2.1724	1.7600	2.0435

Question 10, psycho-social attributes				total	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
1	1	tea and coffee making facilities in the hotel room	desire for independence	4.7000	4.7531	4.4828	4.8846	4.5833
2	11	a non slip bathroom floor	safety and security	4.5813	4.6543	4.4138	4.5769	4.5417
3	34	credit card pay facilities	service expectation	4.5346	4.6049	4.2759	4.5600	4.5833
4	8	well lit public areas	safety and security	4.4873	4.5500	4.2414	4.6400	4.4167
5	10	comfortable chairs in the hotel room	service expectation	4.3875	4.4691	4.2759	4.1923	4.4583
6	29	an emergency phone in the elevator	safety and security	4.2405	4.3333	4.0714	4.4400	3.9167
7	44	extra security locks on doors and windows	safety and security	4.0938	4.1235	3.8276	4.3077	4.0833
8	33	large size beds in the hotel room	service expectation	3.9497	4.0741	3.5000	3.9231	4.0833
9	32	complimentary newspaper delivered to the room	service expectation	3.8313	3.7778	3.5517	4.1154	4.0417
10	28	an alarm system in the hotel room and bathroom	safety and security	3.6815	3.6750	3.6552	3.8800	3.5217
11	9	a choice between standard and smaller food portions	desire for independence	3.6438	3.4815	3.8621	3.7692	3.7917
12	31	breakfast room service	service expectation	3.5912	3.4568	3.5517	4.0000	3.6667
13	36	breakfast included in the room price	service expectation	3.4813	3.3457	3.5862	3.7692	3.5000
14	38	a coin laundry	desire for independence	3.4713	3.5500	3.2414	3.6800	3.2609
15	37	a coffee shop in the hotel	interaction with others	3.4591	3.1852	3.5862	4.0800	3.5833
16	20	guest information in large print	desire for independence	3.3333	3.2099	3.3929	3.5000	3.5000
17	39	a swimming pool	interaction with others	2.8805	2.9753	2.7586	2.8000	2.7917
18	43	a recreation room in the hotel	interaction with others	2.5064	2.3125	2.6552	3.0000	2.4783
19	6	a hotel room near the elevator	safety and security	2.3185	2.1375	2.4828	2.5600	2.4783

<b>Question 11 bio-physical opinions</b>				total	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
1	53	use shower more than bath	environmental negotiability	4.4313	4.4198	4.4138	4.5000	4.4167
2	48	prefer to stay in non smoking room	cognitive function, sensory clues, olfactory	4.3836	4.3875	4.2069	4.5385	4.4167
3	56	soft floor light for going to bathroom	environmental negotiability	4.2250	4.0988	4.5172	4.1538	4.3750
4	57	room easily accessible	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	4.1950	4.1000	4.2759	4.1923	4.4167
5	46	shower over bath is dangerous	environmental negotiability	4.0886	4.2099	3.8519	4.2692	3.7500
6	49	elevator doors close to quick	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	3.3188	3.1975	3.7241	3.2692	3.2917
7	67	luggage should be delivered to room	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	3.2688	3.0370	3.7931	3.5385	3.1250
8	62	continental quilt preferred to blankets	cognitive function, sensory clues, tactile	2.9188	3.0000	2.7241	3.0769	2.7083
9	54	room keys are difficult to turn	muscular system, agility, strength, stamina	2.8805	2.7654	2.8276	3.2692	2.9130
10	52	sauna/health facilities important	environmental negotiability	2.3188	2.1975	2.4483	2.4615	2.4167

<b>Question 11 psycho-social opinions</b>				total	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
1	59	prices should be clearly stated	relationship to environment	4.7375	4.7901	4.5862	4.8846	4.5833
2	55	guests should be asked if they want no smoking room	service expectation	4.6125	4.5926	4.5517	4.6538	4.7083
3	60	room amenities should be explained	relationship to environment	4.3397	4.2405	4.2500	4.5769	4.5217
4	45	treated with respect	interaction with others	4.3125	4.3457	4.3448	4.2692	4.2083
5	64	entertainment information accessible	relationship to environment	4.2750	4.3704	4.1379	4.3846	4.0000
6	51	turn down service adds extra unnecessary costs	service expectation	4.1962	4.4125	4.1379	3.7308	4.0435
7	58	free guest accessories appreciated	service expectation	4.1950	4.1000	4.2759	4.1923	4.4167
8	61	outside noises enter rooms	relationship to environment	3.8217	3.8608	3.7931	3.7308	3.8261
9	68	favour smorgasbord breakfast	interaction with others	3.7875	3.7531	3.8966	3.9615	3.5833
10	66	hotels should be rated for mature guests	interaction with others	3.4465	3.4000	3.4483	3.4615	3.5833
11	50	like staying with young families	interaction with others	2.9245	2.9250	2.8276	3.1154	2.8333
12	63	luxury is important	service expectation	2.7938	2.5679	3.0690	3.1923	2.7917
13	65	new technology difficult to understand and use	relationship to environment	2.6063	2.5679	3.0345	2.4231	2.4167
14	47	special menu's for mature guests	service expectation	2.4684	2.3875	2.8621	2.2400	2.5000

# **APPENDIX 5**

## Reasons for travel

## ----- FACTOR ANALYSIS -----

Analysis number 1 Listwise deletion of cases with missing values  
 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .58445  
 Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 281.17745, Significance = .00000  
 Extraction 1 for analysis 1, Principal Components Analysis  
 (PC)

## Initial Statistics:

Variable	Communality	*	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct
TRIPRQ1	1.00000	*	1	2.54356	23.1	23.1
TRIPRQ10	1.00000	*	2	1.86156	16.9	40.0
TRIPRQ11	1.00000	*	3	1.50172	13.7	53.7
TRIPRQ2	1.00000	*	4	.97974	8.9	62.6
TRIPRQ3	1.00000	*	5	.93894	8.5	71.1
TRIPRQ4	1.00000	*	6	.79094	7.2	78.3
TRIPRQ5	1.00000	*	7	.68318	6.2	84.5
TRIPRQ6	1.00000	*	8	.64510	5.9	90.4
TRIPRQ7	1.00000	*	9	.43850	4.0	94.4
TRIPRQ8	1.00000	*	10	.35161	3.2	97.6
TRIPRQ9	1.00000	*	11	.26517	2.4	100.0

PC extracted 3 factors.

## Factor Matrix:

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
TRIPRQ1	.40150	.51892	-.40145
TRIPRQ10	.59710	-.29803	.13235
TRIPRQ11	.51818	-.23322	.37670
TRIPRQ2	.29442	.07398	.51311
TRIPRQ3	.66161	-.27922	-.28288
TRIPRQ4	.40954	-.22221	.15707
TRIPRQ5	.68790	-.15584	-.41859
TRIPRQ6	.25868	.77779	.23736
TRIPRQ7	.29373	.82455	.07931
TRIPRQ8	.45081	-.05271	.61515
TRIPRQ9	.48532	.06591	-.44373

## Final Statistics:

Variable	Communality	*	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct
TRIPRQ1	.59164	*	1	2.54356	23.1	23.1
TRIPRQ10	.46287	*	2	1.86156	16.9	40.0
TRIPRQ11	.46480	*	3	1.50172	13.7	53.7
TRIPRQ2	.35544	*				
TRIPRQ3	.59572	*				
TRIPRQ4	.24177	*				
TRIPRQ5	.67272	*				
TRIPRQ6	.72822	*				
TRIPRQ7	.77245	*				
TRIPRQ8	.58442	*				
TRIPRQ9	.43678	*				

VARIMAX rotation 1 for extraction 1 in analysis 1 - Kaiser  
 Normalization.  
 VARIMAX converged in 7 iterations.

## Rotated Factor Matrix:

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
TRIPRQ1	.47895	-.18335	.57326
TRIPRQ10	.40344	.53673	-.10967
TRIPRQ11	.17554	.65699	-.04852
TRIPRQ2	-.12726	.54861	.19564
TRIPRQ3	.71897	.25857	-.10926
TRIPRQ4	.23628	.42242	-.08661
TRIPRQ5	.80772	.14239	.00457
TRIPRQ6	-.08360	.14812	.83623
TRIPRQ7	.03813	.03904	.87720
TRIPRQ8	-.05793	.75178	.12609
TRIPRQ9	.63920	-.05409	.15897

## Factor Transformation Matrix:

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1	.74245	.61068	.27540
Factor 2	-.15557	-.24269	.95755
Factor 3	-.65159	.75377	.08518









