

The role of image in the promotion of a region as a visitor destination.

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1998

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The Role of Image in the Promotion of a Region as a Visitor Destination

by

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August 1998

A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
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Collaborating Establishments: Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourist
Board and Grampian Enterprise Ltd

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and has not been presented or accepted in any previous application for a degree. The work, of which this is a record, has been carried out by myself unless otherwise stated. All quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks and all sources of information have been acknowledged by means of references.

Gillian C. Finlay

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my Director of Studies Dr. Michael Robinson and Supervisor Prof. Justin Greenwood for their time, advice and encouragement given throughout this research.

I would like to thank the School of Food and Consumer Studies at The Robert Gordon University for enabling me to conduct this work. My gratitude also to Grampian Enterprise Limited and Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company for their support of empirical data collection and analysis.

My appreciation goes to my friends and family for their patience and encouragement. Particular thanks to Simon for his support and understanding.

Glossary of Terms

ACORN	A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods
ASVA	Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions
BTA	British Tourist Authority
CEC	Commission of European Communities
EC	European Community
ETB	English Tourist Board
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEL	Grampian Enterprise Limited
GH&ATB	Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourist Board
IPS	International Passenger Service
IUOTO	International Union of Official Travel Organisations
NESCOT	North East Scotland Co-ordinating Committee for Tourism
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NTO	National Tourism Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIN	Pinpoint Identified Neighbourhood
RPI	Retail Price Index
STB	Scottish Tourist Board
STCG	Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating Group
TIC	Tourist Information Centre
UK	United Kingdom
UKTS	United Kingdom Tourism Service
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

Abstract

This research examines the role of image in the promotion of a geographical region as a visitor destination. The inter-relationship between tourism and image was focused upon from both the potential visitor's perspective and the viewpoint of the promoter.

Using the Grampian region in the North East of Scotland as a case study, visitors and non-visitors to the area were surveyed to ascertain their image of Grampian, how that image was formed and the perceived role of image in destination selection. Although the importance of non-visitors to a destination has previously been recognised, an appropriate methodology has not been developed by other researchers.

The significance of image to the promoters of a destination was examined through interviews with members of the industry, analysis of brochures and of policy documents. This revealed a significant lack of co-ordination throughout the industry which hindered effective image promotion.

The empirical research was considered against a number of theoretical perspectives which have been developed to assess tourist motivations and destination selection, but have previously provided little or no weighting to the role of image. A conceptual framework for the decision-making process of destination selection was developed through the case study.

The research suggests that the possession of a clear image is *the* most significant factor in destination selection due to its inseparable link with other factors, such as past experience of a potential destination and experiences of other destinations. By identifying the significance of experience on image formation, the importance of image promotion is also highlighted. However, there is a lack of significance attached to image in the promotion of a destination, mainly due to problems associated with effectiveness measurement. The research also highlights the problems of developing a promotional image for geographically and economically diverse regions and raises questions regarding the unit areas presently used in the promotion of Scotland.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Importance of Tourism

“Taking holidays is a major international business, the market is world-wide and tourism is an international growth industry” (Goodall & Ashworth, 1988, p. 1). In relation to manufacturing and heavy industries, the tourism industry has become increasingly important within the last few years. When revenue figures for 1994 and 1995 are compared in Table 1.1, it can be seen that the change in revenue for the manufacturing industries is +14.6% and +21.9% for the tourism industry.

Table 1.1: Revenue from Industries 1994-1995

Industry	Actual 1994 (£m)	Actual 1995 (£m)	% Change 1994-95	% Change 1985-95
All manufactured goods	112,126	128,531	+14.6	+7.9
Service Industry	41,399	45,254	+9.3	+6.5
Tourism	9,919	12,092	+21.9	+8.3

(British Tourist Authority / English Tourist Board, 1997)

As can be seen from Figure 1.1 above, over a 10 year period, revenue accrued from the tourism industry has grown at a rate just above other export industries. With the relative decline of heavy industry and manufacturing in the United Kingdom, there has been a simultaneous diversification and increased importance of the service sector, especially tourism and leisure. Arguably, these industries have become important sources of income and employment for the UK. However, it should be noted that such employment is mainly seasonal (Vaughan, 1986) and therefore statistics relating to tourism employment can be misleading. Also, the other industries listed in Table 1.1 need defining since although less subjective than tourism, clarification is necessary for accurate analysis of relevant data.

Tourism is of increasing importance to the United Kingdom where it is already a significant sector in each of the regional, Scottish and British levels of the economy. According to the English Tourist Board (1995), Britain employs 1.5 million people in tourism related industries, producing 4% of the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Scotland alone 163,200 people are employed, constituting 5% of the Scottish GDP. Indeed,

visitor expenditure in Scotland reached £1,310 million in 1994, with 8.5 million visitors to the country that year (Scottish Tourist Board, 1995). In the same year, visitor expenditure was approximately £181 million in the Grampian region, with 1.19 million visitors (calculations based on Scottish Tourist Board fact sheets). In 1995 there appears to have been a 10% improvement on the 1994 figures for Scotland and Grampian (Hasler, 1996), indicating increasing importance of the tourism industry.

Leisure time has been increasing since the 1960s for individuals living in industrialised countries, which may be explained by increased public holidays and restriction of the working week to five days for many. However, in the 1980s, total leisure time rose by only 2%, with the average working week reduced by one hour and paid holidays increasing to 32 days (Key Note Publications, 1991), with some individuals gaining leisure time and others losing it. In the same time period, consumer spending on leisure increased by 150% in value (Leisure Trends, 1990). Therefore, the amount of leisure time enjoyed by UK residents appears to be relatively stable, with an associated increase in leisure spending. This suggests that in the 1980s there was potential for the tourism industry to enjoy increased visitor spending without an increase in visitor numbers.

However, in the early 1990s, the average expenditure per person on holiday has remained the same with an increasing Retail Price Index (RPI). Between the years of 1989 and 1994, overall spending on domestic holidays taken by UK residents increased by 18%, but the RPI increased by 22% (English Tourist Board, 1994). Consequently, in real terms the amount of money spent by visitors has decreased. Therefore, to maintain the same level of revenue, destinations must seek to attract more visitors.

Knowledge of conditions affecting an individual's propensity to travel may assist the quest to attract more visitors. Greater household disposable income increases the probability of travel exponentially (Rita, 1993). However, a saturation point is reached, after which increasing income does not necessarily lead to increased spend on tourism (Key Note Publications, 1991). Increased travel costs below the level of inflation is also likely to increase the number of people taking holidays, as would increased leisure time. Other factors which have contributed to increased leisure and travel include increasingly inhospitable urban living conditions resulting from high density populations, such as overcrowding, over-utilised infrastructures, and greater mobility (Muller, 1990).

The characteristics of domestic and overseas visitors vary sufficiently to justify separate analysis. In 1994, the number of trips taken within the United Kingdom by residents of the UK was 136.7 million compared to 27.5 million by overseas visitors. However, the duration of stay for domestic visitors amounts to only 704.4 million nights compared to overseas visitors who stayed for 287.8 million nights, giving a notably higher average figure. Expenditure whilst taking trips in the United Kingdom indicates the most significant difference with domestic visitors spending £14,525 million and overseas visitors spending £18,310 million (NOP Consumer Market Research, 1994).

Extension of opening seasons in destinations and their attractions may lead to an increase in the number of domestic holidays taken by United Kingdom residents. The development of attractions such as Centre Parcs and wet weather facilities may help to reduce the issue of seasonality. Increasing numbers taking active, rather than passive, holidays may further enhance the attractiveness of such facilities for potential visitors. This increasing linkage of leisure with health has led to the development of many related facilities, such as health and fitness clubs (Key Note Publications, 1991). This may be advantageous for Scotland, potentially becoming a more popular destination again for English visitors with an increasing number of people looking for alternatives to the traditional holiday abroad, including activity holidays and an escape from urbanisation (Devereux & Band, 1989).

Acknowledging the importance of visitor attractions for day-trippers as well as tourists, it is important to review the number of visitors and expenditure made at attractions. The number of visitors to attractions in the United Kingdom increased by 28% in the 1980s (Leisure Trends, 1990). The average prices charged rose by 167% within the same time scale, although this figure does include a number of museums and galleries that began charging for admission at this time. Approximately 1,000 new attractions were opened in the decade, with a number of new types of attraction, including theme parks and country parks. In the early 1990s, the number of visits to attractions began to fall. In 1992, there were 31.5 million visits to attractions in Scotland (Scottish Tourist Board, 1993), a decrease of 14% from the previous year. However, by 1994, this figure had increased to 31.9 million showing an improvement in the number of visits made to attractions in Scotland (Scottish Tourist Board, 1995).

The increase in visitor numbers to attractions may be credited to a number of factors such as: increased free time for a reasonable proportion of the population; increased car ownership (English Tourist Board, 1994); increased number of younger adults with children in the UK population (Lawson, 1988; Seaton, 1992; Rita, 1993) and the creation or expansion of associated retailing and catering facilities within attractions.

In the future it may be necessary to continue developing new types of attraction, with corresponding image promotion. In light of increasing public awareness of rights issues and environmental concerns, the development of new and upgrading of existing attractions may be restricted (Key Note Publications, 1991) due to such factors as removing habitat for wildlife or the seasonal over-utilisation of facilities. Through the promotion of an associated image of environmental conservation or preservation, new or refurbished attractions can potentially be made attractive to this relatively new type of visitor.

There are two main ways the domestic market for a destination can expand. In absolute terms UK residents could take more domestic holidays. Any other increase in domestic visitor numbers is relative growth where visitor numbers in one part of the country expand at the expense of another region.

In the 1980s, the number of trips taken by UK residents abroad for holidays and to visit friends and relatives doubled, reaching 25 million by 1989 (Leisure Consultants, 1990). Spending increased by 138% within this same decade. This may be explained by a combination of factors. The real cost of holidays abroad declined with the average cost of holidays abroad increasing less than consumer prices, including domestic holidays, in the United Kingdom. Package tours also increased in popularity within the 1980s, accounting for 60% of the market by the beginning of the 1990s. The number of second holidays and out-of-season holidays taken increased, with an emphasis on winter sun and snow holidays. Special interest, sports holidays and cruises also gained in popularity. Holidays abroad are perceived to have a climatic advantage over the United Kingdom for these activities.

Other factors which have served to increase the attractiveness of holidays abroad include the increase in media coverage given to foreign holidays; the traditional attraction of sun, sand and sea and the change of scene; favourable exchange rates; increasing trend of people taking more holidays, and extended seasons. Arguably, a self-perpetuating cycle is

associated with taking holidays abroad, whereby the greater the number of people who choose to travel abroad for holidays, the more attractive such a holiday appears to others, reflecting popular culture and status attached to destination selection.

However, the relative attractiveness of domestic holidays compared to travelling abroad fluctuates. The appeal of a holiday abroad may be negatively affected by such factors as exchange rates, acts of terrorism, violence and natural disasters. Conversely, it may be positively influenced by investment and improvements to the area. The number of foreign visitors to the UK also varies annually due to similar variables. According to the latest Department of National Heritage strategy (1997), the UK is an attractive destination to potential foreign visitors because of the international appeal of the English Language, culture and heritage, the UK's safe environment and wide range of visitor facilities and attractions.

The number of destinations visited and activities undertaken has widened since the early 1980s. Although there is still a strong concentration of visitors to London and other high profile destinations, low profile tourist destinations are beginning to attract more visitors, potentially aiding the distribution of revenue obtained from tourism throughout the United Kingdom. However, the average length of stay of foreign visitors to the United Kingdom has fallen since this time, suggesting an associated decrease in expenditure.

As the comparative advantage of many traditional UK industries diminishes, tourism is becoming increasingly important to the UK economy. The importance of tourism to the economy on national, regional and local levels necessitates continued attraction of visitors. However, the impact of tourism is not only economic, but also environmental and social.

With increasing competition for destinations, since image is inextricably linked with tourism due to its characteristics, the importance of a destination's perceived image is also increasing. It is the nature of the relationship between tourism and image that is the focus of this study.

1.2 Aims of the Thesis

Image is a problematic concept to study due to its subjective nature, and yet it is this same characteristic that warrants the study of image. This research presupposes that the study of

a system's constituent parts and the inter-relationships between these individual parts enhances overall understanding. Therefore, the study of image and its inter-relationships with other variables in the potential visitor's decision-making process serves to enhance the promoter's understanding of the promotional process for destinations. Therefore, the main aim of this research is:

- ◆ To evaluate the role of image within the potential visitor's decision-making process of destination selection.

The role that experience plays in destination selection, and hence the potential role that image promotion can play in destination selection, can be identified through comparison of image perceptions with and without experience of a destination. Therefore another aim of this research is:

- ◆ To study any differences established in the image perceived of a destination by potential and actual visitors to that area.

Having identified the potential for image promotion, it is necessary to consider any possible limitations to its effectiveness. Therefore, it is necessary to consider all factors involved in image formation. Therefore another aim of this research is:

- ◆ To identify how an image is formed, the influential factors involved and the inter-relationships between them.

This research considered the relationship between geographical distance lived from a destination and image perception to have been inadequately examined to date. Therefore this research aims:

- ◆ To study the relationship between clarity of image, geographical distance from a destination and likelihood of visit.

In order to address the first four aims of the research, a methodology that would contact both potential and actual visitors needed to be employed. To ensure conclusions could be drawn from the data generated, this research aims:

- ◆ To employ a methodology, designed to collect qualitative and quantitative data from a representative cross-section of the population, with an associated high response rate.

Whilst the significance of image within destination selection from the potential and actual visitors' perspective is important, it is also important to consider the significance of image from the promoters' perspective. Therefore this research also aims:

- ◆ To study the importance of image promotion to the promoters of a destination.

For effective image promotion of a destination, related policies may be necessary due to the complexity and diversity of the tourism industry. Therefore, this research aims:

- ◆ To identify associated difficulties with the development of image promotion policies, and to postulate if, and how, these issues can be addressed.

Destination promoters are generally assigned a geographical area as their remit. This is not necessarily the most effective for image promotion. Therefore, this research aims:

- ◆ To consider a region as a practical unit of area for promotion.

Potential visitors are likely to be exposed to fewer stimuli for low profile destinations than for those with a higher profile. Arguably, image promotion therefore has greater potential for low profile destinations since they are competing with fewer sources of information. Additionally, when studying low profile destinations, respondents may be able to assign importance to different sources of information in image formation, again due to the lack of variables involved. Therefore, this research aims:

- ◆ To study the promotion of a low profile destination.

To draw conclusions and make recommendations from the research conducted, the final aim of this research is:

- ◆ To consider the implications of the research for potential visitors and the promoters of a destination with respect to future image promotion.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter Two critically appraises the relationship between tourism and image. It is necessary to begin this study with clarification of definitions pertaining to tourism and related tourism concepts, including the tourist, the tourism industry and the tourism product. The dynamic nature of destination perception is introduced. Image is defined psychologically and spatially and the symbiotic relationship between tourism and image discussed.

The role of promotion and communication is considered with the need for information and image transference identified and potential distortions highlighted. The promotion of image within the tourism industry is discussed, illustrated by arguably successful image promotion campaigns. The potential development of an image-reality gap and its implications are considered.

Chapter Three discusses the choice of methodology adopted throughout the research within the context of the philosophies of social science methodology. Two main areas of empirical research were conducted. Images perceived by visitors and non-visitors to Grampian, the Case study region, were studied in conjunction with the image promoted by the industry. The rationale for selection of this region as a case study is discussed, clarifying that the role of image was being studied generically through Grampian, to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon on a wider scale.

The methodology adopted for contacting potential visitors to Grampian is reviewed, beginning with a discussion of the methodology employed for pilot studies. The associated problems that would have arisen had this method been employed for the main survey are then highlighted. The benefits and limitations of alternative methodologies subsequently considered for the collection of the main empirical data and the selected method are critically reviewed. The details of the chosen methodology are discussed, with particular attention paid to sampling of respondents, questionnaire design and the data analysis.

The methodology for interviews with members of the tourism industry is discussed with respect to the role that promoters of the region perceive image to play in destination selection. The use of a semi-structured interview technique is justified through the review of alternatives. Analysis of brochure content is considered within a historical context, to identify any change in the image promoted of the area over time. The methodology employed to study image promotional policy is discussed. Relevant documentation is analysed in conjunction with interviews conducted with relevant members of promotional organisations to identify any existing policies and potential for success of future policies.

Chapter Four focuses upon the role of image in the decision-making process of potential visitors to a destination. Individuals' motivations to fulfil needs and desires, studied by a number of researchers in different areas of consumer behaviour, are discussed. Associated models can be adapted to study the potential visitor's decision-making process of destination selection. However, by doing so, limitations to these models are identified. The main limitation of existing decision-making models is the lack of importance placed upon image in this process.

The use of image in destination promotion is considered, postulating factual information and destination image should be promoted conjointly to attract visitors. The pertinence of the stage in the decision-making process to the potential effectiveness of image promotion is examined.

A brief historical overview of destination image promotion is provided. The effectiveness of the brochure, arguably the most powerful tool for tourism organisations, in communicating images to potential visitors is questioned. Alternative and complementary media are considered.

Chapter Five studies the constituent parts of image to help comprehend image in its entirety. Factors involved in the process of image formation are discussed and associated classification systems, designed by previous researchers, critically reviewed. A factor often omitted from the discussion of image formation is distance that a potential visitor lives from a destination. The role that distance plays in both the formation of an image and the decision-making process of destination selection process are considered.

The process of image formation incorporating these factors is examined. As with destination selection, this process differs between individuals. In association with the variance in characteristics of individuals, personal interpretation of information and varying exposure to stimuli lead to unique destination images.

To evaluate the potential effect of promoters on this image formation process, the issue of image measurement is discussed. The study of image measurement is a relatively recent concept and so it is pertinent to consider similar concepts for which appropriate measurement models have been developed. Similarities between the concepts of attitude and image are established and thus the adaptability of attitude measurement models to image measurement substantiated. Models of attitude measurement considered appropriate are briefly reviewed. Limitations of image measurement and modelling are discussed, reiterating the subjective nature of this concept.

Chapter Six relates the process of policy-making to tourism and image-related issues. Whilst no policy currently exists for destination image promotion within the case study region, the potential for such a policy is considered.

The potential administrative framework for tourism and image-related policy-making is discussed at both the Scottish and regional level. Limitations to associated policy development are identified and the potential effectiveness of such policies within an industry so fragmented, are questioned.

Chapter Seven analyses the contemporary visitor images of Grampian from the promoters viewpoint with reference to aims and objectives of the study, as stated earlier. Similarly, **Chapter Eight** analyses the image perceived of Grampian by potential and actual visitors.

Chapter Nine utilises the information accumulated throughout the thesis to promote further understanding of image formation and the decision-making process of destination selection. Image is proposed to be the most significant factor in destination selection. Factors involved in the potential visitor's destination selection process are reviewed within the context of their inter-relationships and an appropriate model proposed, highlighting the role of image.

By identifying the significance of experience in the process of image formation, the importance of image promotion is highlighted. However, the lack of significance attached to image in the promotion of Grampian, potentially due to problems associated with effectiveness measurement, identifies misunderstanding by promoters.

The lack of image promotional policy is considered. Potential for effective image policies in the future is discussed in light of recent structural changes in a number of the organisations involved in the promotion of regional destinations. Limitations associated with using a region as a unit area for promotion identified question the unit areas now being used in the promotion within Scotland, after recent consolidation of Tourist Boards.

Finally, suggestions are postulated for future research that would utilise the findings of this study, including extension of the research to the promotion of other destinations.

Chapter II: The Relationship Between Tourism and Image

2.1 Introduction

Image is fundamental to tourism. Due to the intangible nature of the tourism product, image has a role to play in destination selection for both potential visitors and promoters. Analysis of this relationship identifies the influence promoters of a destination can have upon potential visitors. There are economic, social and political implications to any degree of control over a potential visitor's decision-making process. Visitor expenditure can be channelled, specific types of visitor attracted and developments, and related employment, targeted.

Without the ability to sample the product, individuals use their perceived image of a destination in their selection process. When the image perceived reflects the reality of the destination, a visitor is likely to be satisfied by their experience and thus may become a repeat visitor. Whilst, "tourism is both an agent and object of change" (Dann, 1995, p.133), associated images are also continually changing through acquisition of new or updated information. The significance of the relationship between the two dynamic concepts of tourism and image for effective promotion of a destination is the essence of this research. However, image is only one of a number of inter-related factors which influence this decision. A better understanding of the role that image plays in relation to these other factors will enhance the relationship between potential visitors and promoters.

For a piece of research to be legitimately valid, concepts used throughout the study must be defined. This is particularly important with respect to tourism since there is no universally accepted definition of tourism or related concepts. This study begins with the necessitated definition of relevant concepts and related issues as a foundation for the critical appraisal of the relationship between tourism and image.

2.2 Difficulties With Defining Tourism and Related Concepts

The subjective nature of tourism can lead to discrepancies between definitions of tourism and related ideas. The definition of these concepts is a prerequisite for valid visitor analysis

and accurate comparison of destinations. A review of existing definitions identified those most appropriate for this research.

The definition of the central concept of tourism assists in the definition of related concepts. Three approaches to defining tourism have been identified by Buck (1978) and Leiper (1979). The plethora of definitions can thus be classified into the three categories of 'conceptual', 'technical' and 'holistic'.

Definitions which can be classified as conceptual separate tourism from other phenomena which may be similar or related, such as leisure and recreation (Burkart & Medlik, 1981). Tourism could therefore be described as, "the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs" (Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p. 1).

Conversely, a number of definitions can be classified as technical. These descriptions differentiate between types of tourist and constituent parts of the tourism activity. This form of definition is the most appropriate as the basis for statistical measurements, legislation and industrial needs (Burkart & Medlik, 1981). Early definitions of tourism were technical (Rita, 1993), describing the direct economic impact of visitors.

Alternatively, tourism definitions may be holistic. These descriptions incorporate the whole subject area, providing the basis for an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach. Holistic definitions can give insight into the nature of the tourism industry and the rationale for travel (Rita, 1993). Tourism can be defined as the total relationships and phenomena linked with the stay of foreigners in a locality provided they do not exercise a major, permanent or temporary paid activity (Hunziker & Krapf, 1942). This was reiterated by Kaspar (1981) who defined tourism as the entire inter-relationships and phenomena resulting from people travelling to, and stopping at, places which are neither their main continuous homes nor place of work.

An emphasis on epistemology is made in Jafari (1977)'s holistic definition of tourism. He stated that it is, "the study of man away from his usual habitat, of the industry which responds to his needs, and of the impacts both he and the industry have on the host's socio-

cultural, economic and physical environments''. This identifies one important difference between tourism and consumer goods, that experience of the product has implications beyond economics.

This research considers that tourism is a concept that contains elements of each of these three categories. Tourism is constituted by a number of inter-relationships that exist between all aspects of a destination experienced by the visitor. However, due to its intangible nature, by definition tourism must be conceptual. In addition, to allow comparison between visitors to a destination or between destinations, the definition may include technical parameters. Therefore this research defines tourism as a concept which incorporates the inter-relationships between all aspects of a destination which may be experienced by a tourist within the technical parameters of tourist differentiation. In order to define tourism more succinctly it is necessary to define the tourist.

2.2.1 Difficulties Associated with Defining a Tourist

The description of a person who is 'away from their usual habitat' can be tuned to form a more accurate description of a tourist. In 1963, the UN Rome Conference defined tourists as, 'temporary visitors staying at least 24 hours'' whose purpose can be defined as:

- (a) leisure (recreation, health, holiday, study, religion and sport)
- (b) business, family, mission and meeting

(Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p. 11)

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1989) refine this definition further to exclude nomads, refugees and transit passengers staying for less than 24 hours in a destination. Eurostat (1993) is more specific in the activities that can be undertaken as a tourist in a destination, defining a tourist as, 'any person travelling, for less than a specified period of time, to a place other than that of his usual environment and the main purpose of whose visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited, who stays at least 24 hours in the country visited''.

This interpretation of a tourist can be adapted to the domestic tourist by modifying the definition to staying in a visitor destination for 24 hours rather than a destination in a different country. The United Kingdom Tourism Survey (Scottish Tourist Board, 1993)

limits the length of the time that an individual can spend in a destination without being termed a temporary resident, interpreting tourism to be ‘trips away from home which last for one night or more, up to a maximum of sixty days’.

These definitions exclude day-trippers, since they are considered to bring a minimal amount of revenue to a destination and it is the economic benefits accrued which are deemed important. However, this group of visitors can be very important. If the day visitors live close to the destination, they may visit often on daytrips, bringing revenue into the area on more than one occasion. Alternatively, if people were staying in another destination within close proximity, a day trip may encourage a longer stay in the future.

The distinction was made between ‘tourists’, who stay for at least one night in a destination, and ‘excursionists’, who were day visitors, by the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO), later to become the World Travel Organisation (WTO). The division of visitors into these two categories indicates that the importance of the day visitor has been acknowledged. Arguably, individuals visiting a destination for business purposes have a greater potential expenditure than excursionists and therefore should also be included within the definition of a tourist.

This research considers excursionists to be of importance due to their expenditure, potential for future visits and capacity to encourage others to visit. Therefore, all visitors to a destination are included within the concept of a tourist in this research. This includes tourists visiting family and/or friends, on holiday, on business or for other reasons, such as shopping or medical visits. The length of time spent in a destination and the main activities undertaken are not considered to be factors which warrant the exclusion of any visitors to a destination, since all visitors experience part of the tourism product, which in turn influences their image of the destination. Therefore, the terms visitor and tourist are used interchangeably throughout this study.

Visitors, or tourists, are themselves unique. However, patterns of behaviour can be identified. There are some characteristics of a destination that a potential visitor would expect to attain a certain standard, including accommodation, food, services and friendliness of the resident population (Hunt, 1975). Therefore, these factors, in

conjunction with an attractive area, are arguably the basic requirements for a successful destination.

2.2.2 Difficulties Associated with Defining a Tourism Industry

The suppliers of these requirements could be described as workers in a tourism industry. However, it is difficult to delimit such an industry since aspects of the tourism product may be supplied for local residents as well as tourists, and by suppliers involved in a number of different industries. Tourism is not a single industry, but in fact a group of related industries (Smith, 1989). It is, ‘‘the collection of productive businesses and governmental organisations that serve the traveller away from home, including restaurants, hotels, resorts, transport, national and state parks, recreation areas and private attractions’’(Powers, 1992, p. 318).

This research considers that the tourism industry is not mutually exclusive, it does not exist purely to supply the tourism product for visitors. Instead, the tourism industry consists of many businesses and organisations primarily involved in other industries supplying aspects of the tourism product as a secondary activity, with relatively few organisations and businesses whose main aim is to serve tourists. This is because of the large number of parts which constitute the tourism product. Similarly, image perception is not created solely when an individual is considering a holiday, image extends beyond that of the perception of the tourist. This research has focused upon organisations and businesses directly involved with tourism, assuming that these people would be the most likely to have a clear policy on image promotion.

This fragmentation of the tourism industry has a number of implications for tourism development and promotion, the tourist themselves and also for the researcher. One implication is that tourists are often only part of the clientele for tourism-related businesses, such as restaurants and local bus services, which serve the local community as well as visitors. Indeed, tourists utilise existing infrastructures, facilities and industries as well as demanding amenities specific to them, such as guided tours and visitor attractions. Therefore, development and promotional activities may be aimed at local residents as well as tourists, diluting the potential effect destination promoters can have with a limited budget.

The piecemeal nature of the tourism industry may also lead to disjointed promotion of the destination. The number and variety of organisations and businesses involved renders policy development problematic (as discussed in Chapter VI). Associated with this lack of promotional cohesion is the likelihood that a consolidated image will not be portrayed. In the absence of a universal image promoted by the industry, a potential visitor may receive a confused, non-distinctive image of that area.

The lack of a universal standard of quality for the visitor may also result from the fragmented nature of the industry. Each fragment may have its own standard, such as hotels have rating systems and transport companies must meet certain safety standards, but there is no one system for the whole industry. Therefore the visitor is not guaranteed a certain standard for the whole tourist experience. However, an overall image of the destination can be promoted which portrays a high standard of quality associated with all aspects of the tourism product.

2.2.3 Difficulties Associated With The Definition Of The Tourism Product

The tourism product is an amalgamation of these services and experiences. As Kotler (1988) suggests, anything which may be purchased, used or consumed in order to satisfy a want or need can be termed a product. Arguably a service product (Schmol, 1977; Foster, 1985), the tourist product has a number of service-related and tourist-related characteristics which differ from other products (Rita, 1993). It consists of an assortment of goods and services combined together as an experience to be offered to a potential tourist. The consumption of the tourism product, of place and things is through the tourism experience, constituted by a multitude of experiences and interactions of places and people.

In this research the tourism product is considered to be all aspects of the destination experienced by a visitor. This includes information and images accumulated before and during the visit as well as all goods and services experienced whilst at the destination.

Tourism, has a number of unique characteristics which render the consideration of image vital. Arguably the most important feature of the tourism product is its intangibility. Indeed, the attraction to visit a particular destination is often more visionary than tangible (Hunt, 1975). This attribute, whilst important in isolation, is also the underlying reason for a number of tourism's other distinct characteristics. Unlike other consumer products which

are tangible, tourism can not be inspected by potential tourists. Since tourism can not be sampled in advance, the term product can only be loosely applied to it. Alternatively, tourism can be seen to be a collection of projected images which establish the boundaries of experience (Papson, 1981).

The purchase tends to precede the consumption of the tourist product, booking travel, accommodation and activities. Therefore the potential tourist is being asked to make a speculative investment when they commit themselves to a visit (Holloway, 1991).

Once the visitor has chosen the destination to visit they are given no guarantee of reliability, the holiday can not be exchanged for another if it fails to meet their expectations. Therefore, a greater risk is taken when a tourism product is purchased than other consumer goods. The level of perceived risk varies between individuals and in relation to the specific circumstances of destination selection (discussed in more detail below). In the absence of an opportunity to sample the product, as a substitute for experience, image plays an important role in conveying information about the tourism product to potential visitors. As part of the information accumulation process, potential visitors develop their destination image, providing promoters with scope to impact upon the process of image formation.

The intangible characteristic of tourism affects the purchase decision and also the visit itself. When visiting the area of their choice, the visitor will experience the intangible benefits of service, atmosphere and hospitality, all open to subjective interpretation. Individuals will perceive their experience according to such factors as their own personality, status in society and culture. This indicates the subjective nature of reality, the implications of which are discussed later in this chapter.

All purchases involve an element of risk taking. The amount of risk perceived by the consumer varies with the financial cost, the amount of uncertainty about the product's attributes and the amount of consumer self-confidence (Kotler, 1991). The diagram below, Figure 2.1, was constructed to describe the effect perceived risk has on an individual's decision to visit a destination.

Figure 2.1: Effect of Perceived Risk on Decision to Visit a Destination

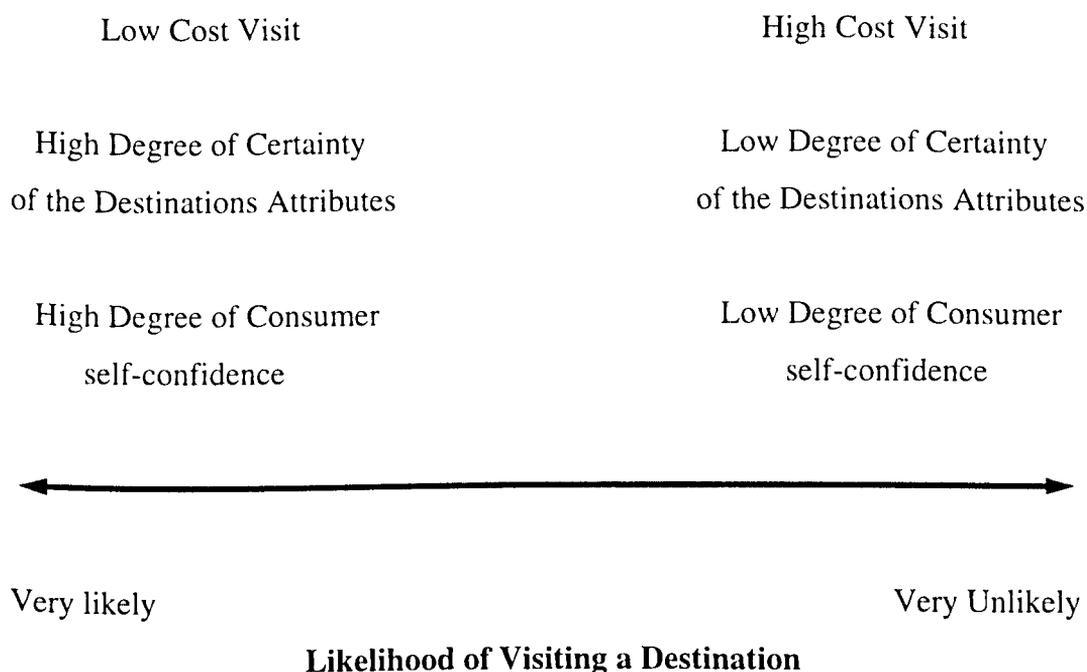


Figure 2.1 suggests that perceived risk for an individual visiting a destination involves a combination of the above factors within a substitutable relationship. Therefore, it could be proposed that a potential visitor is more likely to visit a destination of which they have an unclear image and live a distance from, if the associated price is relatively low. However, a more certain knowledge of the destination's attributes may increase the amount of money the potential visitor is willing to spend. Therefore, the function of price as a factor in destination selection decreases with an associated higher degree of certainty about that destination. However, a level of risk is still involved.

The level of the potential visitor's self-confidence also influences the perceived risk of destination selection. The success of previous destination selections may affect the individual's confidence in their ability to choose the most suitable location for a holiday with respect to relevant circumstances at that specific time. The personality of the individual will also affect the confidence that they have in their own ability to make decisions. Other members of the party and the potential visitor's peers may serve to build the individual's confidence in their destination selection or reduce their confidence through complementary or contradictory information respectively.

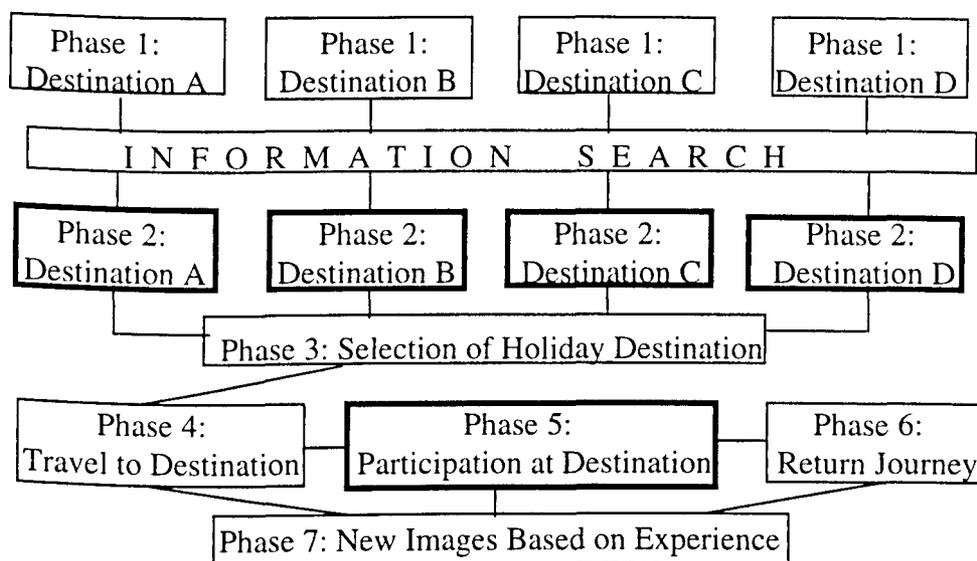
Other factors may be involved in an individual's perceived risk of visiting a destination. An individual may enjoy risk or prefer security in their decision-making. The importance of the holiday may affect the degree of risk that an individual is willing to take in their destination selection, such as risk taking may be seen as more acceptable for a second holiday than a main holiday, or for a day excursion than a longer visit.

The potential visitor may prefer to reduce the intensity of perceived risk by increasing the number of risks taken. The selection of an organised package deal symbolises that the individual is engaging one relatively large risk, the relinquishment of control over arrangements to the tour operator. Conversely, a self-organised visit incorporates a number of risks as each aspect of the tourism product is chosen separately by the individual. Here, even if one aspect of the destination does not attain the level of satisfaction anticipated, the individual will expect other aspects to do so due to the spread of risks taken.

Perceived risk influences the consumer's decision to purchase, potentially causing modification, postponement or avoidance of the decision. To reduce the amount of perceived risk, individuals may avoid making a decision, continue to accumulate more information or choose high profile destinations. To reduce the perceived risk for potential visitors and thus encourage visits, adequate information can be provided at each stage of the potential visitor's decision-making process in destination selection.

The process of destination selection can be divided into a seven-point scale (Gunn, 1988), as per Figure 2.2 below. In the first two stages of the process, an image of the destination is being formed from secondary sources (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991), indicating the importance of information provision. A positive image portrayal is most important at this stage since it is easier to influence an image before it is formed rather than transform it later (Robinson, 1994).

Figure 2.2: Model of Tourist Behaviour



Key:

Phase 1: Accumulation of Mental Images about a Holiday Experience

Phase 2: Modification of Phase 1 by further information

Phase 3: Decision to Take Holiday

Phase 4: Travel to Destination

Phase 5: Participation at the Destination

Phase 6: Return Journey

Phase 7: New Accumulation of Images Based on the Holiday Experience

(adapted from Gunn, 1988)

Phases 2 and 5 in Figure 2.2 have been highlighted as potentially the most important for the tourist and therefore for promoters and developers. These stages of the process involve accumulation of primary and secondary information. It is here that the promoters of a destination can influence the image perceived by visitors. This has implications for those policy-makers involved in image-related issues, to derive maximum effect from promotional campaigns, the best timing for image promotion and best content and format of the message to be conveyed may be drawn from an estimation of the phase of this model that the potential visitor is in.

Another unique characteristic of tourism is that it consists of a longer process than purely the visit. The planning and anticipation of the visit, followed by the recollection of

experiences on return home, may be equally as enjoyable. This compares to the purchase of other consumer products with the anticipation of a product, the choice of the manufacturer and model and the experience of it. However, it differs from durable goods that may last for a number of years since a tourist's visit, by definition, lasts for a determined period of time, restricted by commitments of family and work.

The tourism product also includes the travel experience itself (Murphy, 1987). The accessibility and affordability of flying and the development of motorways have reduced the travel experience since places en route are now avoided, serving to increase the importance of the destination. However, travel remains an aspect of the tourism product. The experience that visitors have on the way to and from their destination will influence the overall enjoyment of their holiday (Boorstin, 1961). The potential visitors will have preconceptions of the journey associated with travelling to and from the destination. Image promotion could dispel any erroneous assumptions, such as destinations outside central England and central areas of Scotland being inaccessible, through promotion of this aspect of the product.

Tourism is a heterogeneous product. It varies in standard and quality over time, unlike other fast moving consumer products (Holloway, 1991). The human aspect of this service product means that differences in such attributes as personality, training and situational circumstances will influence the tourist's experience (Rita, 1993, p. 175). This is linked in part to the fragmentation of the tourism industry, with different standards for each component of the tourism product. However, within these components differences will occur over time due to variations in such factors as personnel and the weather. The tourist may desire an image of a destination which can act as a gauge for what they can expect.

Supply of the tourism product is highly perishable, fixed in time and space. The number of bedrooms or seats available on a flight can not be altered immediately, nor stored or inventoried, to be sold at a later date, as can many other consumer products. This often leads to heavy discounting by accommodation providers and airlines at the last minute to facilitate a minimum revenue, to at least cover fixed costs. A change in demand will lead to a lagged response from the supply side due to the time taken to adjust fixed variables, such as number of beds available or frequency of flights. To minimise any potential difference between supply and demand, information should be readily available for the potential

visitor relating to the destination's facilities and alternative modes of transport to and within the destination. The promotion of an image which portrays a high quality product in conjunction with the provision of such relevant information is most likely to attract visitors.

Linked to the perishable characteristic is a further unique attribute of tourism, that production and consumption are inseparable (Rita, 1993). Capacity can only be utilised when the customers are present at the point of production (Middleton, 1990). Tourism can not be brought to the consumer, unlike other goods where the exchange of goods and services can take place at the location of the purchaser (Papadopoulos, 1986). Instead the visitor must be taken to the tourism product. The distance that a potential visitor lives from the destination becomes an important factor in the decision whether or not to visit since for those that live further away, it will probably take more time and money to travel to the destination. However, the effect of distance is dependent upon the individual's perception of the travel experience.

The tourist product differs from consumer durables in this respect since the price when purchasing a good and length of time taken to buy a durable good tends to differ between purchase points in a way which does not necessarily correlate with distance from the site of manufacture since a consumer good is relatively price inelastic. Conversely the demand for a tourist product affects the price charged for it, making it relatively price elastic. This research has further considered the relationship between the proximity to a destination and the clarity of image perceived, the results of which are discussed in Chapter VIII.

The tourism product is also unique due to its characteristically seasonal nature. As Rita (1993) suggests, the time of year, day of the week, and time of day affect demand for tourist products. Traditionally people from Northern Europe tend to take their holiday in the summer months of June to September (Middleton, 1990). This has distinct climatic advantages since daylight hours are longer and it is generally drier and warmer. Long school holidays also occur within this period. However, a greater number of short breaks, a stay of three nights or less, are now being taken throughout the year, either instead of main holidays or as additional holidays. In 1995, 28% of domestic tourism in the United Kingdom was a short-break holiday, compared to 27% which represented longer holidays

(BTA/ETB, 1996/1997). This has the benefit of allowing suppliers to derive an income outside the main season.

Seasonality remains an important, although arguably diminishing, issue of the tourism industry in the United Kingdom. As can be seen from Table 2.1 below, holidays taken in the UK by residents are centred around August and to a lesser extent July. However, from 1983 to 1995, the percentage of holidays taken outside the main holiday season, May to September inclusive, have increased from 18% to 41%. This spacing of visitors throughout the year shows a reduction in the seasonality of people taking holidays. However, 59% of the holidays taken by UK residents in 1995 still occurred in the main holiday season which constitutes only 42% of the year, showing that seasonality, whilst reducing in severity, is still an issue. Seasonality is linked to weather since some activities tend to be more enjoyable with favourable conditions. This suggests that seasonality will always be an issue for the tourism industry and therefore its effects should be minimised.

In 1995, the short break market for UK residents was less seasonal than that for the main holidays taken, with 52% of additional holidays started between October and April, compared to 31% of the main holidays begun in these months. Although August was the most popular month for people to begin both their main and additional holidays within the UK, July was the second most popular month for residents to start their main holiday, whereas May was the most popular for additional holidays. A general trend can be identified of additional holidays having a bi-modal distribution with the nodes either side of the most popular months for main holidays.

Table 2.1: Domestic Holidays taken by UK residents lasting four nights or more

Month Holiday Began	All Holidays 1983 (%)	All Holidays 1995 (%)	Main Holidays 1995 (%)	Short Breaks 1995 (%)
May	10	10	10	11
June	12	9	9	9
July	21	13	17	9
August	25	17	23	10
September	13	10	10	9
Other Months	18	41	31	52

(English Tourist Board, 1994 & Office for National Statistics, 1997)

With 69% of domestic UK main holidays and 48% of short breaks taken in five months of the year, there is clearly a main holiday season from May to September. Promotional activities are usually set up to take account of this and portray the destination as an all year round attraction. Destinations which are orientated around outdoor pursuits, such as beach activities and summer sports, may have to promote a different image for the out-of-season visitor, concentrating on less weather-specific attractions, such as heritage of the area.

A positive aspect of the UK domestic market is the number of short breaks taken, which arguably, relating to the concept of perceived risk, have more potential for locational substitution than longer holidays. Indeed, in the UK in 1995, the average number of nights per trip taken by UK residents was 3.8 (BTA/ETB, 1997). In Scotland this was slightly higher, with an average of 4.7 nights per visit. The average amount of money spent per night in the same year was £28 in the UK as a whole and £30 in Scotland. This trend is reflected in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Domestic Holidays Taken by UK residents, 1995

Length of Stay	UK (million)	Scotland (million)
1-3 Nights	77.4	5.2
4 or More Nights	43.6	4.5
Total	121.0	9.7

(British Tourist Authority / English Tourist Board, 1997)

Table 2.2 indicates that a high proportion of holidays taken in the UK are short breaks. However, the proportion of holidays taken of such a duration in Scotland when compared to longer holidays lasting four or more nights, is lower than that in the UK (54% of the holidays taken in Scotland are short breaks compared to 61% in the UK). Therefore, there is potential for Scotland to attract some of the domestic visitors who are presently visiting other areas of the United Kingdom.

One factor which may influence the number of short breaks taken in Scotland is the distance people are prepared to travel for different lengths of visit. Since the geographical distribution of UK residents is dramatically skewed with England the most densely populated, any correlation between the distance a potential visitor is willing to travel and the length of stay, means more short breaks will be taken in England than Scotland. Therefore, efficient, economical access to Scotland may help to encourage visitors to Scotland.

Another characteristic of tourism, already touched upon, is that generally the tourism industry experiences high fixed costs of operating available capacity and relatively low variable costs (Middleton, 1990). Unlike other consumer products, one consumer may be unable to make a purchase without others doing the same. A guest house may close during the months of October to May due to a lack of sufficient demand to substantiate the opening up of all the facilities, or the frequency of flights to a destination may be reduced.

The necessity of multiple visitors for many aspects of the tourism product to profitably be supplied exemplifies the issue of seasonality again. The use of promotional activities to reduce the affect of seasonality coupled with improved communication between potential visitors and those in the tourism industry could lead to an increase in the number of visitors throughout the year. Many respondents in this research complained that a high proportion of attractions and amenities were closed or running infrequently when they had visited outside the main season. Indeed, many attractions and amenities close from September until April or at least have restricted opening hours.

The seasonal characteristic of the tourism product means that the cost to the consumer may alter throughout the year. Most other consumer products will remain at a constant price unless under special promotion or there is a permanent price increase. The timing of both booking and the visit itself therefore influences the relative price of alternative destinations

Again linked to the concept of seasonality, those supplying a product which is in greater demand at a certain time of year are likely to charge a higher price at that time. Naturally, if demand exceeds supply, such as if a hotel is at full occupancy and turning customers away, a higher price can be charged for the rooms as people will be willing to pay more to get a room when the availability is low.

Another characteristic of tourism, particularly pertinent to tourism-related policies, is that the tourism experience requires a high level of interdependence and complementarity between different aspects of the tourism product. Co-operation in policy development may therefore appear beneficial, however the nature of the industry also renders policy-making problematic. A visit to a destination would typically utilise elements of the three components; attractions, facilities and accessibility (Medlik & Middleton, 1974; Rita,

1993). If different components ensure their product complements others, such as travel companies running transport close to accommodation for visitors, the tourist is more likely to have a congenial experience. The standard and quality of these constituent parts of the tourism experience must be equally high since if even one of these services is of a low quality, the others will suffer as a direct consequence. The quality of service provided is evaluated by the tourist (Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry, 1985; Gronroos, 1985) and will affect the image perceived of the destination.

This high standard can be conveyed to the potential visitor through an associated image. Having either a product of quality or an image of quality without the other renders both worthless. Either the potential visitor does not realise that the destination has a high standard of facilities, amenities and attributes, or such an image is portrayed and subsequently found to be false through direct experience or other sources of information. Image is not merely a communication of facts but a style in which information is conveyed. Having referred to destinations throughout the review of other tourism-related concepts, it is necessary to clarify the definition of a destination.

2.2.4 Associated Problems with Defining Tourist Destinations

As Laws (1995) suggests, the concept of a tourist destination is problematic to define and covers a wide spread of geographical locations from purpose built resorts and historic cities, to entire countries. What unites this extensive variety of locations as tourist destinations is that they all act as recreational centres for travellers.

At different stages of tourist behaviour (Gunn, 1988), the destination may be redefined as information is accumulated, indicating that boundaries of a destination may be fluid to potential visitors. The perceived delimitation of a destination may reduce as knowledge is increased in an inversely proportional relationship, as shown in Figure 2.3 below.

Figure 2.3: Possible Relationship Between Destination Delimitation and Knowledge

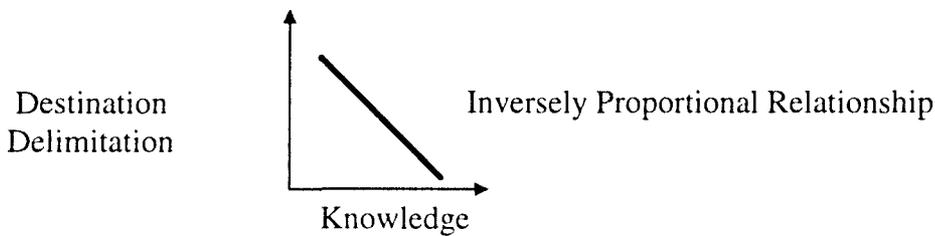


Figure 2.3 suggests that as more detailed information is gathered, the delimitation of the destination by the potential visitor correspondingly decreases. If the relationship between destination delimitation and knowledge of that destination is indeed inversely proportional, progression through the decision-making process of destination selection may reduce destination size. For example, an individual first decides to visit Scotland. On information accumulation the destination is restricted to Grampian and on further gathering of information, Elgin is selected as their final destination. Thus, the perceived destination has been reduced from a nation to a city. Perceived boundaries of a destination are however likely to be more blurred than this simple example, leading to problems in determining an appropriate unit area for image promotion.

This is only one way in which the delimitation of a destination can change. Conversely, a potential visitor may begin with the desire to visit a particular attraction. Information about the surrounding area may then be accumulated, expanding the boundaries perceived of the destination, leading to a proportional relationship between destination delimitation and knowledge of the destination, contradicting Figure 2.3.

A method of assessment of how a destination is delimited by potential or actual visitors would be to study how an individual describes to a friend where they were going, or had been, on holiday. Whether a national, regional or local area was described would indicate the perceived boundaries of the destination. However, the individual will be influenced by the stage in their information accumulation process. The inversely proportional relationship between destination delimitation and knowledge, proposed above, would suggest that individuals in early stages of information accumulation would delimit the destination with wider boundaries than later in the information search. In addition, the individual may be influenced by the knowledge they perceive the other person to have. Therefore, an individual may not say they were visiting Aboyne when their friend had minimal

knowledge of Scotland, due to the improbability of comprehending a specific village in Grampian.

Delimitation of a destination by visitors will have marketing implications. Individuals desire information on the area they have chosen to visit and it is the responsibility of promoters to supply potential visitors with relevant information. Thus, demand influences the material supplied, including the geographical area covered. This may however be limited by the structure of promotional organisations, with different regions promoted by their own tourist boards or local authorities. Indeed, “tourist destinations are usually identified and resourced in terms of existing administrative boundaries... rather than based on modern perceptions and area used by tourists” (Laws, 1995). Visitors do not tend to recognise the administrative boundaries that policy-makers and funding agencies do. Consequently, the area covered by promotional material may alter the potential visitor’s perception of the destination’s dimensions or the effectiveness of image promotion may be reduced.

This research has considered the marketing of regional destinations. The diverse nature of a region includes not only urban and rural differences but also a high degree of variance within these areas. There are two ways that a region can be marketed. An image can be applied to the whole region, necessitating a relatively general image to be applicable for the entire area. Such a general image may arguably exhibit similarities with a national image, introducing the issue of separation, questioning whether an image of a region can indeed be separated from a national image (for further exploration of this issue see Chapter VIII). Alternatively, a more specific image can be promoted which applies to a smaller proportion of the region, which is not necessarily representative of the whole area. Arguably, these two methods could be used in conjunction with each other at different points in the information accumulation process, with the general image more pertinent in the earlier part of this process and as the potential destination is reduced in size, the more specific image becomes more appropriate.

All destinations are unique. Geographical location, layout of the area and composition of attributes are singular to every destination. Nor have any two destinations experienced identical histories of development. However, regardless of their history, many destinations may offer similar provisions for tourists, such as reasonable accommodation, accessibility,

activities and attractions. Therefore, some destinations have limited potential for substitution. When destinations are perceived as substitutable, one deciding factor in destination selection may be distance the potential visitor would have to travel to the destination, such as people from London visiting Oxford because it is closer than Cambridge. Alternatively, the destination's image may be the deciding factor. All destinations have an image, be it good, bad or indifferent (Hunt, 1975). These images can be identified, changed where necessary and exploited by promoters to ensure visitors are attracted to their destination.

Destinations compete locally, nationally and internationally for visitors. Increased leisure time and greater accessibility has diminished the relative importance of distance in the tourist's decision-making process and image perception has become more important. Therefore, destination image promoters have an important role to play in encouraging potential visitors to choose their destination.

Destinations change over time. Structurally the destination changes through construction of new buildings and the deterioration or renovation of other buildings. Demographically the destination changes as the number of residents increases or decreases, the ratio of male to female residents alters or the proportion of people in different age groups and socio-economic classes changes. New visitor attractions may be opened or opening hours revised. These and many other characteristics of the destination, including its image, are dynamic. If developments and associated marketing are not conducted simultaneously, there is likely be a lagged effect in image construction or reconstruction. This potentially delays the attraction of visitors to the development and hence returns on investment will be slower.

The inter-relationships between the concepts herein reviewed indicate the complexity of their definition, with definition of one concept necessitating the introduction of others. Not only are tourism-related definitions complex and diverse, but so too is the impact of tourism.

2.3 Tourism as an Agent of Change

Environmental and social effects of tourism are exacerbated in destinations where tourism is the catalyst for development in the absence of other modernisation (Ziffer, 1989). However, without management tourism can have a negative impact upon any destination.

Potentially tourism can cause serious detriment to the environment, at both a local and larger scale, through congestion, litter and erosion of natural areas. However, the “development of tourism can generate both positive and negative environmental impacts” (World Tourism Organisation, 1994, p.32). Therefore, if controlled, tourism can be ‘sustainable’. Increasing awareness of environmental issues, indicated by growing numbers of associated pressure groups, creates the correct climate for sustainable tourism.

Tourism can have social impacts upon the resident population of a destination. Potentially, friction may arise between visitors and residents. If individuals visiting an area are perceptibly more affluent, for example, local people may be envious and become resentful of the visitors. The degree of respect assigned to visitors and local residents respectively will affect the relationship which develops between them and their impact upon each other.

A number of researchers have studied the attitudes towards tourism amongst local residents (see for instance Butler, 1980; Allen, Haper, Long & Perdue, 1993; Akis, Nicos & Warner, 1996). Variance is identifiable among these attitudes, but two themes emerge. With increasing distance from the tourist zone, the reaction towards tourism appears more favourable (Sheldon & Var, 1984) and the less time a resident has lived in the area, the more tolerant of tourism they appear to be (Um and Crompton, 1987).

The social impact of tourism varies in form and intensity, “tourism may be a catalyst of change but the direction of change is uncertain” (Ryan, 1991, p.165), with visitors influencing the culture of local residents (Cohen, 1982; Loukissas, 1982; Jafari, 1982 & Krippendorf, 1982). Arguably this is most likely when there is a low ratio of tourist to host and within an atmosphere of integration, where visitors interact with residents, leading to mutual transference of ideas and customs. Where visitors remain separate from residents, the local culture is more likely to remain directly unaffected but may be indirectly affected through restructuring of employment to become appropriately tourist-orientated. The image local residents perceive of visitors will be affected by contact with them and may influence the degree to which they accept others’ ideas and values.

Alternatively, visitors may help sustain the historical culture of an area through expenditure which provides the opportunity and incentive to maintain, restore and find new uses for the area’s history. In addition, development of visitor attractions may include the conservation

of certain areas which may have otherwise changed their land-use, thus retaining the environment in which the local culture was nurtured. This is most likely if destination developers feel that an historical, culture-rich image will attract visitors.

Visitors to an area will have an impact upon the local infrastructure. Negatively, the increase in user numbers will exert pressure upon the system (Laws, 1995) and may lead to traffic congestion and quicker degeneration of road surfaces, place pressure on facilities, such as public conveniences, and necessitate clear signposting. Positively, revenue from car parks and tolls, where appropriate, may be increased, and greater use of public transport may reduce fare prices for local residents. If additional pressure on the infrastructure necessitates development of new facilities, such as pedestrianisation or additional leisure facilities, these will benefit the local people as well as visitors. Any developments primarily for visitors, such as airport expansion could be paid for by direct user fees (Hawkins, 1993), ensuring local spending is not diverted from other investments.

Local residents may perceive visitors as expensive to host due to the additional pressure placed on the local infrastructure and amenities. However, the image perceived of visitors may be more positive if associated expenditure leads to the expansion of facilities and increased employment opportunities for local residents. Therefore, behaviour towards visitors is influenced by the relative importance placed on the costs and benefits that these individuals are perceived to bring to the destination (Ryan, 1991).

Image plays an important role for both local residents and potential visitors. The perceived impact of tourism will affect the local population's reception of visitors and the destination image, including friendliness of the locals, will influence the potential visitor's destination selection, highlighting the value of studying tourism and its relationship with image.

2.4 Problems Associated with the Definition of Image

The main problem associated with defining image, similar to tourism, is its subjective nature. Everyone perceives images, whether or not they have experience or knowledge (Gunn, 1988; Mazanec, 1989). An object, person or phenomenon is viewed subjectively. Image is widely believed to be essential to decision-making (Hunt, 1975; McLellan & Foushee, 1983; Telisman-Kosuta, 1989; Um & Crompton, 1990; Kent, 1990; Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Robinson, 1994) since images perceived influence opinions and decisions.

Conversely, decisions made influence images held. Therefore, it can be concluded that both the image people have of a tourist destination is a factor in their destination selection and the decision-making process will affect the image held of that area.

Image is a representation, a mental picture depicting an individual's subjective impression of a psychological object (Thurstone, 1927). This is anything which may have a positive or negative effect on people, such as a physical object; an idea; a plan of action; an ideal; a slogan; a symbol or a destination.

Image has been defined in a number of ways due to its subjective nature. These definitions can be divided into two main categories, spatial and psychological. The psychological definitions can further be subdivided for further analysis into pictorial and non-pictorial.

2.4.1 Pictorial Psychological Definitions

Images can be seen as pictures. Image is similar to seeing, a picture in your head (Millar, 1990), emphasising the close relationship between image and reality. Arguably "one possibility is that images are like internal pictures or snapshots" (Morris and Hampson, 1983, p.119).

Pictorial representations may be more easily remembered than verbal representations. The clarity of image is also higher through visual rather than verbal representations since "images, unlike arbitrary associations between words and things 'resemble' the objects they depict" (Millar, 1990, p.129). However, Information is likely to be stored through a combination of pictorial and verbal codes (Paivo, 1971). Destination images rely substantially on visual images interacting with other thought processes to attract the potential visitor (Mackay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

2.4.2 Non-Pictorial Psychological Definitions

Alternatively, non-pictorial definitions of image are based on the individual forming their image from the "encoding of features taken from the environment" (Robinson, 1994, p.6). Image involves anticipation, it is the equivalent of pretending to see or imagining and is not merely the retrieval of a mental picture or perceptual description (Neisser, 1976). Imagination is indeed an important element in the tourism industry in both destination

perception and promotion. As Pylshyn (1973) noted, visual representations would take up too much space in the brain, which is why images are stored in a descriptive form.

Active participation is involved in perceiving an image, it involves a “type of mental role-playing or pretending to see, hear or whatever” (Morris and Hampson, 1983, p.119), or as Marks writes (1983, p.107), imagery is a “conscious, quasi-perceptual experience”, comprising of “interactions among stored information used in language, perception and reasoning” (Kosslyn, 1984, p. 92). The individual selectively retrieves information from their memory using imagery.

Every person possesses a different image of the same psychological object. Image is subjective knowledge, what an individual believes to be true (Boulding, 1956). Indeed, “image is not necessarily knowledge. Rather it is subjective knowledge. Knowledge carries the implication of validity and truth. Image connotes what I believe to be true...it is our own personal understanding of what we know” (Markin, 1974, p.121).

Similarly, image is a “pseudo-ideal....it is synthetic, believable, passive, vivid and ambiguous” (Boorstin, 1961). Whilst the description of image as a spurious manufactured idea of perfection which is less complex than reality, with uncertain meaning is credible, the reference to the passive nature of this concept is not. One inference that could be taken from this description is that image is a static concept. Yet, new information is continuously accumulated which influences the perceived image, therefore it is a dynamic concept. Alternatively, describing image as passive may have implied that image can be influenced by reality but reality can not be altered by images. This research rejects this proposition, since perceived images can be catalysts for a changing reality. Therefore, information gathered from respondents must be considered within the time and spatial framework in which it was collected.

Similarities do exist between images held by people whose semblances have been constituted in similar circumstances, such as level of education, shared experiences, peer groups akin to one another or exposure to the same media representation. Therefore, whilst image is a subjective concept, comparisons can be made between perceptions of similar people.

2.4.3 Spatial Definitions

Alternatively, a geographical approach to the definition of image centres around the spatial aspect of the concept. The formation of images is considered through the use of “maps and models of the world we carry around with us” (Gould & White, 1986, p. 192). Image is a systematised likeness of an object constructed from an individual’s subjective knowledge or experience, it is an organised representation in an individual’s cognitive system (Kelman, 1965).

Images are a result of cognitive mapping, “a process composed of a series of psychological transformations by which an individual acquires, codes, stores, recalls and decodes information about the relative locations and attributes of a phenomena in his everyday spatial environment” (Downs & Stea, 1973, p.23). The environment exerts influence upon the individual and reinforces or changes, where appropriate, any notions that it transpires are inaccurate through information accumulated from spatial behaviour.

Definitions of image have been adopted from the field of psychology. With respect to marketing, Kotler (1991, p. 570) expresses image as, “the set of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person holds of an object”, emphasising the individuality of each person’s image. Indeed, image is “the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudices, imaginations and emotional thoughts with which a person or group judges a particular object” (Lawson & Baud-Bovy, 1977, p.10). However, the use of the term ‘objective’ with respect to knowledge could be considered misleading, inferring that individuality is excluded from the formation of an image, although the remainder of the definition indirectly describes constituents of subjective knowledge without naming it.

Refining Kotler (1984) ’s definition to specify the formation of a potential tourist’s image, image is “the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has regarding a tourist destination” (Murphy, 1985, p.11) and, “a tourist image, or impression is conjured up from information received, as interpreted through the personal and behavioural characteristics of the tourist” (Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p.31).

The concept of image relates to both individual traits or qualities and a total impression. The lack of recognition of these two components of image has led to the confinement of destination image measurement to specific attributes of a destination, such as amenities and

scenery, ignoring the overall image of that place, such as attractive, barren or a destination worth visiting (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Therefore, the assertion made by Dichter (1985) that the concept of image does not describe individual traits and qualities, but instead describes the total impressions made, is dismissed by this research. Image is an evaluation of a destination based on a related set of perceptions (Wilkie and Pessemier, 1973) which includes both an overall image perception and the image perceived of related attributes.

The number of definitions developed for image are an indication of its subjective nature. Arguably, images are pictorial, based on information that may have been derived in another form, such as textual. Retaining images visually may be easier than descriptively, exemplified by many people able to remember faces, but not necessarily names. Images of one phenomenon may be linked to others, forming a spatial map. This research has assumed that image is a combination of pictorial, descriptive and spatial elements, with the image perceived by an individual unique in both formation and format. Differing perceptions of a destination can occur between similar individuals as well as between groups. A visitor's perception of a holiday destination may differ from a local resident, a tourism promoter and/or fellow tourist. Similarly, people with experience of a destination may have a different image than non-visitors, as indicated later by this research.

Having defined tourism and image, it is now possible to discuss the symbiotic relationship between these two concepts.

2.5 The Relationship Between Tourism and Image

Destination image is a vital aspect of tourism marketing (Ryan, 1991) since image is a critical factor in an individual's decision to visit a destination (Gartner and Hunt, 1987). Given that tourism is an intangible product provided by a fragmented industry, greater importance is placed on the image of a destination than that of other products being considered for purchase. The image of a destination has to compensate for the lack of opportunity to sample the product before visiting the destination.

The importance of the characteristic of intangibility is highlighted when discussing the role of image in decision-making, "tourists must base their decisions on their mental images of the alternatives" (Kent, 1990, p. 44), the visit can not be sampled. Image can be used as a substitute for experience, "unless he has previous acquaintance with his destination, he is

purchasing an expectation, not a tangible product which can be inspected or sampled before the purchase” (Burkhart & Medlik, 1981, p.197).

Image is one of a number of inter-related variables considered by an individual in their decision-making process of destination selection. The importance of other factors relative to the image of the destination is likely to vary between individuals, although trends can be identified. The acknowledgement of the importance of image is indicated by the inclusion of this concept within consumer decision-making models. This research has identified, through interviews with members of the tourism industry, that promoters of a destination also recognise the importance of this concept. Arguably however, visitors do not perceive the significance of image in their decision-making process, as indicated by this research.

Image does have a role in the selection of a destination, but the extent and nature of that role needs to be determined, both in the minds of visitors and promoters.

2.6 Rationale for Image Promotion

Tourism promoters acknowledge the importance of image in destination selection more than potential visitors, as shown by this research (discussed further in Chapters VII & VIII). Indeed, those involved in the promotion of a destination potentially exert a significant influence upon the image perceived by a possible visitor since, “the marketer defines the product to be sold and then transmits the definition in the form of an image to potential travellers” (Lundberg, 1990, p.146). However, this research has also revealed that although promoters say they acknowledge the importance of image promotion, this is not necessarily reflected by their actions.

Amongst many, arguably one of the main reasons for destination promotion is to increase revenue accrued from visitors (Ashworth & Voogd, 1991). It has been suggested earlier in this chapter that the perception of a positive image will increase the likelihood of destination selection. Indeed, if it is believed that the majority of potential visitors have a positive image of a destination, promotional activities can sustain awareness of that destination and its associated image. However, image promotion can be used to alter a perceived image as well as to create or sustain image. If potential visitors erroneously perceive a destination to have a negative image when the reality is notably more positive, to reduce the imbalance an improved image should be promoted. However, if the image of

a destination is negative and is a true reflection of the reality, a positive image should be promoted in conjunction with accompanying structural change, ensuring image and the reality remain congruous. If the destination has a positive image but the reality falls short of this image, structural changes should be made to the destination to reduce the image-reality gap (discussed in greater detail later in this Chapter) which, if left unchecked, could lead to dissatisfied visitors.

Negative image perception may be general or related to specific events, including natural disasters, political violence, terrorism and involvement abroad, illustrated by uncharacteristically low North American visitor numbers to the UK in 1986 (ETB, 1994/1995), attributable to Libyan bombings. The decrease in tourism demand associated with negative image perception may subsequently lead to closure of tourism facilities and attractions (Lea & Small, 1988). The recovery time will vary between destinations and is dependent upon such factors as the severity of the event and the likelihood of recurrence.

Although effects of such events may be estimated, occurrence and severity are less easy to predict. Through evaluation of the incident, potential visitors will perceive the likelihood of recurrence and therefore the risk involved in visiting the destination. Promotion of stability and ability to absorb any unpredictable events through planned remedial action may be the most effective image promotion here. The potential influence of such image promotion is dependent upon the importance placed on promotional activities in image formation.

Measuring and evaluating the success of image promotion is problematic. There is no single measurement that can be taken to gauge the success of image promotion. However, there are a number of variables that can potentially be employed as indicators for the success of image promotion, including changes in visitor numbers; total expenditure by visitors; expenditure per visitor and type of visitor attracted.

The specific rationale for image promotion may favour one or more indicators over others to evaluate any successful changes, such as promotional activities undertaken to alter potential visitors' perceptions of a destination may be evaluated by analysing a change in the type of visitor and/or the number of visitors. However, any variable employed to indicate the success level of image promotion can also be influenced by numerous other

variables, such as media representation and natural disasters in the area. Therefore the effect of image promotional activities is dependent upon other circumstances at the time.

The subjective nature of the concept of image leads to problematic image measurement. The problems experienced with image measurement and image promotion evaluation suggest that destination promoters will be inaccurate in their analysis of image promotional activities. In addition, it is possible that promoters incorrectly assess the original image perceived by potential visitors due to the same problems associated with measurement.

Arguably, promotional activities will have a potentially greater affect on an individual's decision-making process for destination selection than for other consumer products due to the intangible nature of tourism (Gitelson & Crompton, 1983). This means that people are likely to be more receptive to promotional activities relating to destination choice. However, distortions can occur in the image of a destination when it is promoted and as it is received. Due to its subjective nature, the image promoted will be influenced by the promoters perception of the destination, which could be considered as a distortion of reality. Selective promotion can also occur, where promoters portray only part of the reality. Additionally, as with all marketing, the recipient of the promotional information will interpret it in their own way, leading to perceptual distortions.

2.6.1 Perceptual Distortions

Selective promotion may be used in order to attract visitors to a destination. This may confine the promotion of the destination to certain areas or to specific characteristics, perhaps neglecting to show the more negative areas or aspects of the destination. If taken to an extreme, tourism marketing can portray a positive image to the potential visitor, "even to the point where reality may become relatively insignificant" (Ahmed, 1991, p.36). This raises an ethical question as to whether organisations involved in the promotion of a destination should portray all aspects of the area or whether it is sufficient to show the potential visitor only those aspects that they want to see.

Potential visitors do not necessarily expect, and may not want to see, negative aspects of a destination promoted, such as pictures in brochures with eyesores like pylons, barbed wire fences and industrial chimneys. Similarly, when people visit a destination they may deliberately avoid the negative aspects of the area, such as the homeless people or any

depressed or dangerous areas that may exist. Individuals are aware of their existence but do not necessarily want to experience these things. The concept of tourism as a social construct (Urry, 1990) may serve as an explanation for this phenomenon. Society may dictate that it is only the positive attributes of a destination that should be experienced by visitors rather than all aspects of the area. However, some individuals may deliberately visit a destination or certain areas of it for apparently negative reasons, such as tourism centred around visiting scenes of past conflict, ex-prisoner of war camps and industrial tourism.

The subjective image portrayed by the promoters of a destination will be further distorted through the individual's perception of that image (Ashworth & Goodall, 1990). There are three main ways in which the individual can manipulate the image portrayed. Selective exposure describes the potential tourist actively seeking out the information with which they agree or is pleasant (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1987). Selective distortion manipulates information by the recipient, to make it say what they want to hear. Selective retention means the individual commits to memory only those aspects of the information which they choose to.

A possible reason for these perceptual distortions is explained by the concept that every individual has a number of 'schemata' relating to different subjects (Lee, 1991). These are modified as new or updated information is received. However, this new material is absorbed in a selective form so that the individual will only accept information which fits in with their original structure of thought and personal interpretation manipulates it to a better fit. However, sometimes this new information is so different from the original schema that a complete change of view is necessary.

This concept of schemata implies that it is possible to alter people's image of a destination after they have formulated an opinion of it, although any information they receive will be selectively accepted into their perceived image of that place. To alter a perception, it may be necessary to focus on a completely different aspect of the destination to force the individual to abandon their original schema and adopt a more favourable one.

Perceptual distortions of promotional activities may be explained by the individual's socio-psychological set (Gitelson & Crompton, 1983). Additionally, if someone has already been

subjected to a stimulus, further exposure to it or other stimuli relating to the same destination will result in different behaviour than an individual exposed to the stimuli for the first time. The stage reached in destination selection process may also influence the perceptual distortion of promotional material. If an individual has decided to visit the destination being promoted, information will be sought that confirms this decision. Conversely, if another destination has been selected, the individual will seek negative information that confirms their decision not to visit.

In addition to the number of possible interpretations of image promotion, the promotional activities themselves are designed by a number of people working for a variety of organisations, potentially with different objectives and priorities.

2.6.2 Spectrum of Image Promoters

The vast array of organisations and private enterprises involved in the tourism industry is reflected in the number of organisations that involved in image promotion (a full description of those involved in image promotion is given in Chapter VI). The most prominent organisations involved in this promotion are tourist boards and other government agencies, such as Enterprise agencies. However, other organisations are also indirectly involved in image promotion since an image designed to attract industry and investment to an area may also serve to attract visitors. Therefore, district and regional councils may portray an image to attract industry to the area, which is also attractive to potential visitors. Attractions and accommodation establishments are also involved in image promotion through marketing activities and the experience they give to visitors.

With over 220,000 tourism businesses in the UK (Robinson, Pemberton & Holmes, 1997), the industry does not lend itself to the promotion of a universal image. This has a number of implications. From the potential visitor's viewpoint, a lack of harmony will be identified from the fact that promoters are not working together to promote a single image, potentially leading to confused expectations for the individual and disbelief of portrayed images, rendering the promotional activities useless or even detrimental. Conversely, promoters may not feel that joint marketing portrays the whole destination satisfactorily. This reflects a political aspect of image, whereby certain aspects of a destination are promoted over others.

Each of the groups involved in image promotion may have different prioritised interests, such as the tourist boards primarily promote the region as a tourist destination, whereas the Enterprise Companies are more interested in the development of the area for tourism. One of the activities of the Economic and Planning Department of Aberdeenshire Regional Council is their involvement in the provision of amenities for the local residents of the area as well as for the visitors. The audience for image promotion also differs between organisations with the Scottish Tourist Board marketing Scotland to potential visitors both domestically and overseas, the Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board marketing domestically to individuals, Grampian Enterprise Limited marketing to industry and Aberdeenshire Council marketing primarily to local residents. These basic differences may lead to a different emphasis placed by each organisation on the image they portray.

The finance that the organisations have available for marketing also affects the image portrayed. This research has ascertained that there does not appear to be a specific part of an organisation's budget allocated for image promotion. Since tourist boards are primarily in existence to market an area to potential visitors, much of their budget is allocated to marketing. For other organisations, marketing is on a smaller scale and may need to contain more factual information, since marketing is the job of tourist boards. However, factual information can still involve the portrayal of an image through the format of the information communicated.

Clearly then, due to the number and variety of organisations involved in the promotion of a destination's image, and the number of perceptual distortions that can be made to the promoted image, the resulting image perceived will vary considerably between individuals dependent upon exposure to promotional activities and individual characteristics. However, there is evidence that image promotion can effectively influence the image perceived by individuals.

2.6.3 Evidence of Successful Image Promotion

Some destinations actively promote an image of their area to increase awareness and thus attract more visitors whilst others maintain awareness of the destination to retain visitors. Many high profile destinations such as Edinburgh and London may not need to raise awareness of their attraction as a holiday destination. Instead their promotional activities may be targeted, hoping to attract a particular clientele with greater expenditure

possibilities, or to promote particular areas or aspects of the region which have portrayed a negative image in the past. Areas which have been improved structurally accompanied by successful positive image promotion, measured by an increase in visitor numbers and the attraction of industry to the area, include Docklands in London, Castlegate in Manchester and Albert Docks in Liverpool (Brownhill, 1990; Thompson, 1990; Brownhill, 1994).

In the early 1980s, the city of Glasgow suffered from an image of a dirty, industrialised, violent city having experienced economic decline for a number of decades (Boyle, 1988). Appointment as the City of Culture for 1990 prompted structural improvements to the inner city accompanied by an extensive promotional campaign to attract visitors and industry to the area during the 1980s. Visitor numbers increased rapidly, with 0.7 million tourists visiting Glasgow in 1984, 4 million by 1987 and a peak number of 9 million during the Year of Culture (Zeppel & Hall, 1992). This provides strong evidence of successful image promotion in association with development of the City's facilities and buildings.

Parts of Glasgow were structurally improved during this campaign, however many poorer areas of the city had no improvements made to them at all. Indeed, it could be argued that investments that may have been made in these areas were diverted to the areas improved during the campaign. The policies and programmes that were followed by the council, Scottish Development Agency and Glasgow Action, a private sector venture, favoured the city centre at the expense of the peripheral, largely residential areas (Boyle, 1988).

The residents of these areas have felt that they have experienced none of the effects that the success of the City is acclaimed to have enjoyed. This may have led to some visitors experiencing an image-reality gap since the image promoted throughout the campaign was associated with the improved areas and did not take account of the peripheral areas. It is possible that incoming visitors may travel through these peripheral areas when visiting the city and may therefore be disappointed with this aspect of Glasgow's tourism product.

The highlight of Glasgow's success in 1990 could have been short-lived since "each special event is only part of a long-term campaign which must be repeated in some way if the progress is not to be wasted" (Law, 1993, p.107). However, attainment of the 1999 City of Architecture award may further boost visitor numbers.

The success of image promotion is therefore difficult to ascertain. This is further complicated by destination images not resulting purely from image promotion, instead they are formed by a number of inter-related factors.

2.7 Interactions Between Sources of Image

Using Gunn's (1988) categorisation of factors (discussed in more detail in Chapter V), tension may exist between organic image determinants, such as experience and talking to friends, relatives and colleagues, and the induced image determinants, such as promotional literature and media representation. Information accumulated from all the different sources of information may portray the same image of a destination, confirming the message received by the potential visitor. However, the subjectivity of image suggests that differences will exist between individuals' images and therefore conflicting information may be generated.

Individuals may prefer to rely more heavily on some sources of information than others. Evidence suggests (see for instance Engel, Kollat & Blackwell, 1973; Gitelson & Crompton, 1983; Laws, 1991) that the emphasis placed on personal recommendation implies that potential visitors feel promotional literature will not portray a representative image of the destination or will not contain the information that they wish to ascertain. In this research, the importance of talking to friends, relatives and colleagues as a source of information for respondents' image of Grampian was studied. However, personal recommendations are arguably more subjective than promotional material as they are influenced by incidents particular to an individual's experience, highlighting one of the unique characteristics of the tourism product, variance in standard and quality over time. Conversely, promotional literature is unlikely to contain such low points of a visit.

The degree of education that the individual has attained, psychological and socio-economical characteristics and motivations may reflect the sources of image used by individuals. These variables may also help to explain the scepticism placed on some sources of information by sections of the population, such as promotional literature and media representation. These characteristics which influence the individual's perception of destination image also influence their perception of reality.

2.8 Problems with Defining Reality

The concept of reality requires definition due to its relationship with image. The subjectivity of reality may be refuted by natural scientists, but is generally agreed upon by social scientists and philosophers. As with many other phenomena, there are a number of schools of thought relating to the concept of reality. This gives rise to a major philosophical debate on the definition of reality. Natural scientists equate the world of facts with reality (Popper, 1973). Indeed, people have a direct, immediate and secure perception of external, objective reality (Reid, 1785). However, Popper (1973) disputed that there was anything direct or immediate in experience, since everything has to be learnt through a system of decoding. This learning process incorporates mistakes and reactions to unusual situations, leading to a subjective decoding of experiences and subsequently subjective reality. Common sense enhanced by the decoding process allows people to distinguish between the appearance of a phenomenon and its reality.

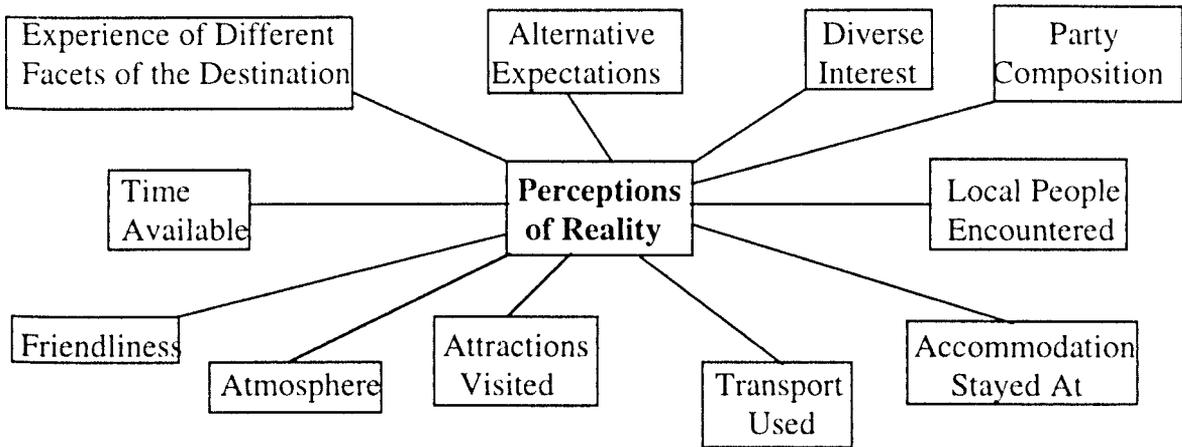
Reality is therefore perceived subjectively. As suggested by O'Hear (1980), individuals experience the world through their perceptions. This can be exemplified by the concept of colour. People who have the ability to see may be adamant that grass is green, having been told that grass is this colour, therefore what they see is perceived to be green. Colour blind people may see a different colour. Blind people may be able to imagine the colour from descriptions given to them by other people and through the use of their other senses. Each person has their own idea of the colour of the grass and sees it differently, although every individual will believe what they see to be reality.

Equally, on a practical level, "if several people are looking at a table at the same moment, no two of them will see exactly the same distribution of colours, because no two can see it from exactly the same point of view, and any change in the point of view makes some change in the way that light is reflected" (Russell, 1912). Similarly, no two people will experience a tourist destination in the same way. Their perceptions interpret reality in individual, subjective ways, "reality is whatever fantasy you favour" (Travel Holiday, 1992, p.66).

A visitor's perception of the reality that they experience of a destination may differ due to a combination of such factors as: experiencing different facets of the destination; alternative expectations; diverse interests; party composition; previous experience of this and other

destinations and personal characteristics. There may also be differences in the reality observed by a tourist and a local resident as the former experiences only a proportion of the reality of the destination. Their experience will be limited by such factors as the time available to spend at the destination; the people met; the accommodation stayed at; the food eaten; the transport used and attractions visited. This is illustrated below by a diagram designed as a product of this research in Figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4: Influential Factors on Perceptions of Reality



There is a difference between everyday life impressions, rural or urban, and the impressions of a strange place formed by a visitor (MacCanell, 1976), suggesting that the reason for visiting a destination influences the image perceived, such as a local resident may have a different image of their home town than a visitor. This also suggests that visitors may not experience an authentic tourism product (Cohen, 1988). The impact of tourism upon a destination may include the staging of authenticity as the reality is changed by expansion of visitor numbers.

The distinction made between rural and urban dwellers implies differences between these two groups of people. Physical activities and cultural opportunities are different for these two communities. People visiting urban areas from the countryside and rural areas from the towns and cities may enjoy the change, but would not necessarily wish to transform their lifestyle accordingly.

The subjective nature of both image and reality, by definition, will lead to differences between the two. This has the potential to be detrimental for visitor destinations.

2.8.1 The Negative Effect of an Image-Reality Gap

It has been established that image and reality are both constituted by the perceptions of individuals. They are subjective concepts. When comparing differences between images and reality it is necessary to compare the image perceived by one individual with the reality experienced by that same person or by someone with a similar background and circumstances. The disparity between image and reality is relative rather than absolute because both of these concepts are subjective. What could be termed an 'image-reality gap' is created when a disparity develops between the image perceived and the reality experienced. The image may or may not be a true representation of what the destination has to offer (Mayo, 1973) due to erroneous promotion and reception of the description of the reality, further emphasising that image is not necessarily an accurate reflection of the truth (Robinson, 1994).

Misleading promotion, or the use of inaccurate information, to attract visitors can be most destructive, since the visitor may be disappointed with the destination due to the creation of an image-reality gap. The expectations derived from the promotional material may lead to dissatisfaction of the destination visited (Okoroafa, 1989). Promoters of a destination's image are potentially selling illusions and dreams (Selwyn, 1993). Conversely, tourists "seek to find confirmation and the tangible reality of their image" (Mason, 1996, p. 5). Indeed, expectations and perceptions can be powerful determinants of satisfaction (Ryan, 1991). The level of negativity will be exaggerated from the high expectations created by the false promotion of the destination. It is unlikely that the visitor will return and a negative image could be conveyed to others through word-of-mouth communication.

As Kent (1991) suggests, a destination's worst attributes will obscure its best, making it unattractive. Negative experiences are more easily remembered than those that are positive. These attributes may be ignored in the promotional literature or erroneously portrayed as more positive than the reality. However, once the destination has been experienced the reality of these attributes will be apparent and the visitor is likely to be dissatisfied.

Since talking to friends, relatives and colleagues is the most common method of information transference relating first knowledge (Paradice, 1985; Woodside & Moore, 1987), it would be detrimental for there to be negative information flows about a

destination. However, visitors will respond differently to the discovery of an image-reality gap. Behaviour is reactive as well as anticipatory (Kelly, 1955). Ryan (1991) suggests that there are two ways that visitors can improve their visit if they have encountered negative aspects of a destination. The individuals can move away from the source of dissatisfaction, such as change accommodation. Conversely, they can undertake an associated activity change to compensate for the negative aspects experienced, such as outdoor activities if indoor activities do not aspire to the standard anticipated. Therefore, an image-reality gap may be surmountable by some visitors, although having been disappointed, a repeat visit is less likely. Promotional activities based on the recognised significance of the relationship between image and reality serve to attract and satisfy visitors.

2.9 Significance of Defining Terminology

Definition of tourism, image and related-terms has highlighted the complex nature of this field of study. The subjective characteristic of these concepts introduces measurement issues. However, critical appraisal of the relationship between tourism and image will allow analysis of the role of image promotion in destination selection. Ascertaining the potential effectiveness of image promotion will indicate the importance such promotion deserves. The relationship between tourism and image is considered by this study through empirical data collection and the review of work by other researchers.

Chapter III: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Identifying the role that image plays within an individual's decision-making process of destination selection and conversely the role that image is perceived to play in the promotion of a destination by relevant organisations are the main research issues under investigation. The empirical part of this research was developed within the framework of a composite philosophy, incorporating the advantages of positivism, behaviourism, humanism and structuralism, whilst minimising associated limitations.

A questionnaire was considered to be the most appropriate tool to collect relevant data from potential visitors to Grampian. The questionnaire design was developed through a review of image measurement tools and further refined with information derived from pilot studies. It was necessary to refine the methodology after potential limitations for a larger study were uncovered by the pilot studies. Consequently, alternative methodologies were considered and an appropriate method developed for the main empirical data collection.

Analysis of the destination image promotion was conducted through brochure analysis, policy analysis and personal interviews with relevant destination promoters, determining the importance placed by destination promoters on image, as perceived by their representatives, and how related decisions are made.

The aims of this research were first considered within the context of social science philosophies.

3.2 Philosophies of Social Science

There are a number of philosophies which can be adopted to investigate the role of image, derived from different ways of looking at the world. Since tourism, and the related issue of image, involves such a diverse range of activities, there is an associated range of philosophies which can be adopted for its study.

Social scientists have to take a stance on the issues of philosophy in order to answer their research questions (Rosenberg, 1988). There is no consensus among social scientists on the

best method to use for research, the research issue itself and the researcher influence the philosophy adopted. Therefore researchers must make their own informed and conscious choice. There are four main schools of thought relating to social science research, positivism; structuralism; behaviourism and humanism. The methodology evolved in this research incorporates elements of all four.

The philosophies can be divided into two broad categories which strive to explain the relationship of people with the world. These are positivist and non-positivist (Hughes, 1979). The positivist explanation follows a naturalist meaning system, where the world conforms to certain fixed and unalterable laws. Individuals' behaviour is determined by these laws and such factors as choice and voluntary behaviour are merely, "vectors determined by interplay of various forces acting on a man" (Hughes, 1979, p. 21). People are only one element in a material universe. To understand the laws of the universe, positivists quantify data, formalise concepts and theories, measuring objectively. There is no accumulation of knowledge from the subject themselves, it is derived purely from the logic, method and senses of the objective researcher, similar to methods employed by natural scientists.

Phenomena are linked with each other in terms of invariable universal laws. Set in a theoretical context, the predictions that these natural laws can make may change the nature of society by altering causal variables (Johnston, 1986). This assumes that human behaviour is subject to the laws of cause and effect, that individuals make decisions by conforming to laws and furthermore that the application of laws and theories can alter societies. Therefore positivist methodologies can predict as well as describe society.

Based on personal experiences or previous research conducted by others, descriptive and explanatory propositions are developed, empirically tested and accepted or rejected as appropriate. Facts are studied whose objectivity makes them quantifiable. Hypotheses can only be accepted as correct if the method of establishing the truth is believed as valid. Hypotheses are used to test theories which predict and explain phenomena through experiment and observation (Keat & Urry, 1975).

Positivism does not allow for human individuality, basing its ideas on objectivity rather than subjectivity, thus rejecting metaphysics, the study of individual's beliefs, experiences

and attached meanings. Questions that arise from scientific ideas about the world but go further than tangible data, can not be empirically answered by positivism. Phenomena can not be explained by unobservable connections or mechanisms (Keat & Urry, 1975).

There are a number of problems associated with the adoption of a positivist methodology for social science research. Hypotheses should be derived from personal experience or previous research. However, if minimal research has been conducted on a subject area, such as the role of image in destination promotion of a region, it is difficult to derive initial assumptions from that work to form the basis of hypotheses. The subject area may be at a formative stage where qualitative, descriptive information is valuable (Robinson, 1991).

Another problem is that the development of positivism for application to natural sciences means it was designed for objective, quantifiable values which are universally measurable and replicable. Scientists are considered to behave identically due to their objectivity, therefore experiments should be replicable. However, neither social science nor its researchers can be perfectly objective, therefore replication by another researcher may lead to different results. Such non-positivistic issues may be constructivistic arguments which are seen as plausible but not measurable.

Despite its limitations, aspects of positivism were incorporated into the data collection design of this research due to their perceived methodological merit. A branch of positivism, Logical Positivism, believes that any hypotheses must be written in a way that can be analysed, rewritten and verified. Hypotheses are tested by comparison to reality. Acquired knowledge accumulated from scientific research is incorporated into established theories, increasing understanding. This philosophy is accepted by this research as a systematic method of determining how to collect data relevant to the research issue.

Due to positivism's objectivity and empirical generalisations, of all the philosophies, positivism lends itself least to integration with other approaches (Johnston, 1983). Therefore, whilst logical positivism is a useful tool for quantitative data collection, there are limitations associated with adoption of one philosophy when designing an empirical study.

The non-positivist explanation highlights the distinction between people and the material world. People have ideas, feelings and motives which remove them from the purely physical world. Therefore, it is not possible to use the same measurements or apply the same logic to people as material phenomena. The natural universe has no intrinsic meaning system, hence applying a positivist meaning system to people distorts the fundamental nature of human existence (Hughes, 1979). Although quantifying people and their behaviour would possibly be the simplest, and certainly the neatest, way to study people, this is impractical due to the dictation of behaviour by individuals' minds. Therefore, the non-positivistic meaning system appears more appropriate for the study of people.

Other philosophies, such as behaviourism, accept some elements of positivism and reject others, showing there is some common thinking and potential for integration of the philosophies. Structuralism is based on the principle of introspection, the observation and analysis of one's own thoughts, images and feelings (Gross, 1992). Under the same conditions and using the same stimuli, introspections can be observed and analysis made breaking down the results into constituent parts. Explanations for observations are the result of empirical study with an associated appreciation of underlying structures. As Skinner (1971) suggests, structuralism considers behaviour to be moulded and maintained by its consequences.

There are two main forms of structuralism, empirical and transformational. The former emphasises the interdependence of social structures. The affect on individuals' thoughts that occupations and employers may have is recognised, identifying their latent power, power which exists but has not been developed. The latter believes that cultural phenomena, such as language, myths and forbidden practices, may appear very diverse but are in fact transformations of a few basic structures (Johnston, 1986).

There are a number of the features of structuralism, the main components of which warrant discussion. Firstly, phenomena should not be broken down and elements studied individually, since relationships between elements are more important than the elements themselves. This implies that the way different components of an individual's destination image interrelate to form an overall image is more important than the image of each separate attribute of the destination. However, this research considered it necessary to identify the image perceived of each attribute before inter-relationships could be identified.

Secondly, structuralism believes the structure that lies behind the social reality that is known and directly observable is consequential. However, the structure of a society is continually changing, making it unlikely for all aspects to be known or observable. Nonetheless, results attained and conclusions made within this research should be considered within the context of society at the time of the study. Thirdly, there are certain mental characteristics that are universal to the way in which individuals' minds operate and therefore a logic can be identified. Indeed, phenomena in society have socially structured meanings, therefore, generalisations can be made for different sections of society.

Finally, structuralists are ordinarily not interested in the cause of a structure but rather how a logical transformation is made from another structure. This suggests that structuralism may in fact be more appropriate for studying image manipulation than image measurement. Whilst structuralist concepts can be used to explain what can not be tested, this philosophy is open to the criticism of bias since introspection is by definition subjective.

Structuralist philosophy was reflected within this research by determination of individual's rationale for previous destination selection choices, including the influence of party composition and peer pressure. However, this research acknowledged that thinking about a subject or justifying behaviour begins to change associated perceptions and potentially influence answers given, since tourism research, "requires people to make explicit those things they previously have undertaken without necessarily too much thought" (Ryan, 1995, p.31).

Introspection, the foundation of structuralism, is rejected by behaviourists because such testing makes the mind the "judge, jury and executioner" of itself (Rosenberg, 1988, p. 53). Behaviourism is based on the premise that data collected must be observable and measurable to more than one person. Objectivity can only be found by studying people's behaviour (Gross, 1992) as opposed to stated perceptions. However, this objective prerequisite is problematic for the collection and analysis of subjective qualitative data.

Behaviourism observes behaviour, taking account of social structures and stimuli. Behaviour is shaped and controlled by the environment experienced by the individual (Coon, 1992) and can be divided into two categories. Firstly, some behaviour is linked to

neuroscience, people reacting involuntarily to stimuli with reflex behaviour, such as responding to a dangerous situation by running away. Secondly, 'operant' behaviour is people acting voluntarily, explained by subsequent reinforcement of behaviour, such as an individual boards an aeroplane with the subsequent reinforcement that they arrive at the destination they have chosen to visit (Rosenberg, 1988). It is this operant behaviour that was studied during this research, mainly through analysis of previous holidays taken and content of promotional literature, since they measure actual behaviour rather than intended behaviour or perceptions.

The objective prerequisite of both positivism and behaviourism is contradicted by humanism however. This philosophy considers individual emotions, experiences, ideals, potentials and problems often derived from case studies and anthropological research. The extent of objective knowledge is questioned and subjectivity of the observer as well as the observed acknowledged. Behaviour is guided by an individual's image of themselves, by subjective perceptions and the need for personal growth (Coon, 1992). In agreement with behaviourism however, humanism considers past experiences to affect human behaviour, but do not concede that behaviour is ruled by unconscious influences or the environment.

A number of subdivisions exist within the school of humanism, three of which are considered relevant to this research. Idealists believe the world exists only within the observation and representation of it by the individual, the mind is the only reality. This highlights the subjective nature of tourism. Pragmatists believe individuals only accept information which contributes to their personal satisfaction. This reiterates the concept of Selective Distortion (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1987) where people only retain the information with which they agree, and Lee (1991)'s concept of schemata where new information is modified by the individual to make it fit better with existing information retained.

Phenomenologists believe phenomena should be examined in the absence of preconceptions and presuppositions and without theories. Human behaviour is determined by individuals' perceptions of the world. Ideologies and values have a variety of meanings and interpretations that result from diverse perceptions, aspirations and subsequent behaviour. Therefore it is difficult to construct theories about human behaviour, observation and description are the only ways to analyse human behaviour. Less staunch phenomenologists would suggest that essential characteristics can be identified which show that people have

similar beliefs about the same phenomenon. This allows comparisons to be made between different groups of individuals, such as visitors and non-visitors.

Review of these philosophies has highlighted similarities and discrepancies between them. There is controversy among social scientists over which approach to adopt. The degree of control an individual is perceived to have over their own behaviour also influences methodology philosophy. Individuals can be divided into three categories (Claval, 1979). *Homo rationalis* is an individual who argues logically and learns without cost, the environment has no effect upon this person and they are good decision makers, reflecting a humanist or positivist philosophy. *Homo historicus* is an individual who develops within the constraints of an environment, leading to the collective development of society, reflecting a structuralist philosophy. *Homo roboticus* is a product of the environment whose behaviour is dictated by society, reflecting behavioural philosophy. Arguably, humans possess traits of each of these three models to differing degrees.

There is some discrepancy over the complementarity of the philosophies described above. It is considered in this research that the philosophies are not mutually exclusive and can be used in combination, since as Gould (1982) puts it, they are in fact working at different corners of the same jigsaw.

This research believes that a composite approach was best suited for the research issue since the selection of a single approach implicitly promotes a certain ideology of society, making a political choice (Johnston, 1986). Based on the premise that different methodological approaches can be applied interchangeably to minimise limitations of each (Brenner, 1981), this work has incorporated characteristics from each of the four approaches described above:

The research began with development of hypotheses to be explored, based on issues indicated salient by the local tourist board. The generation of hypotheses that could be tested followed a positivist approach, whilst their qualitative exploration is more indicative of humanism. Although there was no previous work conducted to expand upon, studies conducted by other researchers on similar subject areas (see Hunt, 1975; Crompton, 1977; Pearce, 1982; Phelps, 1986; Gartner, 1989; Reilly, 1990; Echtner & Ritchie, 1993) indirectly influenced assumptions made which formed the basis of hypotheses.

The collection of objective information, such as demographics reflects positivism, since replication is possible. Indeed, socio-demographic information has been collected by many researchers, therefore their work can form initial assumptions and allow comparison of data.

The collation of qualitative information and acknowledgement of subjectivity conforms to the humanistic approach to social science methodology, assuming behaviour is determined by people's perceptions. By understanding the diversity of perceptions and aspirations, such as image of a destination and motivations for destination choice, it is possible to understand why individuals do or do not visit a destination, and the role that image promotion plays within that process.

People act voluntarily to be tourists, correlating to the concept of operant behaviour, as proposed by behaviourists. This approach is employed when studying an individual's past travel decisions and future intentions. However, behaviour does not necessarily reflect an individual's image. Therefore, this research, contrary to the behaviourist philosophy, has utilised the respondents' own descriptions for analysis rather than employing behavioural observation.

The development of a questionnaire fundamentally adopted the approach of empirical structuralism, acknowledging the influence that social structures play upon individuals. The decision-making process of destination selection is influenced by status in society, such as socio-economic class, age and peer group. What friends, relatives, colleagues and other peers feel is important in holiday destination choice will influence the importance individuals assign to relevant factors.

The subjective structuralist method of introspection has been employed when individuals were asked to describe their image of a destination. However, unlike the structuralist approach, elements of the respondents image of the destination were studied separately as well as together. Another limitation of the structuralist approach is that it is not possible to directly observe the social structure underlying the respondents decisions. The structure of the organisations involved in image promotion were studied, however, in relation to

industry interviews. This research assumed that activities of players interviewed were shaped by the organisations they worked in addition to their own perceptions.

This research considered that the different philosophies of social science are not mutually exclusive and different aspects of each can be amalgamated to provide a composite philosophy as a context within which to develop a research methodology. Within this philosophical context, the case study area was selected, available techniques for the empirical research reviewed, associated limitations identified and sample size calculated.

3.3 Introduction to Study Area and Rationale

Grampian was selected as the case study visitor destination for this research. During this research, political regions were redefined in 1996, with the region of Grampian renamed as Aberdeenshire. Fundamentally however, the region and districts cover the same geographical area as before. Therefore, the region is referred to throughout this study as Grampian. Any changes which have implications for the region's tourism industry are discussed where appropriate.

The rationale for selecting Grampian as a case study area was primarily based on the region's low profile as a visitor destination in conjunction with its geographical location and unit area of size. Studying a low profile destination may serve to identify the source(s) of an individual's image more easily than the study of more familiar destinations. By definition, low profile destinations have fewer associated sources of information or exposure to stimuli, thus allowing greater potential for individuals to ascribe their perceived image to specific sources of information. For more traditional destinations, individuals may not be able to identify the particular sources of information which attributed to their perceived image due to the plethora of related sources and stimuli. However, also by definition, an individual is likely to be exposed to fewer inorganic stimuli (Gunn, 1988) relating to a low profile destination. The local tourist boards affirmed that the region did not have a strong image, unlike the more traditional destinations in Scotland, such as Edinburgh and Glasgow.

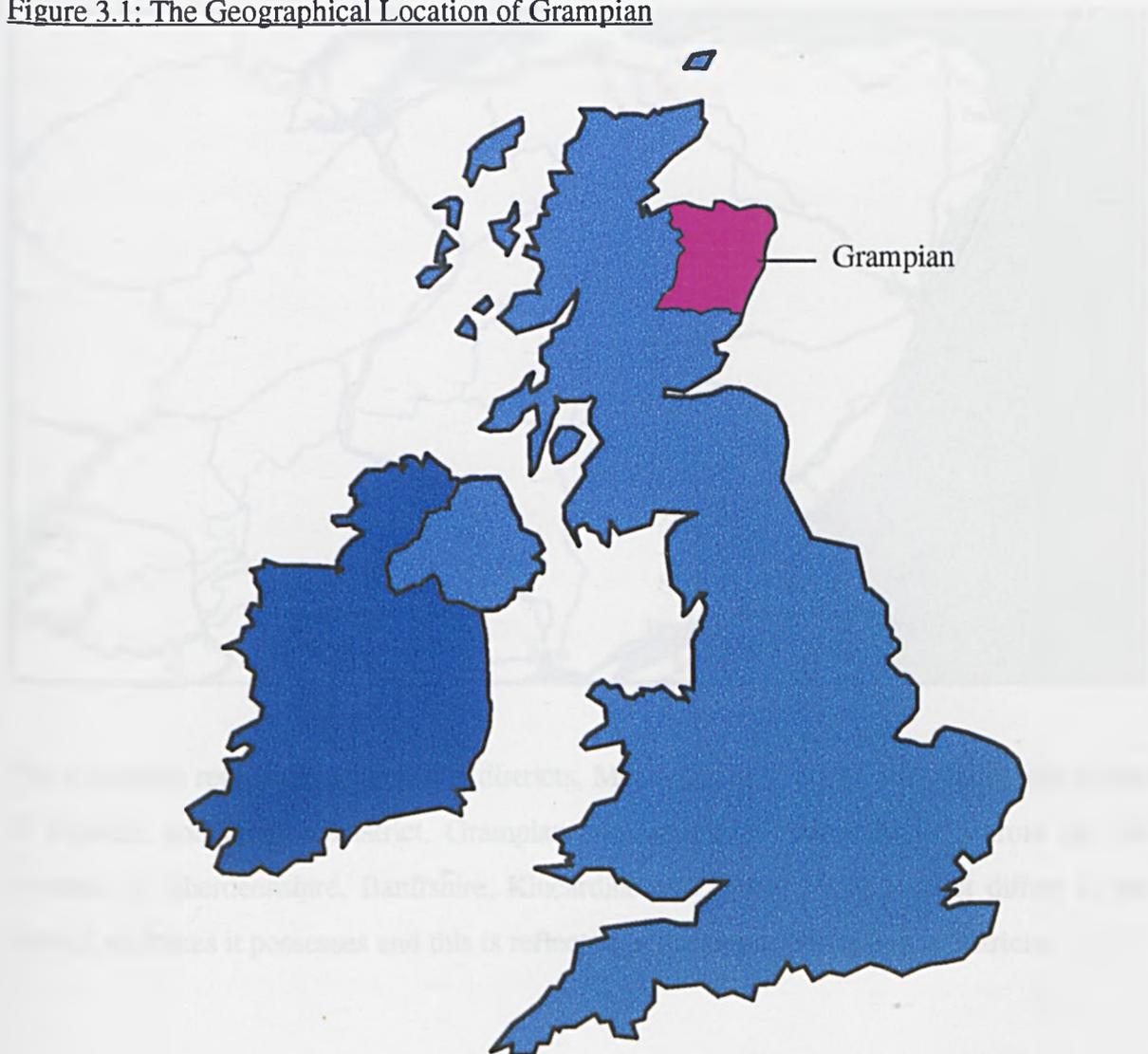
The geographical location of Grampian was considered important, its comparative remoteness to the rest of mainland Britain rendering it suitable for discerning the relationship between increasing distance from a destination and the associated image

perceived. Proximity to the region for the researcher also allowed personal knowledge to assist in associated data collection and regular contact could be made with local members of the tourism industry, allowing the collection of relevant and up-to-date information.

3.3.1 Geographical Location of Grampian

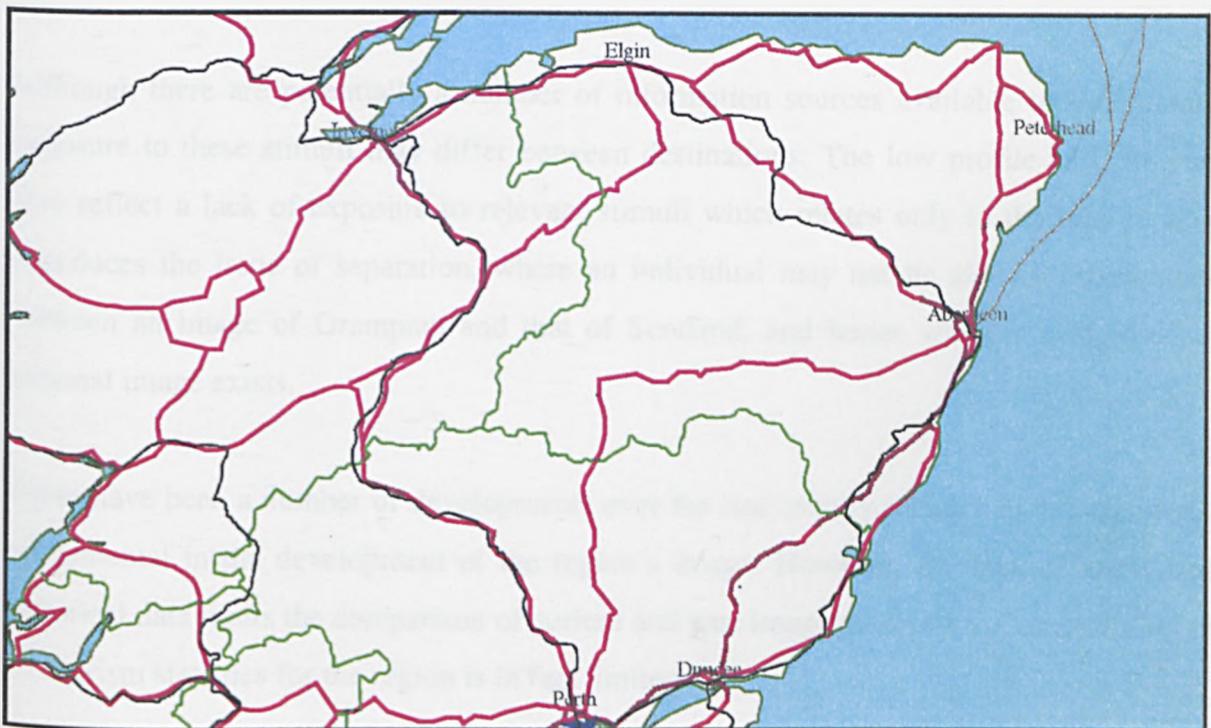
The Grampian region is constituted by the North East of Scotland. An area of 8800 square kilometres, renders it the third largest of the nine regions in Scotland, with a population of over half a million people (Smith, 1987). The area enjoys many natural attributes which visitors may be attracted to, including the Cairngorm mountains, a number of rivers and forests and an extensive, dramatic coastline. However, as shown in Figure 3.1 below, the plethora of natural attractions possessed by Grampian is perhaps counter-balanced by the peripheral location of the region.

Figure 3.1: The Geographical Location of Grampian



Another aspect of the region that may be perceived as a limitation to potential visitors is the transport infrastructure to and within Grampian. There are two airports within close proximity to Grampian, Aberdeen and Inverness, as shown in Figure 3.2 below. There is one train link to the North and the South and a ferry terminal, all of which are centred around Aberdeen. The main road links to the area are one road from the North and one from the South with a couple running West. Direct trains and ferry services are infrequent, in comparison to other areas, and many roads within the region are single carriageway. The main transportation routes to the region are shown below in Figure 3.2 with the thin black lines representing rail links and the thicker red lines depicting the main roads into the region. The airport is located 6 miles north west of Aberdeen and the ferry port, as indicated by the routes marked, is in the city itself.

Figure 3.2: A Profile of the Grampian Region



The Grampian region consists of five districts, Moray District; Banff & Buchan; Kincardine & Deeside, and Gordon District. Grampian was originally formed in 1975 from the old counties of Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, Kincardine and Moray. Each district differs in the natural attributes it possesses and this is reflected in the promotion of these districts.

3.3.2 Unit Area of Case Study

A region was selected for study rather than a city, town or resort to discern whether or not it is possible for an individual to perceive an image of a whole region, since this is increasingly the size of area that tourist boards are responsible for. Conversely, individuals may segment destinations into smaller areas, such as districts or cities, since people may know about Aberdeen but not about the rest of Grampian. This questions the most appropriate unit size of a destination from a promotional perspective. Grampian was chosen for investigation as a single case study region to study this issue.

The main structure of the tourism industry in the region and the inter-relationships that exist between private and public sectors lead to both advantages and disadvantages of working conjointly. The fragmentation of the industry does not allow for complete harmony between the relevant players due to the diversity of interests (as discussed in Chapter VI).

Although there are potentially a number of information sources available to individuals, exposure to these stimuli may differ between destinations. The low profile of Grampian may reflect a lack of exposure to relevant stimuli which relates only to the region. This introduces the issue of separation, where an individual may not be able to differentiate between an image of Grampian and that of Scotland, and hence whether a regional or national image exists.

There have been a number of developments over the last century which can be considered instrumental in the development of the region's image. However, the lack of associated historical data limits the comparison of current and past image perception. Compatibility of all tourism statistics for the region is in fact limited.

3.3.3 Lack of Visitor Statistics

The main reason for incompatible data stems from different definitions of tourists adopted by different researchers and/or the definition used in data collection is not defined. Comparability of data is further reduced by different questions asked to generate data.

Tourism research to date in the Grampian region has been minimal. Although the Scottish Tourist Board (STB) calculate basic visitor figures nationally and regionally, when it is considered how these figures are derived, it becomes clear that they should be analysed with some caution. The STB base their figures on two surveys, the UK Tourism Survey (UKTS) and the International Passenger Survey.

The International Passenger Survey, designed to determine balance of payments figures, is the source of the data for overseas visitors figures. Seven airports throughout the United Kingdom are targeted, only one of which is in Scotland (Edinburgh airport). Clearly, using one airport in Scotland is unlikely to generate an accurate sample of overseas visitors to Scotland.

The UKTS involves face-to-face interviews with 75,000 UK adult residents (STB, 1994) in respondents' homes. Individuals are drawn systematically from the electoral role in a different parliamentary constituency each week and visited up to four times to try to make contact. Visits taken in the last two months are the focus of the survey. In 1994, over 2,000 respondents reported having taken a holiday in Scotland, 250 of whom had visited the Grampian region. Therefore the statistics for visitors to the Grampian region are based on those 250 people. This is a small sample size from which to make assumptions of the whole British public.

The use of the data collected from the UK Tourism Survey is further reduced by its relatively recent introduction as the source of the data for domestic tourism. Until 1989, the National Survey of Tourism in Scotland was used by the Scottish Tourist Board. Therefore figures before 1989 and from this year onwards should not be directly compared. They can, however, be used as indicators of visitor trends.

Acknowledging the limitations of this method of data collection, trends of visitor behaviour can be identified. Statistics of visitors to Grampian follow similar trends as visitors to Scotland as a whole. The number of visits taken by UK visitors to both the region and the nation increased gradually until the mid eighties when numbers declined. Another peak in 1987, when 1.8m visits were taken in Grampian and 13.4m in Scotland as a whole, was followed by a very poor year in 1988. Since the late 1980s, domestic tourism has fallen steadily as shown below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Number of trips taken by UK tourists (Rolling 3 Year Averages)

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Grampian	1.2m	1.1m	1.0m	0.9m	0.9m	1.0m
Scotland	9.6m	8.6m	8.3m	8.7m	8.8m	*8.5m

NB * = single year figure

(Scottish Tourist Board, 1995)

Expenditure followed similar patterns, as can be seen from Table 3.2 below. This steady decrease in recent years, in both trips taken and visitor expenditure appeared to reach its lowest point in 1991 for Scotland and a year later in Grampian. The recession being experienced in the UK at this time may explain the dip in numbers and associated expenditure. The greater reduction in visitor expenditure in Grampian may reflect the perception of the region as a short-break or second holiday destination, where individuals may be more willing to reduce expenditure than if on their main holiday.

Table 3.2: Expenditure by UK Tourists (Rolling 3 Year Averages)

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Grampian	£167m	£152m	£148m	£117m	£125m	£132m
Scotland	£1400m	£1428m	£1263m	£1340m	£1346m	£1310m

NB * = single year figure

(Scottish Tourist Board, 1995)

When analysing the figures shown in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, it should be noted that numbers given are rolling three year averages. The rationale given by the Scottish Tourist Board for this is to eliminate any blips which do not fit with general trends. However, it is arguable that the study of such anomalies is of value. Additionally, whilst results from the United Kingdom Tourism Survey (UKTS) may identify trends in visitor numbers to Grampian, the small sample size used limits how representative this sample is of the UK in general.

The number of data sources for visitors to Scotland, and in particular Grampian, are limited. However, since 1993, a value and volume survey has been conducted by Grampian Enterprise Limited (GEL) and the Area Tourist Board. Initially, methodological problems were encountered, which have now been addressed. Arguably, the methods of data collection may still produce misleading results.

There are five parts to the survey. An occupancy survey generates monthly figures for hotels, Bed and Breakfast and guesthouses, including seasonal establishments, not previously collected by the Scottish Tourist Board. A postal survey contacts individuals visiting friends and relatives in Grampian and day-trippers to the region using A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods (ACORN). The use of an electoral role based system was in fact discounted by this researcher because its use would have necessitated the distribution of a large number of questionnaires to achieve a reasonable completion and return rate.

A tele-survey contacts people who requested information from the local Tourist Information Centres (TICs), with names and telephone numbers obtained from the TICs. A street survey is conducted to ascertain visitor profiles, and a registration survey establishes why visitors chose the accommodation they are staying in.

Although GEL's data collection techniques are still being refined, it is clear that discrepancies exist between these findings and the Scottish Tourist Board figures, again highlighting the care that needs to be taken when comparing figures from different sources. Limitations associated with statistics currently being collected and the void in information available, suggests that the accumulation of further information would greatly enhance understanding of why visitors are or are not attracted to the area. This research has endeavoured to increase this pool of knowledge. The method used to do so was considered in light of the aims of the research.

3.4 Methodology Development

There were three main issues to be considered in the design of the research methodology. Firstly, how to measure image. Due to the subjective nature of image, a suitable measurement had to be utilised which would lead to broadly categorisable data, allowing generalisations to be made. A number of methodologies were piloted to gather this information, and the most useful employed in the final design of the questionnaire.

Secondly, it was considered that measuring individuals' images of a region may prove problematic due to the size of the geographical area covered and the variation that may therefore exist within it. Different aspects of the region were considered in conjunction

with an overall image of the region to identify the existence of such variations. It was felt important to study the image of the region as a whole since this is how the case study region and an increasing number of other areas, are promoted.

Finally, the method of contacting respondents was an issue. Although the importance of data collection from non-participants has been acknowledged by many (see for example Haukeland, 1990; McClung, 1991 and Caldow, 1997). However, an appropriate methodology which enjoys a high response rate and accesses a good cross-section of the population has been less forthcoming.

Whilst important to contact a representative sample of the population, the methodology also needed to not be heavily reliant on resources. The group of individuals to be sampled also influenced the methodology design. Had the sample of individuals contacted included overseas visitors, for example, the methodology would correspondingly have needed to incorporate a way of contacting enough of these potential respondents, which would not have been possible through the methodology adopted. A number of methods were considered to contact potential visitors to Grampian, discussed below.

Given the available resources when the study commenced, a methodology was developed for data collection on the image of Grampian held by potential visitors and promoters of the area. However, associated limitations of the method coupled with impracticalities experienced in its implementation, necessitated reconsideration. After consideration of a number of alternatives, a methodology was developed which accessed visitors and non-visitors to the Grampian region.

3.4.1 Selection of the Study Group

To ensure that it would be possible to complete the research, with the time and other resources available, it was necessary to restrict the study. Firstly, the analysis was restricted to United Kingdom residents potentially visiting Grampian, the domestic market. This constraint was made for a number of reasons. The overseas market, people travelling to Grampian from other countries, arguably differs from the domestic market in what the visitor wants to experience. This is shown by the production of different brochures, varying in content as well as language.

It was assumed that greater variation of image perception would occur internationally than nationally and with it associated promotional activities would differ. Restricting data collection to UK residents is arguably not a serious limitation of the work since 83% (Scottish Tourist Board, 1997) of visitors to Scotland are from England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the rest of Scotland. Concentrating on UK residents also reduced the cost of questionnaires being returned and avoided any potential language barriers. The differences between the images of overseas and domestic visitors would be an interesting area for further study however (discussed in more detail later in this chapter).

Studies that had been conducted by other researchers were to be used to ascertain what happens in an individual's decision-making processes before requesting promotional literature from the tourist boards (see Iso-Ahola, 1980; Plog, 1987; Gunn, 1988; Morrison, 1989; Lundberg, 1990; Um & Crompton, 1990; Pearce, 1993). Goodall (1988) suggested that potential visitors consider only destinations which are among their opportunity set of destinations, i.e. those destinations that they are aware of. If people have not heard of a destination, considered it as a destination to visit, or as suitable for their particular chosen style of holiday, the destination will not be included into this set of possible places to visit and therefore will not be selected. The opportunity set of destinations is reduced to the evoked set by excluding the places that do not satisfy the party's needs. The evoked set is limited to those destinations with which the potential visitor is familiar, can remember and finds acceptable (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1987).

However, Goodall's concept of the 'opportunity set' does not take account of late booking holidays, special offers and the possible influence of travel agents on destination selection. Late bookings are often offered at a discounted rate to compensate for the uncertainty of location. Therefore, the image of a destination is not an important factor in destination selection for these individuals. Special offers and travel agents may also place new destinations into the potential visitor's opportunity set.

Potential visitors to Grampian were contacted, through Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourist Board, once they had requested promotional literature. It is acknowledged that the initial image perceived by a potential visitor may then change on arrival of the promotional brochures and leaflets, or may conversely support their first impressions. Both those who subsequently decided to visit and those who did not provide significant

information for studying the role of promotional literature in the formation and adaptation of a destination image. Indeed, those who decided not to visit Grampian could be considered the most important group to study.

The identification of a non-experience is especially valuable for comparative purposes with people who have experience of a phenomenon. Therefore, in this research, the characteristics and perceptions of those who have not visited Grampian can be compared to those who have visited the region. Significant differences can then be identified and any marketing implications established.

Of those who do decide to visit Grampian, it would also be important to discover if their expectations were satisfied or not through completion of a questionnaire on their return home. A comparison of the image respondents had before the visit and the reality they experienced during their stay in the region was to be used as an indication of their satisfaction with Grampian as a visitor destination. This would determine whether they themselves would become repeat visitors and whether they would relay positive or negative feedback to friends and relatives.

A self-completion questionnaire was selected as the sampling method mainly because of the method used to contact respondents. Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourist Board assured the anonymity of people who had requested promotional material by not issuing the names and addresses of these people. Therefore, no other contact could be made with these potential visitors to the region other than with the information sent. The local tourist board agreed to send out the questionnaires and envelopes with their promotional literature using pre-paid envelopes to encourage their return.

The questionnaire (shown in Appendix 1) sought to collect a variety of information. Visitor profiles were collated to allow comparison between visitors and non-visitors. The role that image was perceived to play in the individuals' decision-making process and the affect of promotional literature on this image was ascertained.

To ascertain the image perceived of the region's different attributes as well as an overall image, respondents were asked to describe their perception of Grampian's characteristics. The attributes considered were determined from both a study of promotional literature,

identifying aspects of Grampian highlighted in text and pictures, and an informal group asked to state attributes of the region they considered important. The results were then rationalised, grouping similar aspects of Grampian to minimise the number of questions asked.

This methodology introduced an important bias by restricting the sample of respondents to those people who had already requested promotional literature. Therefore Grampian was already within their opportunity set, the potential number of destinations under consideration had already been restricted and an information search had begun. Arguably, it is before this point in the selection process that the image of a destination is formed (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991). However, this image is refined as information accumulation continues, therefore this research is still relevant to the study of image formation.

Having established the rationale for using a questionnaire as a data collection tool, the design and format of the form was considered.

3.4.2 Pilot Questionnaire design

It is difficult to predict reactions, therefore it is necessary to conduct a pilot study for every survey (Oppenheim, 1992). Although the questionnaire may appear satisfactory to the researcher, objective self-criticism is limited. Therefore, all aspects of the questionnaire must be piloted, including wording of questions, layout and length of the form, coding and quantification of open-ended responses. Where possible, categories were designed before data was collected, avoiding unnecessary work for both the respondent, in detailing surplus information, and the researcher, in categorising data. Where objective information was sought, closed questions were sufficient. Time spent answering questions in non-essential detail may detract from time spent on others.

Questions were made concise to encourage completion by respondents (Dillon, 1990). An emphasis was placed on using basic English to reduce possible misinterpretation of questions and lack of understanding through use of more complicated terminology. It could be said that vocabulary used should be understandable by an average eleven year old (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1976) to avoid ,‘hardship, confusion and waste caused by complicated forms’ (Plain English Campaign, 1993). Words with ambiguous meanings

were avoided or qualified within a context (Bryman, 1989). The pilot questionnaire tested language used and any necessary refinements made to produce the final questionnaire.

Emphasis was made in the questionnaire design on a simple and clear layout because the form was for self-completion. It was acknowledged that information included later in the questionnaire may have influenced earlier answers, no check could be made that questions had been answered in chronological order. Although a limitation of the sampling method, this was counter-balanced by the elimination of interviewer bias (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1981), where people who appear more approachable are chosen.

To encourage completion, the questionnaire was designed to be quick and easy to complete. The first questions were simple, to make the respondent feel completion of the form would be fast and to arouse an interest in the subject matter. Once the respondent had already invested some time in questionnaire completion, the more difficult, time-consuming questions, which required some thought, were positioned in the middle and towards the end of the questionnaire (Kane, 1985). Different question formats were used to maintain interest.

Different styles of question were designed into three pilot studies for the collection of qualitative information to determine the most successful. The number of questionnaires to be distributed was considered relatively arbitrary because pilot studies are rarely of value in providing estimates of variability since they are too small to yield estimates of any worthwhile precision (Moser & Kalton, 1989). However, the expected response rate was unknown, so 350 forms were printed for distribution to accommodate a poor response rate if necessary.

The first pilot study tested the content of all questions and the format of the questionnaire as well as the design of qualitative questions. Since subsequent studies were only testing a sub-section of the questions, 150 forms were distributed for this study and 50 for the others. Returned questionnaires from the first pilot study indicated that the format of the questionnaire was satisfactory.

In the first pilot study a Likert scale (Likert, 1932) was used for questions designed to measure the respondent's attitude towards various attributes of the Grampian region and

motivating factors behind their proposed visit. Five adjectives were offered on an ordinal scale, each representing an equal area on an attitude continuum, from very unimportant to the bipolar opposite of very important.

The second study followed a free elicitation approach (Reilly, 1990) with respondents asked to complete a sentence with the most appropriate word or phrase. This method eliminates the bias of predetermined responses as thoughts can be expressed in respondent's own words. Inability to answer these questions suggests the respondent has no clear image of the subject. Open-ended questions are however difficult to answer and to analyse. A suitable coding scheme has to be devised, otherwise details of information can be lost (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1976). Development of a coding scheme specifically for data generated in this research minimised loss of detail from information gathered.

The third pilot study adopted what could be described as an intermediate approach. The respondent was given incomplete sentences with possible endings and asked to circle the ending most appropriate or to give an alternative answer. Whilst fixed-alternative questions are quick to answer and analyse, respondents are forced to choose from alternatives which may not accurately describe their thoughts and may not have been considered without prompting.

The second and third pilot studies were conducted simultaneously to compare response rates between questionnaire formats. One hundred of each were distributed. Response rates for the pilot studies were 20% (29 responses) for the first, 12% (12 responses) for the second and 8% (8 responses) for the third. This suggested that the first style of question design was considered easier to complete by individuals.

A number of problems were encountered with this method of data collection. The main brochure was prepacked by a central mailing house, therefore questionnaires could only be distributed when additional information was requested from the tourist board. Due to insufficient manpower at the Tourist Board it was not possible to keep a record of the enquirers' names and addresses, therefore reminders and replacement questionnaires could not be sent. Had this been possible, the response rate may have been increased and potentially the sample would have been made more representative. Since reasons for non-

response are uncertain, those who did not respond may have differed significantly from those who did.

Responses received were mainly from people who had previously visited the Grampian region. One reason may be that more of the people who requested promotional literature have previous experience of Grampian, in the pilot study twice as many respondents indicated they had visited Grampian than those who had not. A more probable explanation is that those with no experience of the region felt the questionnaire was inappropriate, as noted by a number of respondents, questioning how an image can be perceived without experience of the reality. However, the questionnaire was designed to ascertain images perceived by individuals both with and without experience of a destination.

In an attempt to pre-empt a potentially low response rate, pre-paid envelopes were used and an incentive was offered in the form of free entry to a prize draw on return of the completed questionnaire. However, the affect of the prize draw is debatable because several respondents returned questionnaires knowing they had missed the closing date but wanting to provide information for the research.

The response rate for the pilot studies was low, with an average figure of 13%. It was hoped that enough forms would be returned to allow a repeat questionnaire for respondents who subsequently visited the region. The purpose of the follow-up survey was to determine if the visitor perceived an image-reality gap between expectations before the visit, established in the first questionnaire, and experiences gained from the visit. To allow comparisons between respondents at each stage of the analysis, the number of questionnaires for distribution could be calculated based on responses to pilot surveys. Using worst case scenarios, these sample sizes are shown below in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Number of Questionnaires Required to Attain a Good Sample Size

	Assumed Response Rate	Number of Questionnaires
Main questionnaire	N/A	7,500
Number Returned	10%	750
First Time Visitors	5%	188
Further Questionnaire	70%	131

There is no single answer to the number of respondents needed to give a representative sample size (Kane, 1990) because it is dependent upon a number of factors. The degree of

precision desired, acceptable sampling error (Oppenheim, 1992) and the way that the data is to be analysed, including the number of sub-groups, influence the sample size. The nature of the dependent variable(s) dictates the amount of variability expected. The time and costs involved may also influence the size of sample that can be studied. Any theoretical estimates made are based on the unrealistic assumption that the sampling frame is modern and accurate, and data collection is accurate and unbiased (Oppenheim, 1992).

Although no number can be assigned to a sample size which guarantees that the results are representative of the population, a minimum sample size of 30 is often identified by statisticians as sufficient to perform most statistical tests, although more than 100 respondents leads to more accurate results (Kane, 1990). This figure must be applied to each sub-group studied, such as respondents over the age of 65 or people living in East Anglia. The larger the sample size, the lower the probability that the distribution of the data has occurred through chance since the sampling error is reduced, although it does not follow that the larger the sample the more accurate it is (Oppenheim, 1992). To allow subdivision of respondents, by demographics and other variables, into approximate group sizes of 30, a minimum of 131 questionnaires needed to be returned.

In Table 3.3 above, the assumption of a lowest response rate expectation of 10% was made based on the average response rate of 13% experience by the pilot studies. Other figures were based on firm intentions stated by respondents in these studies. Since it took 36 days for 170 questionnaires to be distributed, therefore approximately 34 forms per week, at this distribution level it would take over 4 years to send out 7,500 questionnaires. Therefore, this methodology could not generate an adequate sample size.

3.4.3 A Critical Review of Alternative Methodologies

In light of the problems experienced with the initial methodology, it was necessary to consider alternatives. One possibility was to delay the distribution of questionnaires until the following season. Forms could then be inserted into the pre-wrapped brochures, prepared in late summer. This would however delay the time-constrained research.

Alternatively, questionnaires could be distributed randomly across the United Kingdom using a geodemographic classification system to identify potential respondents. There are a number of these systems, such as ACORN, PIN and MOSAIC, which classify individuals

by neighbourhood, demographics and financial variables (Chisnall, 1991). However, an associated limitation of using a geodemographic system for this research was the very large number of questionnaires that would need to be distributed to generate a sufficient sample size, as shown in Table 3.3 above.

Another alternative was focus groups. Information can be obtained quickly in focus groups as several people are interviewed at once. Interaction can occur with respondents, if appropriate, explaining questions in more detail if not understood and responses may be more spontaneous since participants are not restricted to answering direct questions (Fahad, 1986). The flexibility of this method also allows subjects covered and the depth of interview to adapt as the group progresses. The context within which the focus group is conducted can be controlled, non-verbal cues confirming the validity of verbal responses. The synergy of the assembled people combines the effect of the group to produce a wider range of ideas, comments from other participants may stimulate a chain of responses causing snowballing of ideas. Fortunate discoveries may be made by accident.

There are however disadvantages to focus groups. Incentives, such as a fee, may have been offered to recruit respondents which may affect responses given. The sample size may be too small or unrepresentative and therefore subsequent generalisations may be unreliable. Responses given may have been influenced by interaction between respondents or by self-appointed leaders of the focus group (Fahad, 1986) or the researcher may form a bond with the group and the role as the one who controls and encourages discussion may be forgotten (Goodyear, 1971).

Focus groups could be conducted for actual visitors to Grampian. With groups held throughout the region, potential respondents could be contacted through the Tourist Information Centres (TICs). However, this methodology would exclude the 33% of visitors to the region who do not frequent the TICs (Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourist Board TIC Visitor figures compared to Scottish Tourist Board Visitor figures), introducing bias into the individuals sampled. When this possibility was investigated further, it was discovered that the Tourist Information Centres within the region did not have sufficient space to run focus groups on their premises.

Focus groups for non-visitors could also be held throughout the United Kingdom with potential participants contacted through such mediums as advertisements in local papers. However, forming representative focus groups of a sufficient size would be problematic, very time-consuming and costly. Individuals may require an incentive to participate, venues have to be hired, travel and assistance costs must be met.

Another limitation of focus groups was the bias the researcher would introduce by leading the group personally. Even with the necessitated acquirement of skills for non directive permissive questioning, the researcher would still be biased through awareness of research aims and expected results. One solution would be to employ a trained psychologist with no knowledge of the field, fed only with enough information to lead focus groups. However, resources were not available for this. Therefore, as with the other alternatives discussed above, due to financial, time and resource constraints, this methodology was rejected.

3.4.4 Evolved Methodology

A methodology was developed which would be resource efficient; engage in a high degree of random selection of respondents and encompass a wide spectrum of socio-economic classes and geographic areas in which people live. The technique employed accessed a captive audience, resulting in a high response rate and generally well completed questionnaires. Adoption of this methodology allowed the study to be expanded to contact potential domestic visitors to Grampian at any stage of destination selection.

With the co-operation of the, then, British Rail business sectors of Scotrail, Intercity East Coast and Intercity Cross Country, it was possible to contact potential respondents throughout the United Kingdom. British Rail passengers were approached on a number of routes (see Appendix 10) and asked to complete a questionnaire which would be collected before disembarking. Each respondent approached was given a simple explanation of the research being undertaken and what they were being asked to do, reiterating the introduction written at the top of the questionnaire (see Appendix 4). Consistency was maintained by the researcher themselves approaching the individual and giving the same explanation each time. Any individual who stated the questionnaire was irrelevant to them was prompted in the same persuasive manner.

3.4.5 Limitations and Justifications of Methodology

Convenience sampling was used, selecting respondents by their convenient availability rather than a more random sample of the population which may generate less biased statistics (Chisnall, 1992). This non probability sampling method was adopted since it would produce a good sample size which, due to the good cross-section of the population who travel on trains, was considered relatively representative.

Some sections of the population were excluded from the study by the adoption of this methodology however. Arguably, individuals with the lowest disposable income are less likely to travel by train. However these people may also be less likely to travel to another region due to associated costs, and therefore their exclusion from the survey has minimal impact. To ascertain how representative the sample of respondents were, profiles were compared to national statistics.

It is acknowledged that rail is only one mode of transport and by contacting British Rail passengers this excludes people travelling by other means. However, train passengers were approached only to gain access to a section of a population, the mode of transport being mainly irrelevant. In addition, individuals use different modes of transport dependent upon the purpose of travel, party composition and available alternatives. Indeed, an individual is unlikely to exclusively use one form of transport. The form of transport used by individuals to travel to their destination in Scotland in 1992 is shown in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4: Mode of Transport Taken by UK Residents on Trips to Scotland, 1992

Mode of Transport	All Tourist Trips	All Holiday Trips
Car (Own/Hire)	5.9m (66%)	4.2m (72%)
Train	1.0m (11%)	0.5m (9%)
Bus/Coach	1.2m (13%)	0.7m (12%)
Plane	0.3m (3%)	0.1m (1%)
Other	0.5m (6%)	0.2m (3%)

(Scottish Tourist Board, 1993)

It can be seen from Table 3.4 above that the majority of people (66%) visiting Scotland travel by car. More people travel to Scotland by train if the reason for their visit is anything other than on holiday, such as on business or visiting friends and relatives. Indeed, in this research 406 respondents were travelling on business at the time the survey was conducted.

with 349 people visiting friends and relatives and only 128 people on the train for holiday purposes.

When visitors to Scotland are compared to the rest of the United Kingdom it can be seen, from Table 3.5 below, that more personal transport, namely the car, is used in the UK as a whole than Scotland specifically, with 77% compared to 67%. The percentage of people travelling by train appears to be only marginally higher for visitors to Scotland, 11% compared to 9% for the UK. It can therefore be assumed that there is a greater number of people travelling to Scotland by bus and coach to amass the figure of 28% for public transport taken to Scotland compared to 20% throughout the United Kingdom. Figures for Grampian could not be attained, although arguably a greater number of people may travel by car than to more central Scottish regions due to less accessibility or frequency of services to some areas of Grampian.

Table 3.5: Mode of Transport Taken by UK Residents for all Tourism Trips, 1992

Mode of Transport	United Kingdom (%)	Scotland (%)
Train	9	11
Personal Transport	77	67
All Public Transport	20	28

(Figures taken from English Tourist Board, 1994)

Contacting respondents who are travelling by train therefore does not limit the sample to potential visitors using the train as their mode of transport. How relevant information was to be gathered from these respondents was considered with reference to pilot studies.

3.4.6 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire design was a revision of the pilot studies (see Appendix 4). Basic demographic and quantitative data was collected using closed questions and qualitative data using open-ended and scaled questions. A self-completion questionnaire methodology was chosen over face-to-face interviews primarily to allow for a greater sample size to be approached, but also eliminating the potential influence either of overhearing other people's responses or by knowing their responses would be heard by others.

Personal contact is an advantage of this method of data collection because it can provide necessary explanations, with care not to give interpretations of the questions (Oppenheim, 1992). Another benefit is anonymity could be given to respondents since there was no need to gain names and addresses. However, it was appreciated that this methodology would not allow prompting or ensure completion of all questions. Similarly, completion of the questionnaire without conferral with others could not be assured, an important consideration since a substantial quantity of the data generated was subjective.

The questionnaire was designed to fit on one piece of A3 paper, folded into booklet form, to give the appearance of a questionnaire that would be quick to complete. However, Intercity Cross country requested additional information from respondents on their trains which necessitated insertion of another page into the questionnaire (shown in Appendix 5), which may have hindered completion.

Whilst questions were based on those used in the pilot studies, information sought from each question was re-examined to check the validity of their presence in the questionnaire. The questions designed can be categorised into the five main groups of demography, visitor profile; knowledge about and experience of the region; image and the decision-making process of the respondent. The principal reasons for the final selection of questions included in the questionnaire are given in Appendix 6. The timing of data collection was considered relatively arbitrary.

3.4.7 Data

Data was gathered outside the main tourist season since potential respondents were all train travellers, not solely tourists. Therefore, it was possible to conduct the empirical work at any time, overcoming one of the constraints of time experienced in the pilot studies. The survey was conducted during October and November 1993. However, this did mean that some of the trains mainly used by tourists, such as the Glasgow to Fort William line, had few passengers and therefore few potential respondents.

All passengers were approached on the train except those asleep, eating in the restaurant or standing. Where possible, as new passengers joined the train, carriages were revisited and new arrivals invited to complete a questionnaire. However, on busier trains it took the whole journey to pass down the train once distributing questionnaires and a second time

to collect them. This still intercepted passengers joining and alighting the train at different stations as people sitting in the carriages approached earlier in the journey were mainly those who had joined the train at the original station and carriages reached later contained more passengers who joined en route (details of journeys are discussed in Appendix 11). Where possible, peak time trains were avoided since it was felt that a large number of passengers on these trains would be travelling distances too short to complete a questionnaire.

Most passengers had time to spare and therefore the majority of those approached were willing to complete a questionnaire. Of the 940 questionnaires distributed to individuals travelling on trains throughout the United Kingdom, 913 were completed, indicating a response rate of 97%. The number of respondents accessed was limited only by the number of passengers on trains surveyed. Analysis of resulting data necessitated the design of an appropriate system.

3.4.8 Analysis of Data

It was necessary to devise a coding system specifically for the data gathered due to the number of open-ended questions. Categories were assigned numbers instead of letters for both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure there were no restrictions to analysis that could be carried out by statistical packages used.

Categories were not predetermined for open-ended questions before the questionnaires were completed. Where 5 or more responses had the same basic meaning, a category was assigned. Although computer packages for qualitative data analysis, such as Ethnograph and Nudist, are in existence, access was not available to these packages, nor were their benefits considered to outweigh those of manual coding.

Quantitative data was categorised, where possible, using a standard unit size. However, categories with less than 5 responses generally would be merged with another category, resulting in a larger group of responses from which conclusions could be drawn. Home towns were categorised by political region, as defined by local government boundaries, (Regional Trends 27, 1992) to group respondents by the distance lived from the Grampian region and to allow possible comparisons with other data. Socio-economic classes of

respondents were determined by coding occupations given using the Standard Occupation Classification (HMSO, 1990).

Financial assistance was gained from Grampian Enterprise Limited to employ an assistant to input coded data into a spreadsheet. Approximately 50 of the entries were randomly selected for checking. The level of error was minimal and did not appear to warrant further checking.

The initial statistical package used was SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) for Windows, selected because of its capability of extensive data analysis. However problems were encountered with access and memory capacity of computers attached to the network version of SPSS for Windows at the University. It was therefore necessary to use another software package in conjunction with SPSS for Windows. Compatibility and availability were the two main factors which determined the software selected. Microsoft Excel Version was chosen under these criteria. However, it was not possible to switch all data analysis to Excel since this software is unable to conduct all the necessary statistical tests. Analysis of the data using these computer software packages identified limitations associated with the data.

3.4.9 Assumptions Necessary for Data Analysis

There were two main assumptions made when analysing data accumulated from potential visitors. It was considered that the timing of data collection was reflected by references to 'the last year' being twelve months between Autumn 1992 and Autumn 1993.

Where qualitative information was sought, respondents were encouraged to give multiple answers. The assumption was made that people were likely to give answers in a relatively descending order of importance. To account for this, weightings were given to all factors in the following way:

- When two factors were involved, the first factor was multiplied by 1 and the second by 0.5.
- When three factors were involved, the first factor was multiplied by 1, the second by 0.75 and the third by 0.5.
- When four factors were involved, the first factor was multiplied by 1, the second by 0.825, the third by 0.675 and the fourth by 0.5.

- When six factors were involved, the first factor was multiplied by 1, the second by 0.9, the third by 0.8 and the fourth by 0.7, the fifth by 0.6 and the sixth by 0.5.

Categories with less than 10 respondents were excluded from most analysis to reduce the plethora of data. Although an arbitrary number, it was considered that no valuable generalisations or conclusions could be drawn from less than 10 responses. Questionnaire distribution deliberately sought to omit respondents aged under 18, therefore this category is ignored during analysis.

3.4.10 Analysis Of Frequency Distributions

Variables were cross tabulated to ascertain independence or association with other variables. Statistical tests were selected to analyse nominal data. The chi-square statistic measures discrepancies between observed and expected frequencies. Tables (Johnson & Leone, 1977) are used to calculate the significance of results determined by the magnitude of the chi-square value and degrees of freedom, the number of independent variables involved, calculated by subtracting the number of restrictions from the number of classes. Where figures were not given for the value required, guesstimates were calculated using percentages of given values. Any association between variables was tested using chi-square at 5% and 1% significance levels.

Measures of association based on chi-square include Phi coefficient and Cramers V. The Phi coefficient is appropriate where there are no more than two rows or columns whilst Cramers V can be used for any number. Whilst it is not possible to accurately interpret the value of the Cramers V statistic, because no significance tables exist, strength of associations can be compared (Norusis, 1988).

3.4.11 Limitations of Data

A less than representative categorisation of the population may have occurred when coding socio-economic classes, since more respondents were assigned to the Socio-economic class II than expected. It is possible that a greater number of jobs were placed into this category than intended by designers of the Standard Occupation Classification system due to potential ambiguity of interpretation. When unsure of the class to assign respondents, there may have been a tendency to place people in the higher of two possible classes.

The demography and socio-economic status of respondents were compared to population statistics in the United Kingdom to identify any bias introduced by adopting this methodology, as shown in Table 3.6 below.

Table 3.6: Socio-economic Class of Respondents compared to National Statistics

Class	UK (%)	Sample (%)
I	5.85	22.67
II	30.64	42.50
IIINM	22.80	8.00
IIIM	21.09	10.95
IV	14.47	3.07
V	5.16	1.10
Total	99.99	88.29

(National Statistics adapted from HMSO, 1995)

As can be seen from Table 3.6, the total for the sample does not add up to 100%. This is because some of the respondents could not be classified into the Socio-economic classes I-V. Instead they were placed into the categories Housepersons, Students, Unemployed and those in HM Forces. Since the National Statistics are based on the working population, without these separate categories, the two sets of statistics should be compared with caution.

The classification system used to generate the United Kingdom statistics categorised individuals into the socio-economic classes using descriptors such as Professional, Intermediate Management and Skilled Workers, whereas respondents from this research were categorised by household into socio-economic classes using the Standard Occupation Classification, a numerical system. This may have led to discrepancies between the figures.

Table 3.6, above, indicates that although the figures vary between the two sources of information, similar trends can be identified. Socio-economic Class II has the greatest number of people from both sources, whereas the greatest discrepancy concerns individuals classified as Class I. In the National Statistics, this class has the second least number of people in it compared to the sample of respondents which has the second highest number of respondents. This may be because the researcher had a tendency to classify people into a

higher class with the classification system used or that there were a high number of professional people travelling on the train for business purposes.

The high number of people travelling on business could be explained by reimbursement policies for travel using this mode of transport by employers as well as individuals taking advantage of the travel time to work whilst travelling. Another factor that may skew the numbers in socio-economic classes is that there were more British Rail workers, and in some cases their spouses, travelling in the trains than there would be in a representative sample of the population.

A profile of visitors to the Grampian region was compiled by the Scottish Tourist Board (STB, 1992), using another classification system to categorise socio-economic classes. The HMSO figures (given in Table 3.6 above) were compared to those produced by the STB. Great disparities were found, with no identifiable trends. Therefore, it can be concluded that the socio-economic classification systems used were not interchangeable and comparison of data would be meaningless. The age and sex of respondents sampled was also compared to national statistics, as shown in Table 3.7 below.

Table 3.7: Cross Tabulation of Age and Sex of UK Residents and Sample of Respondents

Age	Male		Female		Total	
	UK*	Sample	UK*	Sample	UK*	Sample
Under 18	6,590	1,119	6,273	2,674	12,863	3,793
18-35	7,143	11,069	7,257	10,945	14,389	22,014
36-50	5,641	7,338	5,683	7,089	11,323	14,427
51-65	4,366	5,037	4,515	5,099	8,880	10,136
Over 65	3,604	2,736	5,395	3,358	9,010	6,094
Total	27,344	27,300	29,123	29,166	56,467	56,467

(UK statistics: Government Statistical Office, 1993)

Key

* = x 10³

The statistics for the sample, shown in Table 3.7 above are based on 908 respondents who identified their age category. Based on the total population figure for the United Kingdom, each respondent represents 62,188.32599 UK residents. However, the two data sources are not directly comparable since the UK statistics used age ranges which differed by one year for each category, such as 35-49 years of age was used as a category which has been

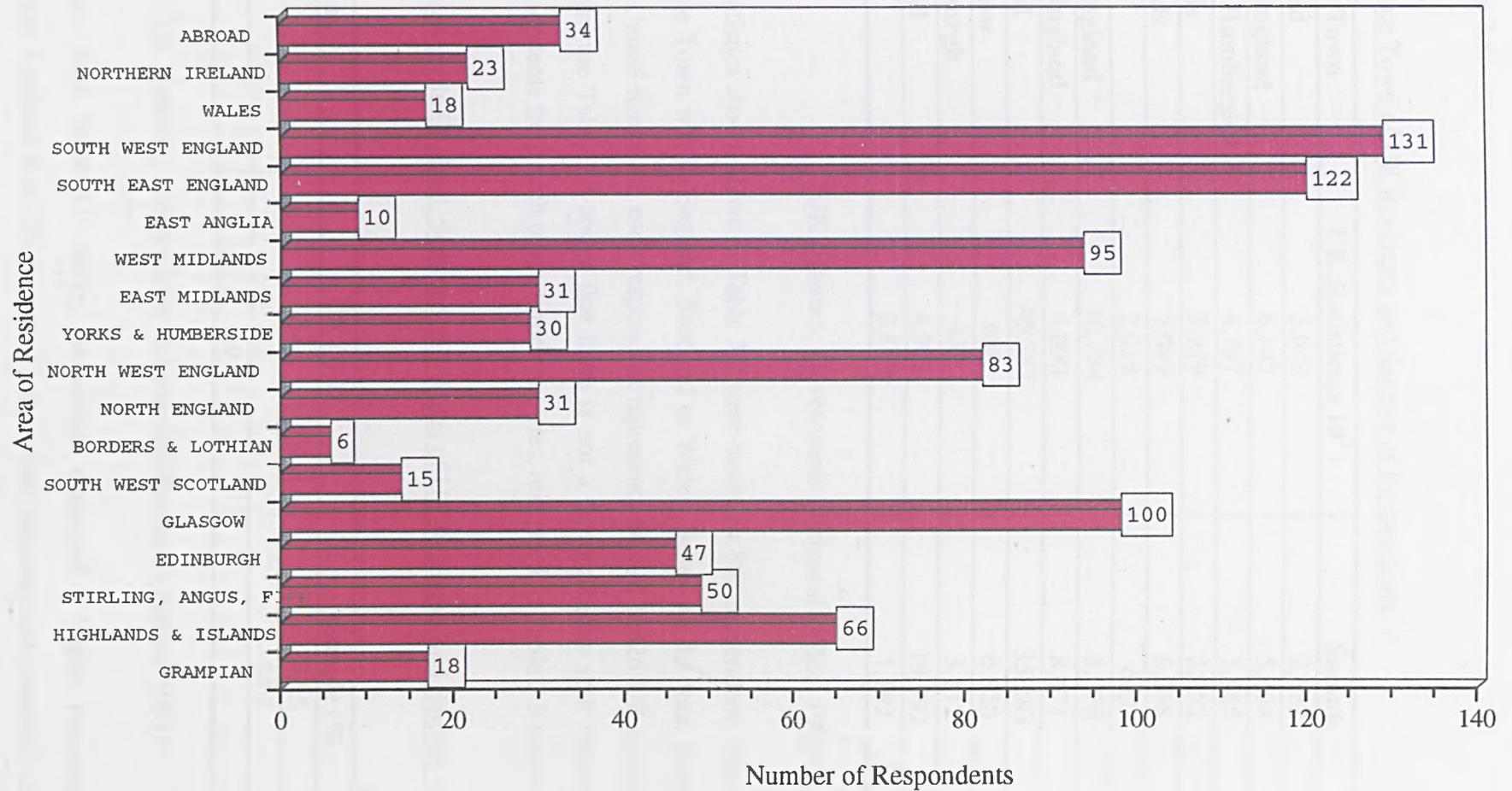
directly compared to those placed in the 36-50 category in the sample. However, the two classification systems are similar enough to allow relatively accurate comparison.

The two age categories with the greatest disparity between the two sources of data are those under 18 years old and 18 to 35 years of age. However, an explanation for the difference between the two sources relating to the under 18 age range was that they were deliberately not targeted during this research. The sample has incorporated more people in the age range 18-35, and to a lesser extent those aged 36-50, suggesting that train passengers are on average slightly younger than the national population.

It was hoped that by travelling on rail networks throughout the United Kingdom a good geographical spread of respondents could be contacted. Unfortunately it was not possible to travel on West Coast Intercity because this business sector did not want to disturb their passengers again when they already conducted their own research on the trains, reducing the number of respondents contacted on the West side of the UK. However, there were sufficient numbers of respondents from most political regions to indicate trends. Although the empirical work aimed to contact non-residents of Grampian, 18 were included. Whilst some questions were consequently not applicable, some valuable information was elicited.

As can be seen from Figure 3.3 below, the South West of England contained the largest number of respondents (131), closely followed by the South East of England (122). Areas with poor representation included Borders and Lothian, East Anglia and South West Scotland. Whilst this may partly reflect routes surveyed, the number of individuals living in each area was also a determinant of how many respondents were contacted.

Figure 3.3: Home Town by Political Region



Analysis of the respondents' home towns revealed that the sample of individuals studied did not give a truly representative geographical spread of the UK population, as shown below in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8: Home Town of UK Residents and Sample of Respondents

Home Town	UK Statistics(x 10 ³)	Sample
North England	3,019	2,052
North West England	6,147	5,494
Yorkshire & Humberside	4,797	1,985
East Midlands	3,919	2,052
West Midlands	5,089	6,288
East Anglia	2,018	662
South East England	16,794	8,076
South West England	4,600	8,671
England Total	46,382	35,283
City of Glasgow	688	6,620
City of Edinburgh	439	3,111
Scotland Total	4,962	19,992
Wales Total	2,812	1,192

(UK statistics: Government Statistical Office, 1993)

The sample statistics shown above in Table 3.8 were based on 853 respondents who stated that their Home Town was in England, Scotland or Wales. Based on the total population figure for the United Kingdom, each respondent represents 66,198.12426 UK residents. It is apparent from the Table 3.8 above that there is not a representative split between the number of respondents from each of the three countries, reiterated in Table 3.9 below.

Table 3.9: Residency in England, Scotland and Wales of UK Residents and Sample of Respondents

Country	UK (%)	Sample (%)
England	82.1	62.5
Scotland	8.8	35.4
Wales	5.0	2.1

(UK statistics: adapted from Government Statistical Office, 1993)

As can be seen from Table 3.9 above, the sample contained a higher percentage of respondents from Scotland than UK figures. Comparison with national statistics revealed that the sample was biased towards the higher socio-economic classes. However, it is likely that individuals from the higher classes are more likely to visit destinations and likely to

have a higher disposable income which can be spent when there. These people are therefore more important for destination promoters than those in the lower socio-economic classes due to the potential revenue which can be generated. The geographical spread of respondents was considered representative enough that generalisations could be made. However, some regions, such as Borders and Lothian with 6 respondents formed too small a category for conclusions to be drawn from it.

The exact meaning of terminology used by respondents was not always clear due to lack of context for one word answers. When coding data, words were categorised together if deemed synonymous by the researcher, although it is recognised that this introduces subjective bias. Colloquialisms also necessitated consideration, therefore responses given were analysed with respect to the home town of the individual.

Despite limitations associated with data collected, the results are significant to the study of the image perceived of Grampian and visitors' and non-visitors' perceptions of the role of image in destination selection. Analysing the role assigned to image in the promotion of a destination contextualises the emphasis placed by potential visitors on that image.

3.5 Image Promotion

The image promotion of Grampian was studied through brochure and policy analysis and interviews with members of the tourism industry. It was considered that using more than one method for data collection would allow cross-referencing and hence validation or rejection of information.

Brochure analysis was conducted on promotional material produced by relevant organisations. Content Analysis of the region's promotional literature was conducted to identify any changes that have taken place in the image portrayed of Grampian. Tourism Policies were reviewed through examination of pertinent documentation to identify any strategies that organisations have in promoting, changing, maintaining or measuring the effectiveness of the image portrayed.

Interviews were conducted with representatives of organisations involved in image promotion of Grampian to collect qualitative information. Subjective information was gathered pertaining to the concept of image, how the image of Grampian is portrayed, the

relationship among the promoters and the relationship between the promoters and potential visitors.

3.5.1 Brochure Analysis and Policy Examination

The content of the promotional literature produced by the tourist boards in the Grampian region over the past 10 years was analysed to ascertain any associated image portrayal change over time. The results were compared to information gathered from interviews with appropriate tourist boards concerning any deliberate changes in image promotion.

Content Analysis is a technique used to make inferences by identifying particular characteristics of messages objectively and systematically (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). Descriptive information is produced which can be used for cross-validation of research findings. This method is unobtrusive and non-reactive. Results can be checked by other researchers because they are explicit to the reader. The benefits of this methodology are shown by the growing amount of literature on the pictorial content of advertisements and its role in the formation of potential visitors' perceptions of tourist destinations (Weaver and McCleary, 1984; Marsh, 1986; Olsen, MacAlexander & Roberts, 1986; Ryan, 1991).

Emphasis was placed on reviewing the cover feature and layout of the brochures, based on the work of Dilley (1986). It was not considered necessary to employ a sociological classification system (as discussed in Ryan, 1995) to analyse the content of the brochure since the rationale for this data collection was to consider how the brochure had changed over time rather than the presence of associated instrumental and expressive values.

Tourism policy documents produced by local and national tourist boards, enterprise companies and other relevant organisations were examined for any reference to image promotion and related marketing plans. Whilst there were found to be no specific image promotion policies, the policy-making process for tourism and related policies was studied. This established relevant potential players in the policy-making process; whose interests would be addressed; how policies could be developed; the potential relevance and importance of each stage of the policy-making process in the formation of an image promotion policy and the likely degree of cohesion in image promotion policies. This material was then compared to information attained through interviews with individuals involved.

3.5.2 Industry Interviews

The role that image is perceived to play in the promotion of a destination by those involved influences the image portrayed to potential visitors. Whilst the study of promotional literature and policy documents gave an indication of the image promoted by each organisation, it did not identify the associated decision-making. To ascertain who within organisations is responsible for deciding on the image of the region, the importance attached to it, how it is to be portrayed, and to identify any conflict between promotional organisations, interviews were conducted with representatives of key organisations in the promotion of a Grampian as a visitor destination.

Face-to-face interviews were used as the method of data collection to allow a high degree of flexibility in questioning and a greater control of the interview, with supplementary information potentially given freely by the interviewee or by prompting. Notes were taken at the interviews to allow accurate recollection of answers given by respondents at a later date. Interviews were conducted with industry members between January and March 1994. The interviews lasted for between 25 and 60 minutes (as detailed in Appendix 7).

Questions were answered in the chronological order, ensuring that later questions did not influence responses given to earlier questions (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1981). The small number of tourism promoters to be contacted allowed face-to-face interviews to be a feasible method of data collection.

Of the three main forms of face-to-face interview, fully structured, semi-structured and focused, the semi-structured format was adopted by this research. Fully structured interviews, where the wording and order of questions is the same for each respondent, was considered inappropriate for the study of such a subjective concept since arguably this type of interview restricts the information accumulated and does not gain insight into the interviewees thoughts and beliefs.

Focused interviews, where there is no standard wording of questions (Hughes, 1979), were rejected because if an interview is too unstructured, a conversation without a purpose may develop. However, completely unstructured interviews are non-existent (Jones, 1984) since

the interviewer will have at least broad questions, or a list of topics, to ask the respondent and the conversation will be directed in one direction more than another.

Semi-structured interviews are pre-structured with questions to be used as guidelines. This allows flexibility for the interviewer, so they can probe for more information on areas that the respondent appears to have an interest in or knowledge of and follow new lines of enquiry. This method allows flexibility for the respondent since they can pass on information to the interviewer in their own way, allowing depth and context to the answers given.

Twenty open-ended questions were designed for the interview and suggested prompts noted for each question. However, to avoid duplication of material covered, if relevant information had been brought out earlier in the interview, later questions were omitted where appropriate, showing the flexibility of this form of interview. A few of the questions were modified between interviews to take into account differences between organisations (see Appendix 8 for Interview Schedule). Therefore, variations between responses could not solely be attributed to differences between respondents since the questions were not identical for each interview (Hughes, 1979).

The order in which questions were asked remained the same for each interview, following a funnel sequence (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1976). The sequence of questions has a progressively narrower scope, with each question related to the previous one, aiding respondents recall of detailed information. It is appreciated that interviewer bias can be introduced when conducting face-to-face interviews, however the researcher was the same for each interview, giving the research consistency and reducing this bias.

3.5.3 Interview Design

Questions were designed in three main sections. These were the concept of image; how image is portrayed by the respondent's organisation; and tourism promotion throughout the region. Once the interview had been designed, the rationale for each question was examined to check the validity of inclusion, as per the self-completion questionnaires.

Each interview was adapted to ensure relevance to the specific organisation being interviewed, through omission of irrelevant questions or the inclusion of others.

Considering the original interview design, before appropriate adaptations were made, the main reasons for inclusion of questions are given in Appendix 9. The criteria for interview selection was that the organisation an individual represented was perceived by this research to be involved in the promotion of Grampian as a visitor destination. Interviews requested with industry representatives had a response rate of 75%, with six out of eight industry members consenting to an interview. Those who did not participate did so due to the belief that the subject was irrelevant to them, in itself a finding.

3.5.4 Propitious Interviews

Representatives of all relevant organisations were invited for an interview (see Appendix 7 for details of those interviewed). However, not all of those approached felt their organisation would be able to give any relevant information to the research and therefore declined an interview, indicating the perception that they do not portray an image of Grampian.

Although those being interviewed were responding on behalf of their organisation, their personal opinions would influence the answers given. A lack of knowledge or deliberate misinformation may also affect the responses given. Also, interviews were conducted in the respondents' workplace which may have influenced answers given if the interviewee felt responses could be overheard by colleagues. The observation of non-verbal behaviour during the interview aimed to minimise any such bias.

Comparison of findings from interviews with industry members and from questionnaires completed by visitors and non-visitors to Grampian can identify potential limitations to image promotion. This includes discrepancies in the perceived role of image in destination selection, differences between perceived and promoted image and the extent to which destination promoters appear able to influence image perception and destination selection. The methodologies employed for data collection here, which have provided valuable results, have potential for application in future research (as discussed in Chapter IX).

3.6 Key Issues in Methodology Selection

The empirical work undertaken places this study within the context of other research in this area. An important contribution to the body of knowledge in this field is data gathered from

non-visitors to a destination. This section of the population is often not contacted due to difficulties in doing so. The methodology adopted here overcame this limitation.

Comparison of the image perceived by people who had visited the Grampian region with those who had not allowed the role of experience to be considered. Experience is an important factor to study since the image perceived of a destination often changes after visitation (Jacobsen, 1997), therefore it is useful to separate the images perceived by potential and actual visitors to a destination. Although experience has previously been identified as a factor in the formation of people's images (such as Gunn, 1988; Stabler, 1991), its relative importance has not been identified. To clarify the importance of experience, correlation between experience and depth of description pertaining to the destination's attributes was studied during this research.

Through the ranked importance of information sources for image formation, respondents identified which factors they perceived most important in this process. This tested whether promotional literature, currently employed widely by destination promoters, is in fact the most effective promotional tool for image promotion.

Further data generation resulted from studying the role of image promotion, as perceived by image promoters of Grampian. Analysis of decision-making processes of promotional organisations, through interviews, brochure and policy analysis, identified the importance placed on image promotion and perceived success. The role image plays within destination selection therefore studies perceptions of potential visitors and promoters.

Chapter IV: The Role of Image in Destination Selection

4.1 Introduction

The role of image in destination selection has been evaluated through critical review of existing literature, surveys and reports, in conjunction with primary data collection. This chapter focuses upon the role of image in the decision-making process of destination selection within a theoretical context.

Whilst previous researchers (see for instance Nicosia, 1966; Engel, Kollat & Blackwell, 1968; Howard & Sheth, 1969; Sheth & Newman, 1991) have developed consumer behaviour models which considered the role of image, each of these models exhibits limitations in analysing the role of image in decision-making when adapted to the field of tourism. These limitations must be addressed to generate workable models which acknowledge the importance of image. Key stages of the selection process, when promotional activities have the greatest potential for influencing the individual's perceived image, can then be identified, potentially increasing the effectiveness of image promotion.

To evaluate the role of image in the process of destination selection, it is valuable to first consider why individuals choose to become tourists. Tourism is not compulsory and yet many people in the United Kingdom take at least one holiday every year.

4.2 Tourism and Image: Functions of Culture

Motivations to take a holiday vary between individuals although they are often related to the concept of departure from everyday life (Urry, 1990), attained through experiencing a different set of stimuli. An individual may seek enjoyment, experience of a new place or merely conformance to the social norm. Indeed, tourism is seen as an indication of status in modern society (Feifer, 1985), therefore an individual may perceive there to be more pressure to take a holiday per se than on the selection of a particular destination.

Tourism is a dynamic social construct. The place given to tourism by individuals depends upon the historical time as well as the society or social group. The period of history dictates the general circumstances under which people live, such as available destinations, accessibility and average disposable income. Society's attitude towards tourism may be

reflected by the number of days holiday allowed and promotional activities undertaken by the governing body. The relative importance placed on different factors in destination selection may vary between social groups.

As a function of image, changing societal values will influence the attractiveness of destination images to potential visitors. There is prestige or status attached to taking a holiday and the particular destination visited, and therefore an individual's image of a destination and the associated selection process may be defined by society's collective perception. Human values, arguably defined by society, "govern a person's lifestyle and underlie a consumer's interests, outlook on life, consumption priorities, and activities" (Muller, 1995, p.3).

Societies are dynamic, developing structurally and culturally. Tourist practices can be seen as inseparable from these changes since they are linked to all other social and cultural practices. Therefore, society's perception of tourism participation and the importance placed upon image in destination selection will also change.

Modern western societies appear to be consumer-orientated. Central to modern consumerism is the notion of covert day-dreaming and anticipation (Campbell, 1987). Satisfaction may be partly related to imagination and pleasure-seeking, therefore one motivation for purchase is to experience in reality what has already been experienced by imagination. Imagination is in fact socially organised, rather than a purely individual activity (Urry, 1990). People are influenced by media representation, advertisements, photography and promotional literature, through which society influences the formation of individuals' images.

Although society strongly influences an individual's imagination, their own unique characteristics also develop personal constructs. Based on their own experiences, individuals develop constructs to explain phenomena, which inter-relate to form a logic that can be used to predict the future (Reardon, 1991). Therefore perceptions of tourism and associated images may differ between individuals within the same society as well as between societies.

Differences in preferences, motivations and expectations may be detectable between socio-economic classes. This may be due to different potential expenditure available for tourism-related activities and varying importance placed on different aspects of a destination. In combination with other variables, such as sources of information and individual traits, these differences contribute to the variation in perceived attraction of destinations.

Social class divisions have also influenced the development of destinations. The higher socio-economic classes were greatly influenced by the medical profession in destination selection during the eighteenth century, leading to the associated development of many spa towns and seaside resorts (Brown, 1990). As other media developed, the medical profession became less influential and the upper class began to visit a wider variety of destinations with the middle class establishing the widespread popularity of the family seaside holiday (Urry, 1990). Destinations developed an image associated with the class of visitor attracted and thus class-related distinctions expanded the role of image in destination selection.

The recent emergence in the last thirty years of a number of pressure groups, such as environmentalists and consumers' associations in part reflects changing values and a continually transforming society (Cazes, 1992). The emergence of these groups suggests that people expect more personal satisfaction, authenticity and difference, rejecting tradition, duty and authority. The implication for the tourism industry is that people are less likely to be influenced by public authorities in their decision-making in where to go and what to do. This may lead to a greater dispersion of visitors around the United Kingdom, reducing the concentration of visitors to high profile destinations.

Individuals' perceptions of Grampian as a visitor destination will have changed accordingly with the changing culture of society. Therefore, this research considered Grampian's changing image within the context of the region's history.

4.2.1 The Development of Grampian's Image

The current image perceived of Grampian appears to be constituted by a combination of perceived characteristics. These characteristics have changed over time with changing society and associated technological developments.

Grampian has often been described in terms of its remoteness. Indeed, its geographic location suggests this will always form part of the region's image, although increasing accessibility reduces negative associations with location. Therefore, it could be argued that the image of remoteness has decreased over time as accessibility has improved.

Aberdeen had a strong image as a fishing port until the mid 1900s, with clipper ships and subsequently steam trawlers frequenting the port. This image was strongest when fishing played a vital role in the area's economy. With improvements in fishing techniques and transportation, and growth of other industries, the importance of fishing in Grampian declined, and with it the associated image lost strength.

The image of the Granite City of Aberdeen has a long history. Since 1741, granite has been used as the predominant material in the construction of buildings in Aberdeen. Quarrying of granite also served as a visitor attraction when operational, particularly in the 1930s (Smith, 1994). After closure in 1971, the largest man-made hole in Europe, Rubislaw Quarry, has stood idle, fenced off to the public (Leckie, 1991) and its use as a tourist attraction debated. This image appears to have remained prominent in recent years.

Royalty, in particular Queen Victoria, has aided the growth of many UK visitor destinations, including Grampian which she described in her memoirs as her 'dear paradise'. Regular attendance by the Royal family at the Braemar gathering, initiated by Victoria, gives the area media coverage and the gathering itself has become an international tourist attraction, with approximately 16,500 visitors per year (Herald Free Press, 1995).

Queen Victoria's belief in the value of fresh air increased the popularity of seaside resorts. Aberdeen benefited from this positive image portrayed by the Queen and the beach became a popular attraction during the earlier years of the twentieth century, with many people travelling from the nearby countryside to spend time at the beach. This popularity continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century, until there was a general decline in the popularity of British seaside resorts (as discussed in Chapter V). As holidays abroad and activity holidays became more fashionable and affordable, Aberdeen became less attractive as a holiday destination. As new opportunities have developed for travel and new destinations opened up both domestically and globally, a different type of visitor to

Grampian has emerged. Proximity is no longer the key factor in destination selection for all individuals.

Local residents also influence the image perceived of Grampian. In the 1920s especially, Aberdonians themselves nurtured the belief that they were shrewd with their money, with many books written at this time referring to such a trait. However, this may arguably reflect the image perceived of all Scots. The image perceived of local residents is seen to be an important factor in visitor satisfaction (as discussed in Chapter VIII) and therefore is important in destination selection. In the last twenty years, development of the oil industry in the region has brought an array of people from all over the world. This has served to create a more cosmopolitan image of Grampian.

A more traditional aspect of Grampian's image is the distilling of Whisky. The abundance of water which passes through granite and peat, said to be essential for the process, make Grampian an ideal location for whisky making. By the late 1880s Scotch Whisky was well established and with it the reputation of Grampian's distilleries (Leckie, 1991). The last quarter of a century has shown that Whisky is also a "highly successful form of tourist attraction" (McBoyle, 1996, p. 1). The success of Whisky as a tourism product could be contributed to the experience of an authentic production process which has remained relatively unchanged over a great number of years, satisfying tourists who are interested in culture (Brokensha and Guldberg, 1992). Whilst there are a number of distilleries with associated facilities for visitors in other areas of Scotland, the plethora within Grampian, reflected by the development of a 'Malt Whisky Trail' makes Whisky distilling a regional characteristic.

The image perceived of Grampian has evolved over time, and will continue to change with technological innovations and changing society, but maintains a traditional structure associated with Whisky and Royalty. Clearly, a combination of the region's natural attributes, man-made attractions and socio-cultural links has created a multi-faceted image of Grampian. However, it could be argued that this composite image of the region relies too heavily upon Aberdeen. The image perceived of Grampian may not be that of a single destination, which therefore does not fit into administrative boundaries and questions the effectiveness of a region as a unit area for promotion.

A relationship between image perception and destination selection has also been identified. The significance of image within this process is paramount to this research. This is considered within the context of behavioural models.

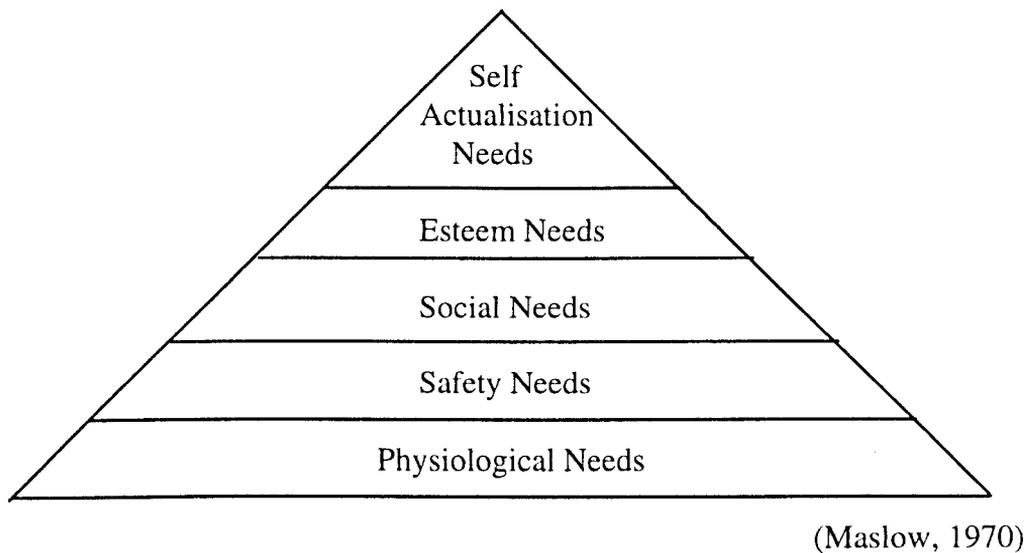
4.3 Significance of Image in Adaptation of Consumer Behaviour Models to Destination Selection

The decision to take a holiday is the first stage in destination selection. Subsequent stages are dominated by subjectively influential factors and their inter-relationships, which can be analysed through the review and adaptation of consumer behaviour models. The field of consumer behaviour relates to the study of behaviour that individuals exhibit in relation to selection, purchase and utilisation of products they feel will satisfy their needs (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1994). Although originally designed to study behaviour in relation to the purchase of consumer goods, consumer behaviour models can be applied to the decision-making process of a potential tourist in destination selection.

People are motivated by needs, wants and desires, which are stimulated by inborn or nurtured impulses. Needs may be physical, based on the essentials required for life, or latent, a need that was not recognised before marketing stimulated demand for the product. Motives may be attainment of goals, such as booking a holiday, or seek to avoid a goal, such as avoiding low standards of a destination (Lewin, 1935). Satisfying desires need not be mutually exclusive, more than one desire can be fulfilled simultaneously, such as visiting a specific destination which may have associated status attached by peers, and may also provide a welcome break. However, a combination of motives can lead to a conflict of interests.

There have been a number of classifications of needs and desires (such as Murray, 1938; McClelland, 1941; and McGuire, 1974). One of the most popular classifications was Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1970), describing the process of instinctual need fulfilment, as shown in Figure 4.1 below. Once needs at the base of the triangle are satisfied, the individual strives to fulfil those at increasingly higher levels. However, it may be possible to partially satisfy the biogenic, instinctual, needs at the lower end of the scale and simultaneously satisfy psychogenic, learned, needs.

Figure 4.1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Although a simple model, priorities that individuals generally attach to their different needs can be identified from it. However, when applied to destination selection, there are a number of potential limitations of this model. Individuals are more readily able to identify physical rather than psychological needs, therefore it may be difficult for potential visitors to identify the motivations behind their choice of destination. Also, the size of each step in the hierarchy of needs will vary between individuals due to differences in psychology, such as an organised person may meticulously arrange every aspect of their proposed visit, whilst a more spontaneous person may prefer to book travel only and make no further arrangements before arriving at their destination (for further discussion of tourist types, see Plog, 1974, 1987; Iso-Ahola, 1980; Pearce, 1993).

A further limitation of this model is that individuals' needs may differ in hierarchical order. One individual may consider visiting a destination with perceived status more important than a previously experienced destination that provides security through personal knowledge, thus prioritising esteem over safety needs. Similarly, an individual may choose to visit a destination that provides physical challenges due to a desire for self-development rather than a destination where they would meet others, fulfilling social needs.

The hierarchy of needs takes no account of past experiences, focusing on the present, conscious, subjective experiences of the individual. Behaviour is arguably described rather than explained through a narrow, simplistic view of reality. Other limitations to this model

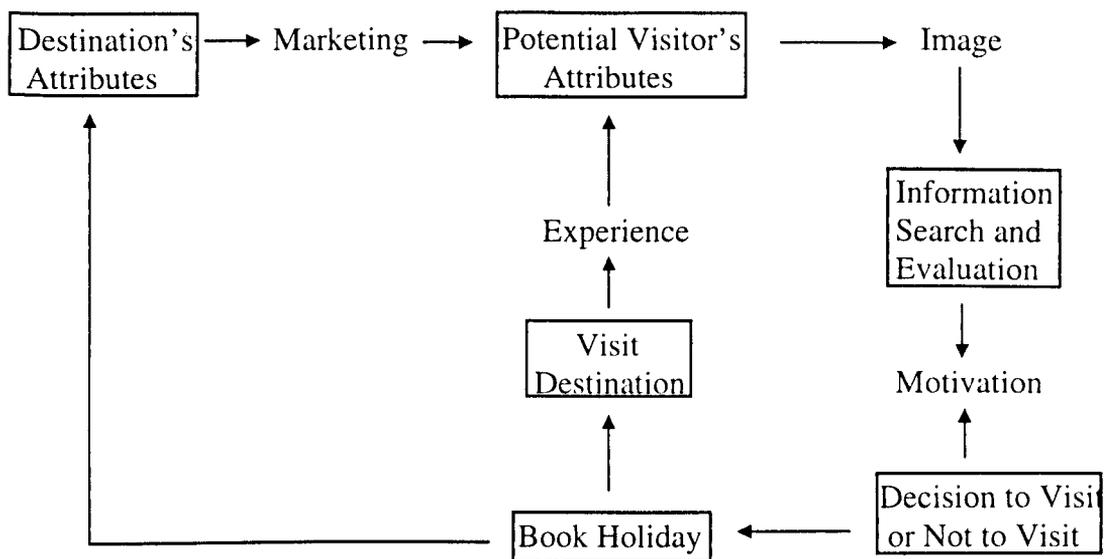
have been identified by other researchers (McNeil, 1974; Liebert & Spiegler, 1982, & McGee & Wilson, 1984).

However, human needs are innumerable and therefore it may not be possible to design a single theoretical system that encompasses all of an individual's complex motivation. Although lacking the background of empirical research (Smith & Vetter, 1982), Maslow's hierarchy of needs highlights a number of unclear dimensions of psychological motives that previous theories had neglected (McNeil, 1974). The relevance of Maslow's hierarchy is shown by the inclusion of his ideas in a number of consumer behaviour models.

From the study of consumer behaviour, a number of decision-making models have been developed. These systematic models sought to integrate knowledge of consumer behaviour and motivation (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1993). Those perceived most relevant to the potential visitor's decision-making process of destination selection within the context of current society have been analysed by this research. Whilst there are limitations associated with each model reviewed, each also provides a valuable contribution to the study of destination selection.

The first model considered is the Nicosia Model (1966), adapted below in Figure 4.2. The visitors' relationship with the destination is the primary concern of this interactive model.

Figure 4.2: An Adaptation of Nicosia's Decision-Making Model



(adapted from Nicosia, 1966)

Figure 4.2 above shows that potential visitors are exposed to promotional activities which may alter their perceived image. This image is further manipulated by the individual's personal characteristics, such as personality, predisposition and experience.

Having formulated an image of a destination, information is sought for comparison of destinations. After which, it is assumed that the individual decides to visit the destination shown in Figure 4.2 because of their motivation to visit. After the visit, the individual will have attained a level of satisfaction which will affect their perceived image and predisposition towards associated future marketing, whilst the destination itself receives feedback from numbers of repeat visitors (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1994). Nicosia recognises the relationship between visitor numbers and corresponding changes in the destination's attributes and associated marketing, acknowledging the dynamics of the industry.

The main advantage of the Nicosia model is its simplicity. However the main limitation for application to destination selection is that the concept of image is not defined, leading to subjective interpretation of this and other concepts by those using the model. Whilst the model incorporates the role of experience and marketing in the decision-making process, the method of comparison between destinations, or brands, is inadequately discussed, ignoring the relative importance of associated costs, availability, accessibility and the substitutable nature of some destinations. The positioning of image within the model also

underplays the role of image within destination selection. An individual will have an image of a destination throughout the process.

The model also assumes the destination initiates its own demand through marketing indicated in Figure 4.2 by the positioning of marketing as the initiator of the decision-making process. However, an individual may be motivated by other factors, such as word-of-mouth communication or media representation. Therefore, marketing is less influential than proposed by Nicosia at the initial stage in the process, although it plays a significant role later in the decision-making process as the potential visitor seeks information. The empirical study conducted during this research did not identify marketing as the primary factor in destination selection for any respondents, although it is acknowledged that respondents may not have recognised the full impact of promotional activities.

Another limitation of Nicosia's model is that the inter-relationships between variables are inadequately analysed. Figure 4.2 is a simple flow diagram which suggests variables affect each other by a chain reaction rather than a series of inter-relationships. This is a most important limitation vis-à-vis image because as new information is accumulated, at every stage of the decision-making process, the perceived image changes.

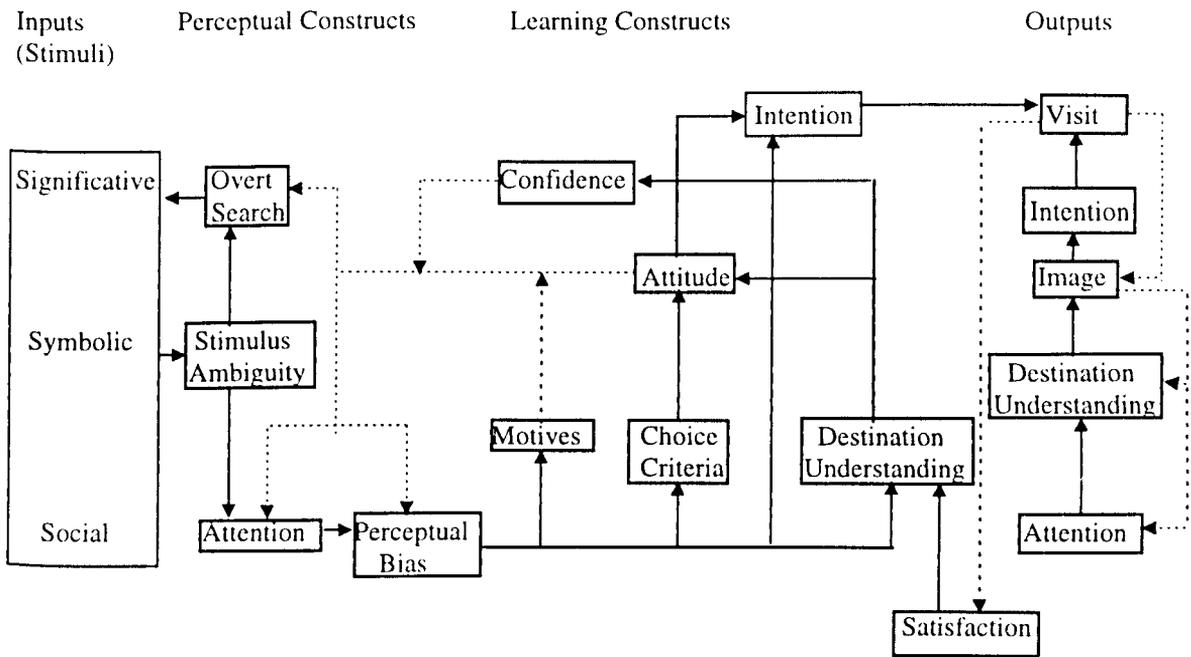
Although this simple model has a number of limitations when applied to destination selection, many of the main components in the decision-making process are identified. Therefore it could form the basis of future models which additionally study inter-relationships between factors involved.

The issue of over-simplicity is addressed by the second model of decision-making considered, designed by Howard-Sheth (1969). When applied to destination selection, this process can be divided into three stages (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1994) as shown in Figure 4.3 below. Extensive problem solving occurs when there is no or limited knowledge of a destination. Information is accumulated on a number of alternative destinations for comparison.

Limited problem solving occurs once knowledge of a destination and an associated image has been partly established. Criteria for decision-making may have been set by this stage, although comparative information will still be sought. Finally, when the individual has

sufficient knowledge and images of sufficient clarity for each alternative destinations, the potential visitor will select one destination.

Figure 4.3: An Adaptation of the Howard-Sheth's Model of Decision-Making



(adapted from Howard-Sheth, 1969)

Key:

- Flows of Information
- Feedback Effects

Inputs to the decision-making process can be categorised into three types of information source which act as stimuli. Significant stimuli are physical characteristics of the destination, such as quality and price; symbolic stimuli are verbal or visual characteristics, such as availability and service, and social stimuli are provided by the individual's social environment, such as family, social class and peers. These categories are discussed further in Chapter V with reference to the work of Gitelson & Crompton (1983).

Perceptual constructs are subjective responses to information received. The meaning of information may be uncertain for the individual, leading to stimulus ambiguity. Alternatively, the information may be deliberately distorted to complement the individual's needs or previous experiences (Lee, 1991, as discussed in Chapter V). Learning constructs

result from experience of decision-making, including previous destination selection, and destinations visited. Criteria are set through learning constructs for the comparative evaluation of destinations.

The main output of the decision-making process is the selection of one destination. The perception of an associated image follows only after the individual has experienced the tourism product. This is a major limitation of the Howard-Sheth model. Since image is often used as a substitute for reality, it must exist before a destination is visited. Arguably, the location of the concept attitude in the central area of this model could be more accurately redefined as image because attitudes describe reactions rather than perceptions, being the “tendency to react favourably or unfavourably” to stimuli (Anastasia, 1976).

Another criticism of this model is that, similar to Nicosia’s model, the psychological variables involved are not defined or directly measured. However, the Howard-Sheth model is more valuable to researchers than the Nicosia model due to the greater number of variables considered and the more complex inter-relationships reviewed. A more detailed model also takes account of exogenous variables, such as personality, disposable income and time available, which may be indirectly involved in the potential visitor’s decision-making process (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1994). A danger with this greater accuracy is the associated increase in empirical data collection necessitated and potential errors.

Whilst the Howard-Sheth model examines the complex inter-relationships between factors involved in decision-making the role of image appears to be under-estimated. However, if indeed the concept of attitude used here is replaced with perceived image, this model becomes a useful tool for the study of destination selection after the individual has made the initial decision to take a holiday.

Consideration of the decision-making process before the individual has chosen to take a holiday is made by Engel, Kollat & Blackwell (1968). In this model the decision-making process is divided into four areas with variables influential on the central zone, the actual decision-making area, located on the periphery.

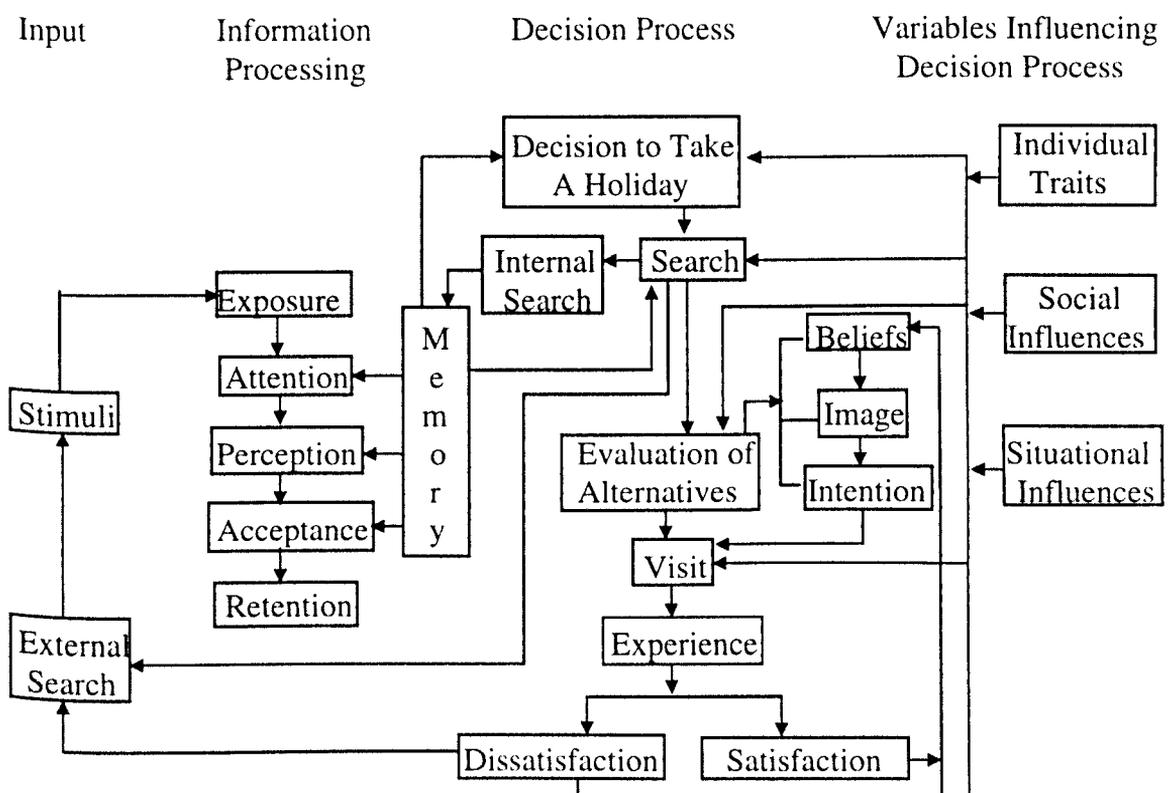
Adapting this model to study destination selection, as shown in Figure 4.4 below, inputs to the system are exposure to stimuli, such as marketing, talking to friends or media:

representation. The potential visitor processes information through personal interpretation and selective retention and their memory filters the information to decide whether a holiday is wanted. External searches for additional information may be required in order to make that decision.

Variables influencing the decision-making process differ between people, making generalisations problematic. This model divides the variables into individual traits, including personality and interests, social influences, including family and peer pressure and situational influences, including time available and party composition.

The decision process itself, influenced by inputs, information processing and personal variables is analysed in the centre of the model. After deciding to take a holiday, the individual conducts an information search both internally and externally. Alternative destinations are then evaluated and one selected. Experience of the chosen destination is assessed through associated satisfaction and the related perceived image altered.

Figure 4.4: An Adaptation of The Engel-Kollat-Blackwell Decision-Making Model



(adapted from Engel, Kollat & Blackwell, 1968).

One big advantage of the model shown in Figure 4.4 above is that the decision-making process before the individual decides to take a holiday is considered and there is no given starting point in the model since all variables inter-related and personal circumstances will dictate where the individual begins the decision-making process. Another merit of both this and the Howard-Sheth model is the acknowledged influence of individual traits and personal selectivity on information reception.

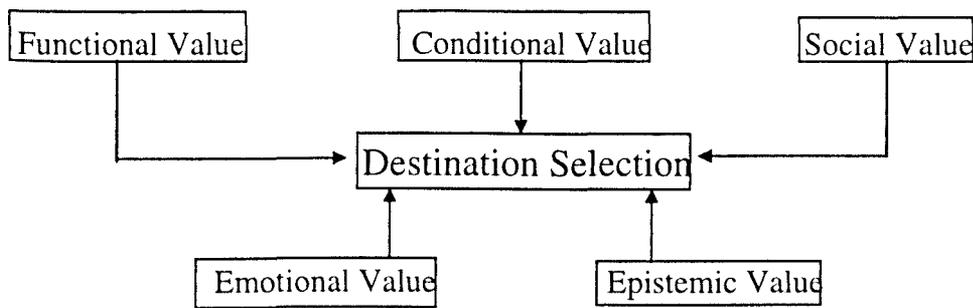
One criticism of this model is that although it considers the evaluation of alternative destinations, an advantage over other models, the criteria and process of comparison is not reviewed. The importance of criteria are likely to vary between individuals, but the process of evaluating alternative destinations will be similar, thus requiring further analysis.

A further criticism is that this model does not recognise the continual information search throughout the decision-making process. Potential visitors will continue to accumulate information relating to a destination once they have chosen to visit to confirm that they have made the correct decision. Also, as with the other models reviewed, concepts used in the model and strengths of variables are not defined, potentially leading to ambiguity.

The incorporation of the majority of factors involved in destination selection and many of the inter-relationships renders the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell model useful for this adaptation. However, the role of image appears to be under-estimated, as is information searches, although the inclusion of 'perception' within information processing may be another word for image, thus recognising its continual importance within the process. However, without associated definitions, this cannot be verified.

The discrepancy surrounding definition of image is reflected by the classification of image within value categories integral to the final model considered, the Sheth-Newman model (1991). This can be used to study the decision to take a holiday and lead to a choice of suitable destination. Predictions can therefore be made for the number of visitors expected by a destination with an associated explanation. As can be seen in Figure 4.5 below, an emphasis is made on simplicity.

Figure 4.5: An Adaptation of the Sheth-Newman Model



(adapted from Sheth-Newman, 1991)

In Figure 4.5, functional value of destination selection relates to the physical performance utility of the destination's attributes, such as price and standard assurance. Conditional value is the perceived utility of the destination selection within the present circumstances, such as time and money available. Social value is the prestige or status attached to that destination. Epistemic value is the perceived ability of a destination to provide the individual with new knowledge, satisfy curiosity or provide novelty. Emotional value is the estimated ability of the destination to stimulate the individual, incorporating the concept of image.

The biggest asset of the Sheth-Newman model is its simplicity. However, its failure to consider the relative importance of influential factors, when within the decision-making process these factors are most influential and inter-relationships between them, limits its usefulness. This illustrates the trade-off that has to be made in model design between simplicity and accuracy. As with other models, a further criticism is that the evaluation of alternative destinations is not analysed in this model. This model may therefore be most usefully employed in conjunction with others, Sheth-Newman ensuring all relevant values are considered and other models expressing inter-relationships.

Another model that could be applied to the decision-making process include the family decision-making model by Sheth (1974). Here, the family is perceived as the decision-making unit, rather than the individual. The desires of all party members visiting a destination may be considered. Indeed, some tourism researchers have highlighted the influence of children on this decision-making process (such as Seaton, 1992; Hill, McDonald & Uysal, 1990; Nichols & Snepenger, 1988).

All of the models described above, although not originally designed to study destination selection, can be adapted to do so. Nevertheless, there are a number of limitations common to all the models considered above. Arguably the most significant limitation is the failure to define image and other subjective concepts, leading to potential ambiguity of interpretation.

Another criticism is that these models assume an individual is able to consider information about a number of alternative destinations simultaneously. However, the concept of individuals having a limited capacity for processing information is central to Bettman (1979)'s model of Information Processing. Destination selection may also be interrupted by other decisions to be made on other matters.

A further limitation of these models is that the strength of inputs are not discussed either in relative or absolute terms. However, varying importance is placed on different sources of information in destination selection, with particular importance placed on talking to friends, relatives and colleagues. Without ranking the importance of inputs, these models can not be used to measure the effectiveness of each input, such as image promotion.

Another factor omitted by these models is that an individual's experience of a destination will be influenced by the level of satisfaction experienced by other party members (Ryan, 1991). Dissatisfaction of destination attributes will be expressed in accordance with the strength of importance attached to this dissatisfaction. Additionally, how an individual expects other party members to respond to their expression of dissatisfaction influences their behaviour (Fishbein, 1967).

Another constraint is that these models do not allow for variance in the importance assigned to image in destination selection. Although image is an integral variable in destination selection, the specific circumstances in which the decision is made and the individual themselves will determine the importance of image in their decision-making process. Another variable inadequately considered is the distance that an individual lives from a destination. The image that an individual perceives of a destination and the related likelihood of visiting is influenced by this distance variable.

These models do not acknowledge that an image is perceived of a destination throughout the whole decision-making process and similarly, information is continually accumulated. Therefore, the number of inter-relationships considered and emphasis placed upon the continual significance of image and information accumulation throughout are underestimated.

Potential differences between destination selection and other decision-making processes may affect the adaptability of the consumer behaviour models to the field of tourism. Indeed, in comparison to other purchase decisions, tourist motivation has been described by Pearce (1993) as more arbitrary, sporadic, future-orientated, dynamic, socially influenced and evolving. Theories developed to explain tourist motivation have either been predictive (such as Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) or post-hoc descriptions (such as Rokeach, 1968; Feather, 1975).

Three theories of tourist motivation are considered by this research to be the most workable. A psychographic theory (Plog, 1974) scaled potential visitors between the two poles of allocentric, confident and variety seeking, and psychocentric, nervous and seeking security. Destinations can be graded, where allocentrics are the first to visit and the psychocentrics last, preferring a well-established destination to an unknown destination.

A descriptive model, consisting of five stages of ranked motivations, based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Pearce, 1986) recognised that tourists have a number of motives at any time, although one motive tends to be dominant. As people get older they climb the leisure ladder, associating the satisfaction of different levels of the ladder with progression through life. This model incorporates dynamics and combines biological and social needs, as does the psychographic theory.

A model of intrinsic motivation-optimal arousal (Iso-Ahola, 1980) suggests that while individuals seek different levels of stimulation, they share the need to avoid boredom. Intrinsic motivations change over time, as described in Pearce's model. However, this model emphasises the individualistic aspect of tourist motivation and adds spontaneous needs to motivational factors.

This research concludes that tourist motivation incorporates each of these theories. Individuals can be loosely graded on a psychographic scale, based on a continually changing hierarchy of needs. Although people are, by definition, individuals, there are a number of factors that each potential visitor is likely to consider in their decision-making process. Acknowledging the associated limitations highlighted by a critical review of consumer behaviour models, these models can nevertheless serve as a framework for the study of destination selection. To begin to address these limitations, clarification is given of inter-related factors considered most important by this study.

4.4 Closer Analysis of Individual Factors Involved in Selection of a Tourist Destination

Factors involved in destination selection can be broadly categorised into the propensity to travel and personal factors (Boniface & Cooper, 1987). Travel propensity on a national level is affected by the nation's stage in economic development, demographics of the country and governing politics. On an individual level, personal factors include; income, employment, holiday entitlement, stage in the life-cycle, such as age and marital status, personality and level of personal mobility.

A number of personal factors and some inter-relationships warrant further discussion. The cost of taking a holiday, with respect to disposable income and relative cost of alternatives, is an important factor in destination selection.

The two factors of distance and time available to visit the destination can be considered conjointly. The time that can be taken away from usual routines of daily life is usually limited, therefore distance lived from a destination will influence the likelihood of selection. Increasing time available is liable to increase the distance that an individual is willing to travel. Arguably, however, improvements in transportation and associated infrastructures over the last few decades has reduced the negative effect of distance. Distance and time factors are also related to the cost of a holiday. Arguably, people may be more willing to spend a greater amount of money for a holiday which involves more travel and lasts longer.

Experience of a destination acts as a source of information in the decision-making process and may serve as security for the individual if they want the assurance of a known quantity. Conversely, experience of one destination may encourage an individual to visit an

alternative destination in the future due to associated dissatisfaction, or due to enjoyment and the desire to experience a destination perceived as similar, or in order to experience something new. Knowledge from all other sources of information significantly supplements the information base for destination selection.

Individuals' characteristics are influential in destination selection. Personality may be reflected in the willingness to take perceived risks of selecting different destinations, dependent upon the importance placed on the holiday. Motivations, values and lifestyle indicate the importance that the individual will place on the different attributes of a destination.

Image is a critical factor in destination selection (Mayo, 1993; Dadgostar and Isotalo, 1995) or at least influential (Williams & Zelinsky, 1970; Hunt 1975). Image is particularly instrumental in the early stages of destination selection when only those destinations perceived to have a favourable image are initially selected (Goodall, 1988). The image perceived is altered by other influential factors, such as experience or other sources of information (discussed in detail in Chapter V).

Although perhaps the most conceptual and least tangible of the factors in destination selection, this research proposes that image is one of the most important since it precludes destinations with a negative image from consideration and may be the distinguishing factor between similar destinations. Importance placed on destination image and the relative importance of specific images may be influenced by society's values as well as personal characteristics.

Whilst the importance of each factor and associated inter-relationships in the decision-making process will differ between individuals, trends can be identified which identify the relative importance assigned to each factor. These rankings can then be used to develop a workable model of decision-making for the potential visitor, as described in Chapter IX, which seeks to overcome the limitations of consumer behaviour models described above. Such a model could assist promoters of a destination to understand how and when they can have greatest influence over the destination selection process.

4.5 Destination Image Promotion

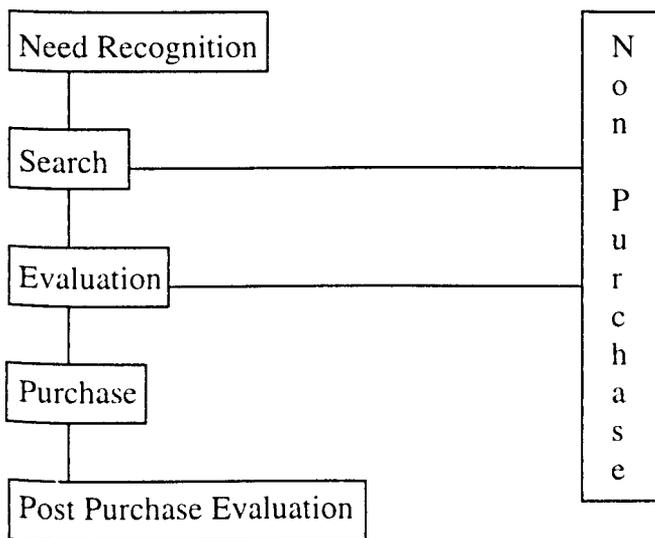
Image is the main factor in destination selection which can be influenced by destination promoters. To enhance the effectiveness of image promotion, imagery is designed and transmitted within an ideological context, reflecting current society. Ideology is the pervasive set of ideas, beliefs and images that groups employ to make sense of the world (Gold 1994). The similarity in style of current promotional literature suggests that the producers of the material and the recipients have a similar ideology, shown by the use of techniques like; rhetoric, puns, cultural associations and natural symbols.

Society's attitude suggests that promotional activities acceptably manipulate the reality they portray. Indeed, "most of us accept certain amounts of deception because it is consistent with higher-order rules ensuring relational and even societal maintenance" (Reardon, 1991). People may not believe that a destination always enjoys the glorious weather depicted on a brochure's front cover, accepting misrepresentation, although not erroneous, information. Arguably, effective image promotion necessitates a change in attitude of readers with the associated promotion of a realistic destination image.

The format of image promotion depends upon whether a destination is promoted in its entirety or as a package of facilities, and may be refined further if targeting specific markets of visitors. Image promotion can influence destination selection through perceived portrayal of an accurate image of reality and by giving direct comparisons with competing destinations.

Although promotional activities only contribute a small amount of information to an individual's store of knowledge (Ashworth & Voogd, 1994), they are the most direct link with potential visitors available to promotional organisations. Effective promotion necessitates the supply of information appropriate to the point reached in the decision-making process, as shown in Figure 4.6 below.

Figure 4.6: Stages of Information Accumulation in Destination Selection



(Ashworth & Voogd, 1994, p 46)

The image of a destination can be most effectively influenced at the early stages of the decision-making process. Once an image has been formed, it is more difficult to change (see Gunn's model of tourist behaviour, reviewed in Chapter V), and thus it may become more difficult to attract individuals (Robinson, 1994). It appears most pertinent then for promotional organisations to target those with a relatively low level of knowledge about the destination. However, these individuals are difficult to target because they have minimal links with the destination and associated promotional activities. For those people who already possess an image, there is a threshold beyond which their image will be altered if the new information received vastly differs from their previous image (see Chapter V for a discussion on schemata).

The relationship between destination promoters and their customers differs from other consumer products. A number of suppliers provide different aspects of the tourism product. To contact more potential visitors through economies of scale, many of these suppliers market their product collectively through area and national tourist boards, visitor attraction associations, the Countryside Commission, Historic Scotland and other associations. However, it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of image promotion (as discussed in greater detail in Chapter V).

Mass media, communication routes to the public, are the most pervasive forms of communication (Reardon, 1991), creating contexts and building an increasing structure of

expectations, informing individuals of expected responses. Second-hand experiences can be extracted from such mediums as novels, poetry, films and drama. If the single source of information for image formation, experiential understanding can therefore be gained without the prejudices of earlier personal experience (Keat & Urry, 1975). However, mass media is only one of a number of sources used in this process. Mass media provides information for all stages of destination selection, although different forms of media may be considered more effective at different stages of the process, as increasingly specific information is sought.

Mass media are also the most economically viable promotional tool available for destination image promotion due to the high degree of exposure that can be enjoyed. Analysis of current technology identifies the most appropriate media for the image promotion specified. Image promoters have traditionally used brochures, although the success of this media, as with others, is again difficult to evaluate. However, rapidly developing technology provides increasing alternatives which can be employed in isolation or in conjunction with other media for image promotion.

4.5.1 Media Strategy for Destination Image Promotion

The rapid development of communication technology has increased the options for marketers of all consumer products, especially tourism. Greater flexibility exists for targeting an increasingly segmented market with the plethora of tools now available for image promotion, to be used in isolation or combination. However, destination image promoters appear reluctant to abandon the traditional media of brochures and posters (Gold & Gold, 1995). This may be in part because of the relative low cost of brochure production, but also its perceived success by destination promoters.

An image promoted through promotional literature can only be distorted by those responsible for the design and content of the brochures and the readers. However, other forms of media can lead to further distortion of the message through the involvement of a third party. This research strongly suggests that the use of media other than brochures, as alternative or complementary tools for image promotion can improve the effectiveness of image promotion which solely uses brochures.

Choice of media is defined by the audience; message, particularly the image to be portrayed; and available technology (Nelson, 1994). The creative requirements of advertising may dictate the media chosen. A complex design would be more appropriately placed in a newspaper or magazine where time can be taken to absorb all the details, whereas a simple design could be identified on a billboard by a passing motorist. The environment in which a message is conveyed also has an important influence on the credibility given to that message. Indeed, some newspapers and magazines may be purported more trustworthy than others.

The type of communication used influences the image portrayed due to the nature of the medium, such as image promotion on the radio can only be verbal, relying upon the listener's imagination to place information into a visual context. The intonation of the voice(s) used and content of programmes or advertisements conveys an image to the audience. The credibility an individual attaches to the radio station on which they hear a programme or advert, and presenters used will affect the perceived image. Image promoters may perceive the role of radio to be limited due to the lack of control that can be exerted over the individual's visual interpretation of an image, the importance of which is shown in the discussion of pictorial definitions of image. Therefore, radio may be considered a tool most appropriate to raise awareness of a destination or convey factual information, rather than image promotion.

In contrast to the radio, television provides both visual and audible stimuli. Due to the popularity of television in developed nations, a good cross-section of the public can be contacted through this medium, therefore creating potential for image promotion. Direct image promotion on television uses advertisements which can be aired at a specific time to target the audience desired. Due to associated costs, advertisements are brief, therefore a format which can convey a large amount of information quickly is likely to be most effective, lending itself to image creation.

The benefits of image promotion using this media are shown by the current widespread use of television campaigns to market destinations and promote images of these areas. Indirect image promotion also occurs through television programmes and films, such as Dr. Finlay's casebook, Take the High Road, Tales of Para Handy and Taggart, which have all portrayed an image of Scotland to viewers primarily in the UK.

Individuals consciously place greater emphasis upon 'organic' sources of information for image formation (Gunn, 1988), as reflected in the empirical study conducted by this research. Here, for example, experience was considered to have been far more important in image formation than promotional literature. Recipients of indirect image promotion are perhaps unaware of the influence that such media is having upon their image perception and may be more willing to modify their image from a less blatantly promotional source of information. Therefore, indirect image promotion may be a powerful tool in image manipulation.

Films influence image perception on a more international level through media representation. Images thus created, "fill in the gaps of first-hand experience" and "provide terms of reference during actual travel" (Strain, 1996, p.1). The recent increase in the number of films set in Scotland, such as *Rob Roy*, *Braveheart* and *Loch Ness*, may have improved awareness of the country's scenery and potentially altered associated images. Grampian has benefited from attention stimulated by the staging of *Local Hero* and *Hamlet* within the region, and subsequent exploitation by destination promoters and other advertisers (Kincardine and Deeside Tourist Board, pers. comm., 1993). Although destination image promoters can not directly employ films as their image promotional tool, interest in a destination may be aroused when a film is made.

Books, magazines and brochures may be less able to portray an atmosphere than television, radio and cinema due to their silent nature. Therefore, printed material may be the most effective tool to convey detailed information which sustains or manipulates a perceived image. Books influence perceived image directly, by focus on the area or indirectly, within another context. Special interest books, including travel books, have become the best sellers in recent years, providing a good opportunity for image promotion as an independent writer may be perceived more objective than destination promoters.

Newspapers are today the most widely used advertising medium due to their extensive circulation, with advertisements constituting 70% of some newspapers, including destination promotion. As with books, the reader can be influenced directly by advertisements, or indirectly through newspaper articles. Newspapers also allow political targeting, since most British newspapers have an identifiable political bias, and

geographical targeting through local newspapers and zoned editions of national newspapers. As a promotional tool, newspaper advertisements can be used in isolation or to supplement other media, such as television or magazines. Similarly, guide books may reinforce destination images created by promotional activities (Steward, 1996).

Photographs used in books, magazines and newspapers provide a visual image of a destination. Photographs can be used in isolation or in conjunction with written copy to portray an image, as used in the traditional brochure. Arguably a photograph may be perceived as a more accurate reflection of reality than text, although it may be staged, such as taken in good weather.

As technology develops and the choice of media increases, the importance assigned to each form of media will arguably diminish. Destination promoters will therefore benefit from using a combination of media to promote an image to potential visitors. This is particularly pertinent if recipients are as cautious about promotional activities as detected by this research (discussed in Chapter VIII), suggesting they may be more receptive to other media forms.

Video tapes are an example of such a development. This new media can be employed by image promoters, with video tapes available from some travel agents promoting a number of destinations. The popularity of home computers can also be accessed by image promoters information software packages and relevant interactive videos.

Developments in printing related technology have led to an improving quality of publications, which can accordingly promote high quality images (Dyer, 1990). The latest technological development to take place within printed text is electronic media, the expansion of magazines to video. The Internet may also provide a useful platform for image promotion. However, as with other technological developments, the Internet is not available to all potential visitors. For this reason, and teething problems encountered, its use to date for destination image promotion has been limited. In an industry which changes daily, other developments are expected (Leisure Consultants, 1990). For example, Virtual Reality may become a viable tool for potential image promotion. Selection of appropriate media is therefore increasingly complicated by new technological developments.

The increasing selection of media, whilst benefiting image promoters through improved choice, potentially decreases their influence by expanding the number of information sources accessible to an individual for image formation. Indeed, indirect image promotion, such as television series have attracted tourists to Scotland even though settings may be fictional, for example Tannochbrae in Dr. Finlay's Casebook does not exist yet many viewers subsequently visited the area where they thought the village could be situated (Gold & Gold, 1995).

With a continually increasing choice of media available for image promotion, the resistance of destination promoters to change their vehicle of image from the traditional brochure arouses interest.

4.5.2 Significance of Promotional Literature

Since its development, printed text has provided image promoters with an important promotional tool, with "perceptions of tourist-place images in the early days of mass tourism ... increasingly affected by the rapid growth of the press" (Steward, 1996, p.1). The tourist brochure is probably the single most powerful marketing tool for tourism promoters. As early as the 1930s the brochure was considered the most pervasive artefact of the decade (Ward, 1988), manipulating idealised images of destinations (Wilson, 1996).

Promotional literature fulfils a number of functions at each stage of destination selection. It acts as a stimulus for the decision-making process, acting as a substitute for the actual product and establishing expectations. To facilitate purchase, once the destination has been selected, many brochures contain booking forms. Individuals may request promotional literature after the decision to visit has been made, seeking reassurance and additional information. Brochures may also be used when visiting the destination for specific information. It has been suggested that the limited representations featured within a brochure serve as a powerful filter on subsequent experience (MacCannell, 1976; Buck, 1977; Gold & Gold, 1995), implying that individuals fit reality as well as images within their existing schemata (as discussed in Chapter V), rejecting conflicting information.

At each stage of the selection process, an image is portrayed through the promotional material to the potential visitor. Therefore, the content and format of a destination's official literature will influence the image perceived, and hence destination selection process, of

the individual. Brochures are the closest thing to an official tourist image for each destination (Dilley, 1986). Therefore brochure design provides the opportunity to portray the destination as it wants to be seen. Themes used are worked, reworked and updated to reflect changes in society (Ward & Gold, 1994), identifiable through comparative content analysis of brochures chronologically.

Image promoters can be more selective when using brochures than using other media due to the greater control they exert over promotional literature (as discussed in section 3.5.1). This selectivity may be intrinsic or deliberate. The inclusion of specific material may reflect who is responsible for brochure production or who is paying for it, however the way it is presented may be standardised. Original thought has never been a strong feature in devising promotional literature (Warnock, 1976). Therefore, if one destination is seen to have a good idea, others follow.

The effect that brochures have upon image perception may have been inadequately assessed however, a function of minimal impact evaluation. This research analysed the importance placed by potential visitors on this source of information in their formation of a destination's image (see Chapter VIII for further details). The results suggest that potential visitors consider promotional literature to have a low impact on image formation, questioning the use of this tool for image promotion. However, regardless of the media employed, destination promoters have limited influence over most factors involved in image formation (as discussed in Chapter V). Therefore promotional material may still prove to be the best form of communication for destination image promotion.

4.6 Significance of Image in Destination Selection

Motivations of potential visitors to a destination differ between individuals due to a multitude of differences in factors such as culture, socio-economic class, age and individual characteristics. Whilst individuals are motivated by numerous factors, image is paramount to destination selection because of its importance in isolation and inter-relationships with all other factors, and hence continual relevance throughout the process.

Establishing how promoters of a destination can influence the image perceived by potential visitors necessitates the study of factors involved in image formation and their inter-

relationships. The process of image formation is therefore key to studying the relationship between image promotion and image perception.

Chapter V: The Process of Image Formation

5.1 Introduction

Image formation involves a number of inter-related factors. Due to the relatively recent recognition of image as a concept worthy of study, and an associated lack of appropriate models, attitude measurement models have been reviewed with a view to adaptation for image measurement. A number of models can be adapted to generate discussion and comparison of the importance assigned to each factor within the process of image formation. Whilst there are valuable components of these models, a critical review reveals limitations which are addressed by this research and lead to further consideration of the role of image.

The process of image formation varies between individuals due to differences in personal characteristics, exposure to stimuli and interpretation of information. Only some of these factors can potentially be influenced by image promotion. The importance of these factors will influence the effectiveness of image promotion. Evaluating image promotion's effectiveness is problematic because of the complex nature of image formation. The limitations to image measurement and modelling reiterate the subjective nature of this topic. Despite associated limitations, image measurement is potentially a useful tool for promotional organisations as an indicator for image promotion effectiveness.

5.2 Image Formation: The Debate

Image formation was studied in totality to ascertain which aspects, and to what extent, promoters of a destination can influence this process. A number of models (including Crompton, 1979; Gitelson & Crompton, 1983; Murphy, 1985; Gunn, 1988; Stabler, 1988 and Bojanic, 1991) have attempted to describe factors and associated interactions which are influential in image formation. The only common supposition of these models is that an individual's destination image reflects their personal characteristics and experience (Kotler, 1988). Those models considered most relevant to this research are reviewed below in terms of valuable contributions and limitations.

A simple categorisation of factors involved in image formation divides relevant factors into three categories, identifying inter-relationships between components (Murphy, 1985).

Individual preferences include personality, social class, disposable income, age and family commitments. Past holiday experiences, both of the destination under consideration and of other destinations, are categorised together. Finally, factors such as word-of-mouth communication, exposure to the media and promotional literature are classified as hearsay.

Image promotion can potentially influence the categories of experience and hearsay. The enjoyment of past holiday experiences, including the affect of any image-reality gap that may have arisen from inaccurate promotion, influences the image perceived of that destination and others. Hearsay can be influenced by image promotion directly, through promotional literature and advertising campaigns, and indirectly, through friends and family relaying experiences. Indeed, social environment influences an individual's behaviour (Skinner, 1981). Individuals profit from what others learned through holiday experiences, reiterating the importance of word-of-mouth communication as the "cornerstone of travel communications" (Nolan, 1976, p. 7).

Whilst this categorisation of image formation factors identifies a number of important components, other relevant factors are excluded. Also, no attempt is made to assign relative importance to each factor within the process. Therefore, the simplicity of this model, whilst beneficial to application, can be seen to be its limitation.

Similar limitations restrict the value of an alternative categorisation of factors involved in image formation into those resulting from an individual's own experience and indirect factors from an 'absence of contact' (Bojanic, 1991). The individual's own contact and experience can be likened to Murphy's category of personal characteristics and half of the past experience category. Indirect methods correspond to Murphy's experience of other destinations and hearsay. Empirical research associated with this model has, however, been inconclusive. Still, the emphasis placed on indirect knowledge is note worthy as a frequently used method of information accumulation by potential visitors.

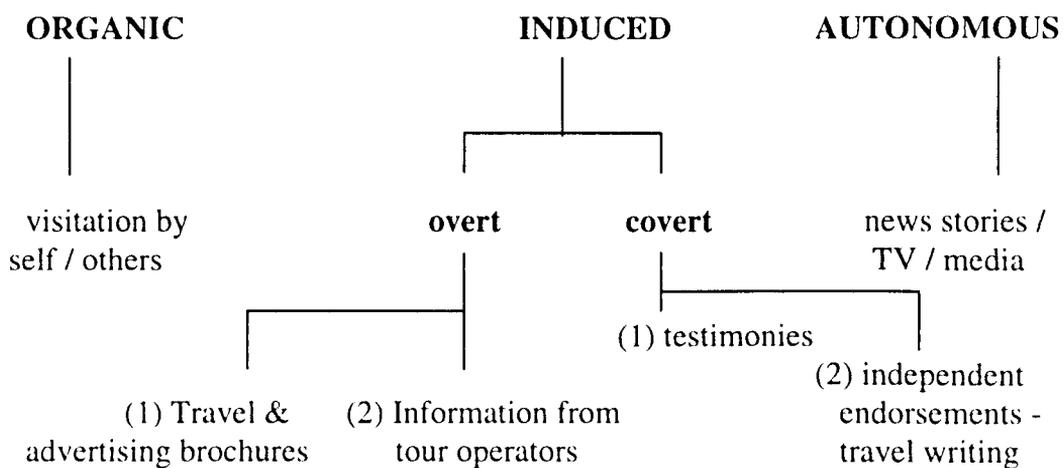
Indirect knowledge is a feature of another classification system, often referred to by other researchers, which categorises determinants of an individual's image as 'organic' or 'induced' (Gunn, 1988). Organic components, incorporating all information accumulated by the individual in their life, such as education, experience and word-of-mouth communication, can not be directly manipulated by promotional organisations. Conversely,

induced factors result from promotional activities, such as promotional literature, advertisements and marketing campaigns, where information is induced by a “conscious effort to develop, promote and advertise” (Gunn, 1988).

Whilst Gunn’s model does not consider the relative importance of factors involved in image formation, it is clear that the importance placed by an individual on organic versus induced factors will potentially influence the effect of image promotion. This issue is addressed by an extension of Gunn’s model which places organic and induced factors at two polar extremes of a continuum (Gartner, 1989). Emphasis is placed on experience as a factor in image formation, a continually updated organic factor with the potential to alter an image formed by induced factors. Experience is indeed unequivocally key to image formation both as a source of information and as a guide to perceived reliability of other sources of information, such as promotional literature and advertising campaigns.

A further adaptation of Gunn’s model introduces another category, emphasising the importance of autonomous factors in image formation, as shown below in Figure 5.1. Arguably, induced determinants will lead to positive images whereas organic and autonomous determinants produce positive, negative or neutral images (Dann, 1995).

Figure 5.1: Gartner’s Adaptation of Gunn’s Categorisation System



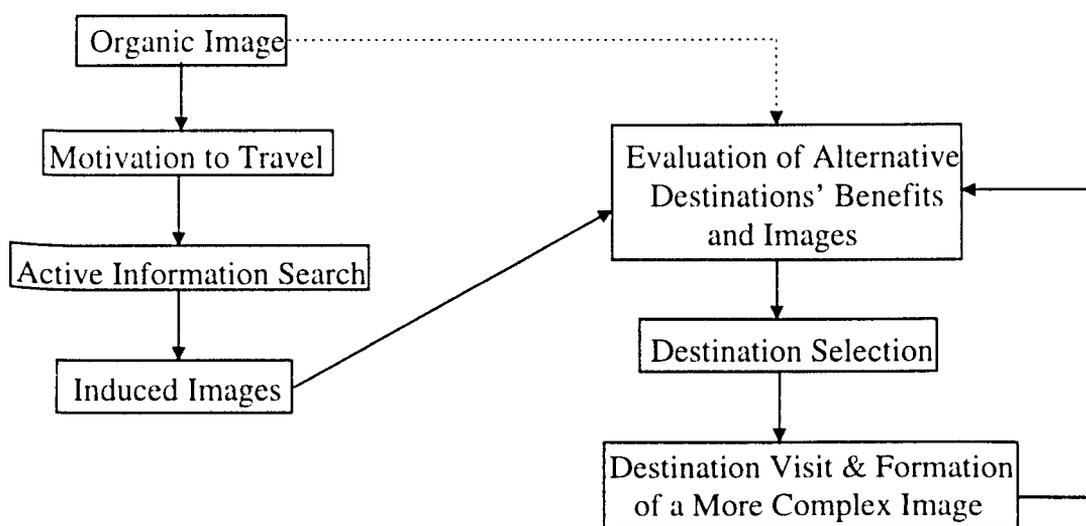
(adapted from Gartner, 1993)

Most tourism image research to date has concentrated on Gartner’s Overt 1 category, shown in Figure 5.1 above, studying the image portrayed in travel and advertising brochures (Boorstin, 1987; Mohammad, 1988 and Dunn, 1995). However, pictures and

photographs used in such image promotion can have several layers of meaning, therefore, it is necessary to study the potential visitor's perception of these stimuli (Cohen, 1993), as considered by this research. An advantage of this model is that it recognises the importance of factors not directly attributable to the individual, although their interpretation is of course paramount, or destination promoters, such as news items and independent travel books. However, the relative importance of factors is again not discussed.

Another valuable modification of Gunn's model placed factors into a chronological order of importance (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991), suggesting that the relative importance of factors in image formation is related to the stage in the destination selection. Organic factors were proposed to be important in image formation before the individual had contact with any promotional literature. Induced factors would dominate once an active search for information had been initiated and finally, a new category of complex factors would become important once the destination had been experienced. This process is shown in diagrammatic form below in Figure 5.2:

Figure 5.2: Image Formation Process



(Fakeye & Crompton, 1991)

The simplistic nature of Figure 5.2 is advantageous for empirical application. However, as with the other models, it fails to show the full inter-relationships between different components, such as the constant influence of the individual's characteristics and the continual search for information throughout the process. Many visitors seek information at every stage of their destination selection process and are therefore potentially receptive to image promotion. The multi-faceted effect of experience is acknowledged in this model

however. A more detailed image will result from experience of different aspects of the destination and any differences between expectations and reality experienced will modify the perceived image.

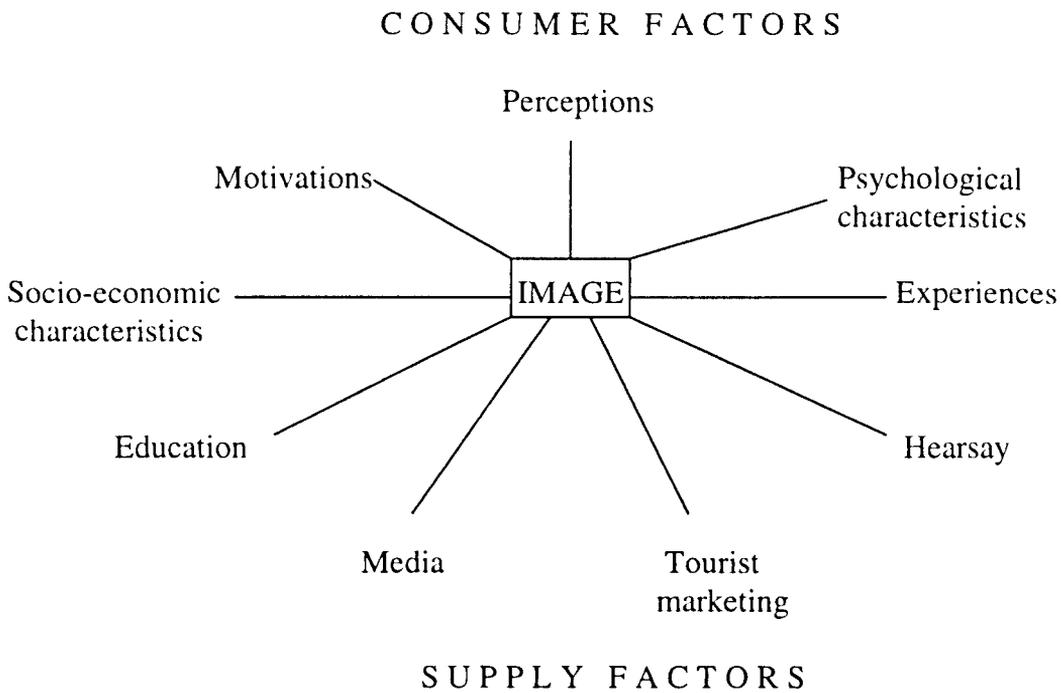
The degree of change in image perception by an individual after experience of a destination may depend upon the amount of information accumulated before visiting (Gartner & Shen, 1992). Minimal prior knowledge arguably renders an image more susceptible to change, as large amounts of information are accumulated with the associated experience, than an image with a wider knowledge base.

The greatest advantage this model has over others discussed is that it gives an indication of the relative importance of factors during the process of image formation within the context of destination selection. This suggests that while the importance of factors will differ between individuals, a trend can be identified which shows that the importance of factors changes during the process of image formation.

The potential difference between the importance placed by different individuals on factors in image formation is considered by a model which divides factors into the categories of internal and external influences. Internal influences, comparable to Murphy's category of individual preferences, includes socio-economic characteristics, motivation and psychological make-up of a person. External factors can be further subdivided into symbolic stimuli, resulting from media promotion; social stimuli, derived from personal interactions, and significant stimuli, experienced by visiting the region (Gitelson & Crompton, 1983). Clearly, destination promoters have a direct influence upon symbolic stimuli, but only an indirect affect on other external factors, illustrating the number of image formation factors outside the control of image promoters and potential limitations to image promotion effectiveness. The main criticism of this model is again that the relative importance of factors is not considered.

A model which makes an even clearer distinction between personal factors and those which can potentially be influenced by destination promoters, divides components into consumer and supply factors, as depicted in Figure 5.3 below (Stabler, 1988). Consumer factors relate to personal traits whilst supply factors are derived from external sources, such as active image promotion, school lessons, magazine advertisements and brochures (Dilley, 1986).

Figure 5.3: Factors influential in image formation



(Stabler, 1988)

Based on self-criticism of a previous model by Stabler (1983), Figure 5.3 above shows that the individual constructs an image from demand and supply factors. Stabler, in his earlier model suggested the potential visitor decided what they wanted from a destination, creating one image from past experiences, perceptions and organic information (Goodwin, 1995). Information would then be sought, creating a second image based on actual facilities available. In this later model, one image is substituted for the two, based on a combination of Gunn's organic and induced factors. The loose categorisation of influential factors within image formation identifies inter-relationships between the individual's characteristics and information supplied by others. This is a valuable advantage of this model.

One limitation to this model is that some factors integral to image formation are not included, such as the society in which the individual lives, in terms of culture, and distance lived from the destination (for further discussion see Chapters VII and VIII). Another important limitation of Stabler's model, and equally of the others cited here, is that it neglects to consider the strength of each of the factors involved in image formation. Arguably, this is an insurmountable problem as individuals have unique characteristics,

needs and desires and the importance of each factor will vary between individuals. However, generalisations can be proposed.

Arguably the importance of factors varies not only between individuals and the stage in destination selection reached, but also due to exposure to stimuli. The process of image formation can be divided into two main categories (Crompton, 1979). Images formed can be mainly person-determined, where an individuals' personal characteristics, experiences and responses to promotional activities influence image perception, or destination-determined, where the image perceived is based on either personal experiences of the destination or those of friends, relatives and colleagues. Arguably, the selection of image formation process is influenced by sources of information available, with destination-determined images potentially replacing person-determined images when experience is gained. The main advantage of this categorisation is the adaptability surrounding exposure to information sources. However, inter-relationships between factors are not adequately considered.

All of the image formation models reviewed above incorporate similar factors, acknowledging their importance within this process. However, there is disagreement over categorisation of these factors, reflecting the complex inter-relationships between the components. Table 5.1 below summarises the different categories into which the common factors have been placed by each of the reviewed models:

Table 5.1: Factors Influential in Image Formation: A Comparison of Theories

Factor	Murphy	Bojanic	Gunn	G & C	Crompton	Stabler
Perceptions	Individual	Direct	Organic	Internal	Person	Consumer
Motivations	Individual	Direct	Organic	Internal	Person	Consumer
Psychology	Individual	Direct	Organic	Internal	Person	Consumer
Socio-economics	Individual	Direct	Organic	Internal	Person	Consumer
Education	Individual	Direct	Organic	Internal	Destination	Supply
Experiences	Experience	Direct	Organic	External (sig)	Destination	Consumer
Word-of-mouth	Hearsay	Absence	Organic	External (soc)	Destination	Supply
Media	Hearsay	Absence	Induced	External (sym)	Person	Supply
Marketing	Hearsay	Absence	Induced	External (sym)	Person	Supply

It can be seen from Table 5.1 that the two factors inconsistently categorised are personal experiences and word-of-mouth communication. Personal experience may be ambiguous for classification purposes because although the subjective memory of the experience is

retained internally, it necessitates the external experience of reality. Word-of-mouth communication does not necessitate direct experience, but can not be directly affected by promoters of the region, leading to a classification of organic and absent of contact.

A factor not considered by these models is that the context as well as the stimuli the individual is exposed to may influence image formation. Tourist motivations including intention to visit, length of stay planned, and purpose of visit, may influence the image created. In this research, factors potential visitors considered influential in the formation of their image of a region as a visitor destination were studied within the context of future intentions to visit. An additional factor considered important by this research, inadequately covered by the models reviewed above, is geographical distance lived from the destination.

5.2.1 The Role of Distance as a Factor in the Formation of an Image

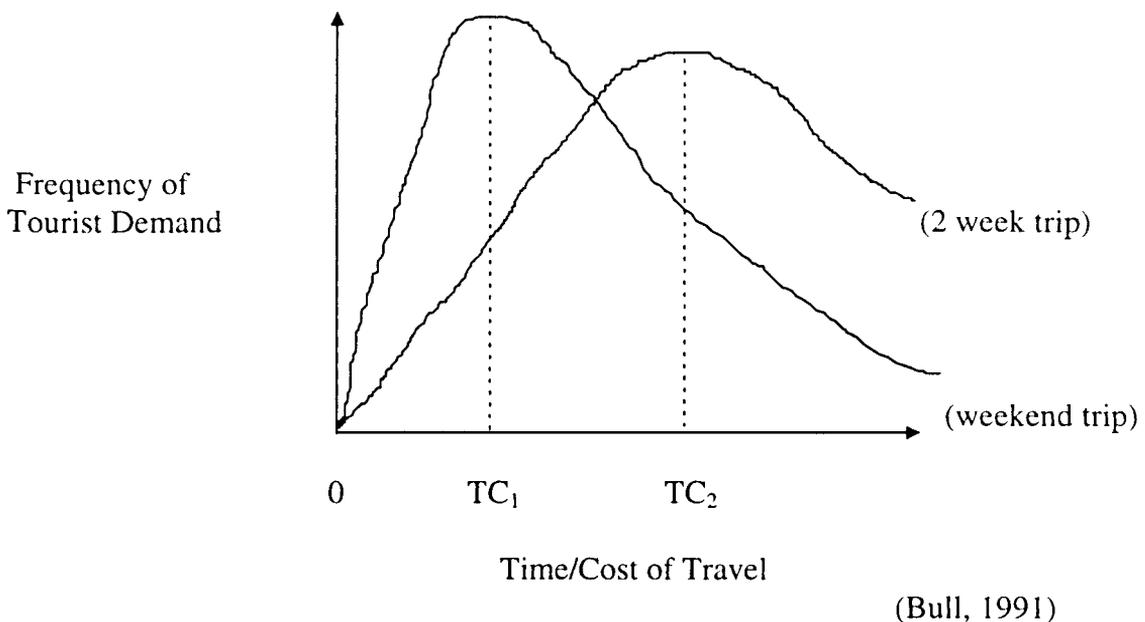
The geographical distance lived from a destination is likely to affect the probability of an individual visiting due to the opportunity cost in time and money associated with travelling. This research has considered the further role of distance in destination selection, as an influential factor in image formation.

A useful adaptation of the gravity model (Carey, 1958) can be made to consider destination selection, assuming spatial interaction is a function of a destination's potential to attract visitors and the degree to which the origin and destination are separated (Eldridge & Jones, 1991). A friction of distance parameter represents the rate at which interaction declines with distance, changing over time and between people. However, the role of a destination's attractiveness is a counterbalance to the disutility of distance (Black, 1983). Therefore, as empirical evidence has shown (Tang & Rochanonond, 1990), it can not be assumed that increasing distance from a destination will deter potential visitors.

The opportunity cost of time and money associated with travel is the forgoing of the opportunity to spend time and money on alternative activities. The physical distance to a destination is not the most accurate measurement of this opportunity cost since the visitor may consider travel itself as enjoyable (Boorstin, 1961). Also, the time and cost involved in travelling to a destination does not increase linearly with physical distance due to variance in factors such as accessibility and level of competition between transport companies to destinations. Therefore, a composite variable representing cost in time and money involved

in travel to a destination may be a more accurate measurement of opportunity cost (Bull, 1991), as illustrated in Figure 5.4 below.

Figure 5.4: The Effect of the Time/Cost Variable on Tourism Demand



In Figure 5.4 above, the time/cost curve for a longer visit shifts the demand curve to the right, since tourists are willing to spend more time and money on travelling to a destination if staying longer because the proportion of holiday spent travelling decreases inversely with length of stay. Although an inverse relationship between the level of demand for a destination and the time/cost variable may be expected, Bull (1991) identified a peak of demand where the time/cost is low but positive. This is represented by the points TC_1 and TC_2 in the above diagram.

Demand increases as the time/cost variable increases until TC_1 and TC_2 respectively because potential visitors perceive a minimum travel time required to make a visit worthwhile, usually less for shorter visits and more for longer visits. Although figures vary between individuals, $0TC_1$ may be estimated to be approximately 90 and 120 minutes within Europe (Bull, 1991), with longer holidays varying more considerably. This composite variable model emphasises that geographical distance is not the only constraint on visitor numbers. Whilst physical distances can not be changed, the speed and cost of transportation links can be improved, altering a destination's location on the time/cost curve.

The distance lived from a destination is not only integral to destination selection (Ankomah, Crompton & Baker, 1996), but also to image perception, as recognised by other researchers (such as Hunt, 1975; Britton, 1979 & Crompton, 1979). Previous research (Hunt, 1975) revealed that individuals living closer to a destination have a more detailed image of different areas within the region whilst those living further away have a more homogenous image of the region, suggesting that different image promotional strategies may be more effective than one image promoted to all. This was complemented by other research (Crompton, 1979) which discovered that the further people lived from a destination, the more it was perceived as a holiday destination.

The relationship between distance and image perceived of a destination has been studied by this research. The hypothesis that clarity of a destination's image diminishes with increasing geographical distance from home town was accordingly tested. The importance of distance in image formation is similarly reflected by its importance in destination selection. Therefore, exclusion of distance from image formation models limits the value of the models.

Although a number of limitations associated with the image formation models critically reviewed above have been identified, each contributes to understanding the process of image formation. Whilst image formation models can identify inter-relationships between relevant factors, theories can explain these inter-relationships through the study of processes involved. There are a number of theories pertaining to this issue, those considered most pertinent are reviewed below.

5.3 Image Formation Theories

One theory of image formation is based upon the concept of individuals developing a 'schema' for every phenomenon (Lee, 1991). These schemata organise knowledge through past experiences. Current events are viewed in light of past experience, constructing a subjective reality (Reardon, 1991). Schemata are continually modified as new or updated information is selectively received by the individual. Only new material which fits within the original schema is accepted, whilst personal interpretation further manipulates information to fit more neatly into this thought structure. Thus, "when a new fact comes in that does not fit the pattern, we don't throw out the pattern, we throw out the fact"

(Pirsig, 1991). When this new information diverges greatly from the original schema a complete change of view, or paradigm shift, is necessitated. To alter an individual's image, focus on a completely original aspect of the destination may force the abandonment of the original schema and adoption of a more favourable one.

Schemata can be divided into four main groups (Fiske and Taylor, 1984). Person schemata are associated with specific individuals, often forming the basis of stereotypes. Self-schemata centre upon the individual's thoughts about themselves, their personality and behaviour. Role schemata relate to the characteristics of sex, age, race, occupation and level of education. Finally, event schemata reflect what individual's expect to happen on certain occasions.

All four types of schemata may be influential during destination selection. Perceptions of local residents would be influenced by person schemata, whilst the comparison of self-image to the destination's perceived image would involve self-schemata. Social status associated with the destination would relate to role schemata and destination expectations would be affected by event schemata. Therefore, an individual is likely to visit a destination that is congenial, agrees with and reinforces what they feel about themselves, and has an image most like their self-image (Hunt, 1975).

A very similar theory of image formation proposes that individuals strive to make their worlds predictable through personal constructs (Reardon, 1991), whilst retaining an element of novelty. Constructs are created through the development of bipolar adjective scales where each adjective used to describe a phenomenon has a bipolar opposite, so a destination may be perceived as attractive or unattractive, popular or unpopular. Constructs, like the phenomena they represent, are interrelated and vary in importance, both to an individual and between individuals. A logic system develops from the individual's structure of constructs, which can be used to predict the future.

Constructs are dynamic and unique to each individual. Based on past experiences, individuals develop hypotheses which are tested on the world, if validated, constructs are maintained, if continually proved incorrect, the construct is modified or abandoned. If constructs contain a degree of permeability, minor unexpected events can be accommodated as variations of a construct rather than causing abandonment. However if

constructs are rigid, frequent changes occur to the individual's construct system as events occur which were not predicted by the construct.

Although perceived images and constructs are unique to the individual, phenomena are construed similarly enough for individuals to understand each other and communicate successfully. The level of understanding associated with another person's construct system affects the potential for influence over that person, therefore promoters understanding the potential visitors' construct system renders effective image promotion more likely.

Understanding a construct system is complicated by fluctuations in an individual's psychological disposition. At times it may be conducive for an individual to believe self-created false mental images (Taylor & Brown, 1988), such as unrealistic inflated views of themselves, overestimated personal control and exaggerated optimism. False self-image creation may reduce the effectiveness of destination promotion, particularly if the individual seeks a destination whose image is similar to their self-image. Practically, promoters may use demographic and socio-economic data as indicators of individuals' construct systems and make promotional decisions accordingly.

The two theories reviewed above identify the integral nature of the individual's characteristics to image perception. Testing these theories has practical limitations however. To understand how the individual had formed their image of a destination, it would be necessary to understand all related personal constructs or schemata, measurement of which would involve introspection. Nevertheless, the formation of constructs by individuals to explain phenomena seems very likely.

An alternative theory of image formation is the creation of an ideal destination image to which other destination's images are compared. An empirical study compared individuals' ideal destination image with the image perceived of an actual destination visited (Ross, 1991). It was apparent from this research that visitors strive to satisfy expectations derived from an ideal image. Arguably, this ideal image could be created from combining schema relating to each aspect of a destination.

This research suggests that a destination image is formed through a combination of the theories reviewed above. Individuals do develop personal constructs for different aspects of

every phenomena, including destinations. Comparisons are also made between the perceived image of destination and that of a 'standard' destination, which acts more as a gauge for a minimum standard than an ideal. The complex nature of image formation leads to problems of image measurement and limits measurement of image promotion effectiveness.

5.4 Rationale for Image Measurement

The potential value of image measurement is significant. Image perception is related to the likelihood of visiting a destination. Therefore, if image promoters could successfully measure a potential visitor's image of a destination and compare it to their image of an ideal destination, it may be possible to predict the number and type of visitor to a destination. The relative success or failure of a marketing campaign could be postulated if comparisons could be made between images perceived before and after exposure to promotional activities. However, because images are formed by a number of factors, any effect that marketing may have can only be intimated and not accurately measured.

Different groups of potential visitors may be identified through image measurement, differentiating perceived images by demographics, socio-economic class, importance placed on different sources of information and experience of a destination. Identification of differences between groups allows segmentation of the market and target marketing. Arguably, the comparison of images perceived by visitors and non-visitors, as discussed in Chapter VIII, is of paramount importance to image promoters since this may identify image-reality gaps. However, researchers have generally focused upon visitors to a destination, for ease of contact, neglecting images perceived by potential visitors (Hunt, 1975). Although existing visitors may benefit from such research, a method of attracting non-visitors will not be identified in this way.

Image measurement may also help to identify whether a positive, negative or neutral image is perceived and whether an image is being promoted that potential visitors want to see and that will attract them to a destination. This can influence future marketing of the destination. Positive image perception is likely to lead to maintenance and enhancement of this image, whereas a negative or neutral image would lead to positive image promotion. If the image held is more negative than the reality, image promotion may be sufficient,

however if the negative image is an accurate reflection of reality, simultaneous improvement of the reality may be more effective.

The qualitative, subjective nature of image renders image measurement problematic however. There is no one tool that has been developed for image measurement because of the plethora of inter-related influential factors in the image formation process. Instead, a number of indicators for image measurement can be used.

5.4.1 Image Measurement Techniques

The value of studying image and the issue of image measurement has only been widely recognised within the last two decades. Therefore, many image measurement techniques employ tools originally developed to measure similar concepts, especially attitude and behaviour. The hypothetical structure of attitude means that, as with image, it can not be directly measured. Although analysis of behaviour indicates an individual's attitude, it can not be considered an accurate measurement tool since the two variables are not equatable (O'Flynn, 1995), illustrated by La Prier (1934)'s study where the majority of respondents denied a racist attitude, but the preponderance exhibited racist behaviour. A number of factors determine whether or not attitudes match associated behaviour.

Changes in attitude may lead to changes in behaviour, although time lagged due to the necessitated learned usage of an attitude (Doob, 1947). Therefore, continued application of an attitude alters associated behaviour. However, it is difficult to identify which attitudes are directly linked to which behaviours. Hence, even if an individual can accurately describe their attitude, behaviour towards that phenomenon can not be predicted. Behavioural intention may also differ from behaviour (Fishbein, 1966), therefore the measurement of attitudes or behavioural intention can only be used as an indication of behaviour and vice versa.

Experience plays an important role in image perception and behaviour. With experience, abilities and opportunities can be realised. Past behaviour affects future behaviour, illustrated by past drug use significantly influencing subsequent drug use (Bentler & Speckart, 1979). An individual may not be able to accurately predict their behaviour since previous responses to stimuli, although instinctively repeated, may not be easily recalled.

Having clarified the relationships between image, attitude and behaviour, the main attitude measurement techniques that can potentially be adapted to measure image are reviewed. The late 1920s saw the development of many of the basic ideas still used in attitude measurement techniques. Assuming only one characteristic of an attitude can be measured at a time, it was proposed that attitudes can only be categorised in terms of more or less favourable (Thurstone, 1927). This conceptual ranking of attitude variables allows creation of a linear continuum, the key characteristic of which is that the attitude scale has evenly graduated opinions so arranged that equal intervals represent equally noticeable shifts in attitude.

One limitation of this technique, as with all linear continuums, is the assumption that every degree of attitude can be located between the two ends of an attitude scale. In fact it may not be possible to rank attitudes or images in this way for all subjects, such as perceived images of polluted beaches. Where the subject matter elicits strong feelings, the distribution of attitudes is likely to be clustered around the two extremes of the continuum, with relatively few located in between. Indeed, Thurstone himself acknowledged the limitation of his attitude scale, stating, “an attitude is a complex affair which cannot be wholly described by a single numerical index” (1967, p. 77). Similarly, the complexity of image reduces the value of a unilinear continuum to only an indicator of image measurement.

Despite the limitations associated with unidimensional scaling, another scale was developed (Likert, 1932) which has subsequently been the basis of many modern methodologies (such as Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Ahmed, 1991; Bojanic, 1991). The individual selects the alternative which best fits their attitude, usually from 5 or 7, each representing an area on the attitude continuum. This method of attitude and image measurement has the advantage of simplicity for the respondent, by options given, whilst providing greater accuracy than simply agreeing or disagreeing with a given statement.

There are however a number of limitations to this technique. Construct validity can only be established if relevant items are used to establish the attitude scale, or unrelated beliefs will be studied. The evaluation of a particular attribute is measured integrally with the likelihood that the subject possesses that attribute (East, 1990), which could result in an individual responding negatively when they do not consider the attitude to possess such an

attribute. To avoid this potential limitation, this scale was used only to ascertain the importance of information sources in image formation in the main study of this research.

Another criticism of this method is that the disposition or mood of an individual may affect responses given. However, this is a fundamental problem to the study of attitude or image measurement due to its subjective nature. This limitation could be addressed by wording some questions negatively and others positively. Indeed, in this research, the Likert scale used was designed to measure responses in a negatively descending order of importance.

A single continuum will only be accurate if internally consistent, unlikely due to the number of factors which affect attitude and image (Abelson, 1967), a limitation which can be overcome using multi-dimensional scales. Here, attitude or image can be measured in terms of psychological distances determined by reactions to stimuli, creating a three-dimensional map using physical distances to represent psychological distances. The multi-dimensional nature of a destination's perceived image was illustrated in this research by the number of aspects analysed. However, the large number of attributes studied rendered three-dimensional mapping less appropriate than studying each attribute in isolation or pairs of attributes through cross-tabulations.

Semantic differential scaling (Osgood, Suci & Tannenbaum, 1957) is another attitude measurement technique, adaptable to image measurement, which uses a 7 point adjective scale. Adjectives, such as quite and slightly, or numbers, such as in uni-polar form: 1 to 7, or in bi-polar form: -3 to +3, may be used in the design of these scales. The basis of several attitude measurement models, this measurement technique allows the study of several aspects of an attitude or image. However, a potential limitation of this technique is that there may be a problem of language usage since adjectives may be ambiguous, with different individuals associating words with different degrees of strength.

A limitation of any form of attitude measurement is that it can only deal with those attitudes that are common (Thurstone, 1927). There are few attitudes that are indeed common enough to be profitably scaled. Therefore attitude scales should only be seen as approximations of the way in which attitudes actually exist in people's minds. Each person possesses many contradictory attitudes, therefore scaled answers are merely an indication of the respondent's attitude at that given moment in time.

One measurement technique which addresses this limitation, designed specifically to study destination image perception is a 'free elicitation of descriptive adjectives' (Reilly, 1990). This technique dismissed multi-dimensional scaling and semantic differential scaling as potentially too open to researcher bias, leading to unreliable results when the individual is unfamiliar with the destination under analysis. The use of open-ended questions in the 'free elicitation' approach instead elicits an unbiased response. However, many resulting responses will be unique and therefore difficult to categorise when analysing data. In this research, free elicitation was employed to ascertain perceived images of a number of the case study region's attributes, resulting in a depth of responses that would not have been collected by more structured scales.

The measurement tools discussed above, each have associated advantages and disadvantages. The net benefits of these techniques have led to their incorporation into a number of attitude measurement models, that can potentially be adapted for image measurement purposes.

5.5 Models of Attitude Measurement

The purpose of attitude and image measurement models is to give an indication of attitudes that people have about all aspects of a subject or object. For image measurement, in practical terms, these models may potentially be most useful to an individual in destination selection or when comparing the relative importance of destination attributes.

All attitude measurement models assume that an individual's attitude, or image, towards a destination is linked to their beliefs about that destination and the value assigned to those beliefs. Attitude measurement models are either Compensatory and Non-Compensatory (O'Flynn, 1995). Whilst both types of model study consumer satisfaction with an object, such as a destination, at attribute level, in compensatory models, weaknesses of attributes may be compensated for by the strength of others. Those models of attitude measurement considered most influential in this field are reviewed below.

5.5.1 Compensatory Models

Compensatory models incorporate the process of compensation whereby positively perceived attributes make up for negatively valued attributes, such as a long journey is compensated by a deserted beach on arrival. The potential for compensation is related to the importance attached to each attribute and the individual's attitude towards negative attributes.

The expectancy-value theory (Fishbein, 1963), a multi-attribute model based on semantic differential scaling (Osgood, Suci & Tannenbaum, 1957) proposes individuals not only consider the reward of a choice, but also the expectancy of success, as shown in Figure 5.5 below.

Figure 5.5: Adaptation of Fishbein's basic Expectancy-Value Model

$$A_0 = \sum_{i=1}^n B_i a_i$$

Where: A_0 = image perceived of attribute o
 B_i = strength of belief $_i$ about attribute o
 a_i = evaluative aspect of belief $_i$
 n = number of attributes

Figure 5.5 identifies the cognitive and affective determinants of an attitude. A later revision of the model added that attitudes are also partly determined by an individual's evaluation of potential consequences of their behaviour. This model has served as the basis of many attitude and image measurement models.

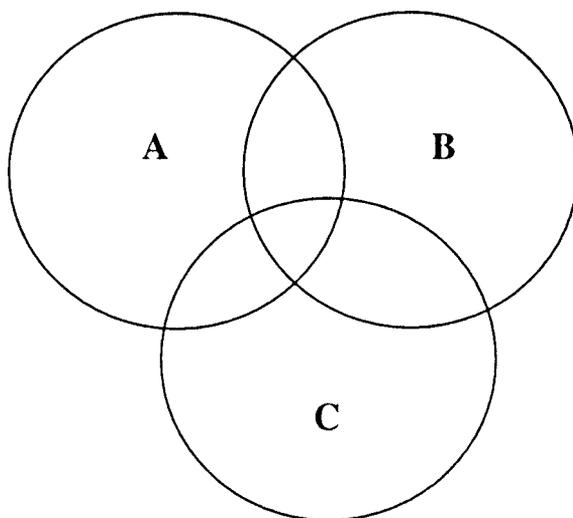
This multi-attribute model was adapted to determine the relationship between tourist destination preferences and visitors' perceptions of those regions (Goodrich, 1978). Attitude attributes can be categorised by this model as 'important', 'determinant' and 'salient'. These categories are not however mutually exclusive since 'determinance' is a product of the other factors. This categorisation may determine which aspects of a destination can potentially compensate for others.

Another adaptation of Fishbein's model (Rosenburg, 1953), designed to measure abstract values, can be applied to image measurement. Values are assigned to each of the destination's separate attributes, which may be positive or negative. The value assigned is dependent upon the intensity of expected outcomes (Peak, 1955). Other models have combined the work of Fishbein and Rosenburg to produce a belief/importance model (Bass and Talarzyk, 1972) and an adequacy/importance model (Bettman, Capon and Lutz, 1975). These models can also be applied to image measurement.

The Ideal Point Model (Lehman, 1971), a further adaptation of Fishbein's work, can be modified to compare destinations to an ideal. Placing destination attributes at an appropriate distance from their ideal point, the best trade-off position, when considering all attributes, can be calculated. One advantage of this model is the simultaneous consideration of multiple attributes. However, a limitation of this model is that relative values assigned to different attributes are not incorporated, an advantage of the compositional models reviewed above.

Conjoint analysis (Green & Srinivasan, 1978), addresses the issue of relative values through the measurement of groups of different attributes. A number of attributes can be compared by measurement against scales or ranking, and corresponding weighting assigned. Figure 5.6 below shows a simple diagrammatic form of this model.

Figure 5.6: Conjoint Analysis: Priorities Assigned to Attributes



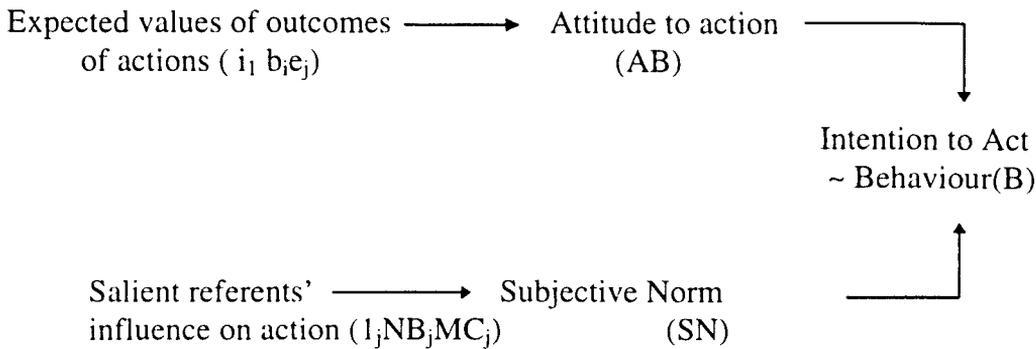
In 4.6 above, the attributes A, B and C, are considered both in isolation and in relevant combinations. The relative importance of attributes is calculated by ranking preferences, such as the presence of attributes A and B in the absence of C, may be ranked higher than B and C present with A absent. Interaction between attributes may lead to a higher aggregate importance than individual value summation, determinable through multiple regression analysis. Here, values assigned to a combination of attributes are represented and compared on a two dimensional map (Abelson, 1967).

Arguably, image promoters could employ conjoint analysis to search for the most cost-effective combination of a destination's attributes to be developed and marketed for a visitor destination. However, it is debatable whether individuals do consider choices in a manner compatible with attribute aggregations and comparisons necessitated for conjoint analysis (Green & Srinivasan, 1978).

A further criticism is that difficulties may be encountered in application, since even few attributes can lead to a large number of combinations. Whilst a restricted number of attributes could be compared at a time, this leads to a greater number of judgements needed, which can lead to respondent fatigue and hence potentially inaccurate responses. Reducing the combinations considered, however, may lead to incorrect inferences.

Alternatively, the theory of reasoned action acknowledges behaviour does not necessarily correlate to attitude (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Whilst action may follow intention, circumstances can intervene. This theory assumes that the 'reasoned action person' has a limited knowledge of action consequences and only take account of known outcomes that are important to them. Actions are partly a response to the belief that what other people think you should do is important. Recognising the potential role of social normative beliefs in image formation is arguably the greatest application of this model, with the image perceived by other members of society undoubtedly influencing the formation of an individual's image. This theory is illustrated below in Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7: The Theory of reasoned action



(Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980)

- Where: $i_1 b_{ie_j}$ = aggregate of the products of likelihood and evaluation in respect for each outcome
- AB = voluntary action
- ~ = relationship between measured intention and behaviour is dependent upon external factors
- SN = internally created pressure from what we think others want us to do
- NB = normative belief, that is to say belief that another person thinks you should do the action
- MC = motivation to comply, that is to say willingness to do what the other person thinks you should do

Another component, perceived control, was added to this theory to take account of the perceived ability to perform some action should the individual want to (Ajzen, 1985). This theory has relevance to choices where consumers can give reasons for their preferences, such as factors perceived important in destination selection, as studied in this research.

A criticism of this theory is the basic assumption that actions are taken to reap benefits and avoid costs, ignoring social obligations, such as visiting friends and relatives, and altruism, such as conservation holidays (East, 1990). Another debatable assumption made is that variables, such as demographics, past experience, and personality, have only an indirect affect on attitude, intention and behaviour due to their affect on relevant beliefs. However, it could be argued that these variables have a direct affect on these factors and therefore need greater consideration.

Whilst the models reviewed above allow positively perceived attributes of a destination to compensate for those perceived negatively, substitution of attributes may not be acceptable to individuals. This introduces the non-compensatory principle.

5.5.2 Non-Compensatory Models

There are three main non-compensatory models (O'Flynn, 1995). The conjunctive model requires the individual to set a minimum standard for all relevant attributes of a destination considered important. With no potential for compensation, a destination must attain the standard set by the individual for all the attributes considered most important, and probably some of those deemed less important, before selection. A potential limitation of this model is that an individual may set standards too high and no destination will meet up to their set standards.

The disjunctive model also involves a minimum acceptable standard set for each attribute, but if a minimum threshold is not reached by one attribute, another attribute may be accepted in its place if it reaches that minimum requirement level. Although a compensatory principal, the attached stipulation of a specific number of attributes attaining a certain standard remains. One limitation of this method, is that it may not distinguish sufficiently between destinations to allow selection.

The lexicographic model is the most systematic non-compensatory model. All attributes of a destination are ranked, evaluated the order of importance to the individual. If two destinations possess the most important attribute, the second attribute is considered, *ad nauseam*. One limitation of this model is that differences between rankings are not considered, so there may be a greater difference between the most important and second ranking and the second and third rankings. The importance placed on different attributes of a destination was studied during this research. A lexicographic style of analysis was used to analyse this data in relation to the potential visitors selection of Grampian as a visitor destination.

This research suggests that destination selection involves the assignment of a minimum standard to a number of destination attributes, some of which will have compensatory standards. Therefore, effective promotion of positively perceived attributes will potentially compensate for any negatively perceived aspects of the destination. Although no models were tested during this research, due to perceived problems associated with collecting all relevant data, the principle of limited compensation was incorporated into the study.

5.6 Limitations of Image Measurement and Modelling: Measuring Effects of Image Promotion

There is no measurement tool that directly and purely measures the affects of image promotion since other variables can not be kept *ceteris paribus*. Therefore, there are only indicators of image promotion effectiveness. Funds, and perhaps expertise, are often also not available to monitor visitors' experiences and measure the accuracy of image content in destination promotion (Ashworth & Voogd, 1994). Many other consumer products are promoted through an invitation to test the product, which can not be offered by tourism promoters.

There are a number of potential sources of bias in the measurement of attitude and image that question the level of accuracy that can be obtained. Indeed, the very act of measurement alters the object being measured, reiterating the Heisenburg Uncertainty Principle (Gray & Isaacs, 1978) which states that any measurement of a system must disturb the system under investigation.

Other sources of error include: lack of insight; ignorance; suspicion; fear; undue enthusiasm or conversely undue apathy, or knowledge of the researcher's enquiry. Individual's may not convey all associated beliefs accurately, or be able to attribute their behaviour to a corresponding attitude, limiting further the ability of attitudes to accurately predict behaviour. Therefore the measurement of attitudes and images can only serve as an indication of behaviour patterns determined by destination selection.

Assumptions have been made by researchers (such as Urness, 1993) that a relationship exists between awareness of a destination and the decision to visit. However, it would be incorrect to base the measured effectiveness of image marketing on an assumption with such little empirical evidence. It may be more pertinent to study visitors to a destination to indicate effective image promotion, although the value is limited without a control group, those not exposed to marketing.

Without appropriate objects of measurement, it is difficult to determine the incremental affect of greater expenditure on image marketing. If it were possible to measure associated effectiveness, a reduction of marketing costs may be enjoyed if, for example, it was revealed that expenditure on brochures was not warranted due to the numbers who read

them (Urness, 1993). Techniques have been employed by tourism promoters to indicate perceived images, suggesting that the need for such tools is recognised by the industry.

5.7 Image Promotion Evaluation and Practical Image Measurement Studies

Image promotion evaluation and image measurement studies have recently become more prevalent. In 1982, due to a dramatic decline in the number of visitors, in line with an overall downward trend in numbers to all seaside resorts, the Pictorial Publicity agency and Torbay Tourist Board considered the image being portrayed to visitors (Torbay Borough Council, 1985). Having discovered that two thirds of visitors were repeat visitor, the image projected was upgraded to entice back previous visitors who had latterly holidayed abroad.

The three towns and surrounding area of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham were relaunched as the English Riviera, emphasising the good climate of the area, with accompanying public and private investment. Although the affect of improving the tourism product and associated image can not be accurately measured, "there can be little doubt that a much changed product image has been created" (Brown, 1990, p. 182).

A most productive piece of research in this field was conducted by the British Tourist Authority (BTA) in France (February 1991). Using group discussions, the current BTA brochure promoting Britain to the French market was discussed to ascertain from the participants whether the textual and pictorial content were considered truly representative of the areas covered. As a direct result of the findings, the entire brochure was redesigned due to the perceived false image being promoted (BTA, pers. comm., 1993).

The Scottish Tourist Board (STB) have studied how the Scots perceived Scotland as a holiday destination, achieved through six focus groups and four hundred 'in-house' interviews. This was considered so successful by the STB that they have subsequently conducted a similar study to discover how the English perceive Scotland. Information generated was used in marketing decisions (STB, pers. comm., 1993).

The South East of England Tourist Board, concerned with potential ramifications of the Channel Tunnel and a single European market on their short break market evaluated their image promotion activities (Carver, 1993; Baker 1994). Contacting individuals who had

requested promotional material from the British Tourist Authority over the previous two years, at tourist information offices and at exhibitions, the brochure was evaluated through a questionnaire. It was believed that the programme generated between £700,000 and £1 million in extra accommodation revenue alone (Laws, 1995), one indication of successful image promotion.

Nottingham evaluated the success of a promotional campaign centred around the image of Robin Hood. Nottingham City and County Council, in a desire to attract more visitors, produced new brochures. Using the platform of Sherwood Forest and Nottingham Castle, coinciding with both the 1991 release of the Robin Hood film and new road links to the area, a brochure was produced to attract more visitors to the area. The promotional campaign used the theme of, 'You've seen the film, now live the legend' (Laws, 1995, p.131). The success of Nottingham's image promotional activities was measured in monetary terms. Brochure production cost £16,200, whilst revenue was increased by £34,000 at accommodation and a similar increase in revenue was estimated in city spending (Nodding, 1993). This success was reflected by the presentation of the BTA's 'UK Tourism Marketing Award' for the campaign.

An image measurement study was conducted to ascertain perceptions of both those who visit Barry Island in Wales and those who no longer do so (Selby & Morgan, 1996), the methodology for which has now been applied to similar areas. Heavy investment began in the area in 1989. In 1993, surveys were conducted with both visitors to the Island and visitors to competing resorts to study perceptions of present, past and non-visitors. One key finding was that many of those interviewed at competing resorts perceived Barry Island negatively. Therefore, although the reality had been improved, image perceptions had not changed. This was reflected by the high levels of satisfaction (96%) experienced by visitors to the Island. Active image promotion was identified as the counter-balance to negative image perception. However, the effectiveness of image promotion was not measured, "only further research will indicate the extent to which negative images can be practically and cost-effectively measured" (Selby & Morgan, 1996, p. 293).

Although there are a number of limitations associated with image measurement, increasing importance appears to be given to related techniques, shown by a rising number of studies being undertaken. Whilst there is no singular image measurement tool available, due to the

number of factors involved in image formation, arguably a combination of indicators will demonstrate the effectiveness of image promotion. Most pertinent are qualitative analysis of the destination selection process and comparison of the number and type of visitors to a destination after associated promotional campaigns.

5.8 Significance of the Image Formation Process

Having ascertained the importance of image within destination selection, the study of image formation has served to identify how, and to what extent, promotion of a destination's image can influence this process. Critical review of existing literature and models relating to both attitude and image have highlighted limitations to measurement of these concepts.

It is apparent that image promoters have limited influence over the image perceived by an individual. Therefore, any image promotional activities should surely be co-ordinated throughout the industry to maximise effectiveness. However, the fragmented nature of the industry renders this unlikely.

Chapter VI: An Image Policy?

6.1 Introduction

The tourism industry in Grampian is a complex web of inter-related private, public and voluntary sector organisations and firms. The industry lacks leadership due to its fragmented nature. In the absence of any strong players, the national and area tourist boards play an important role in tourism.

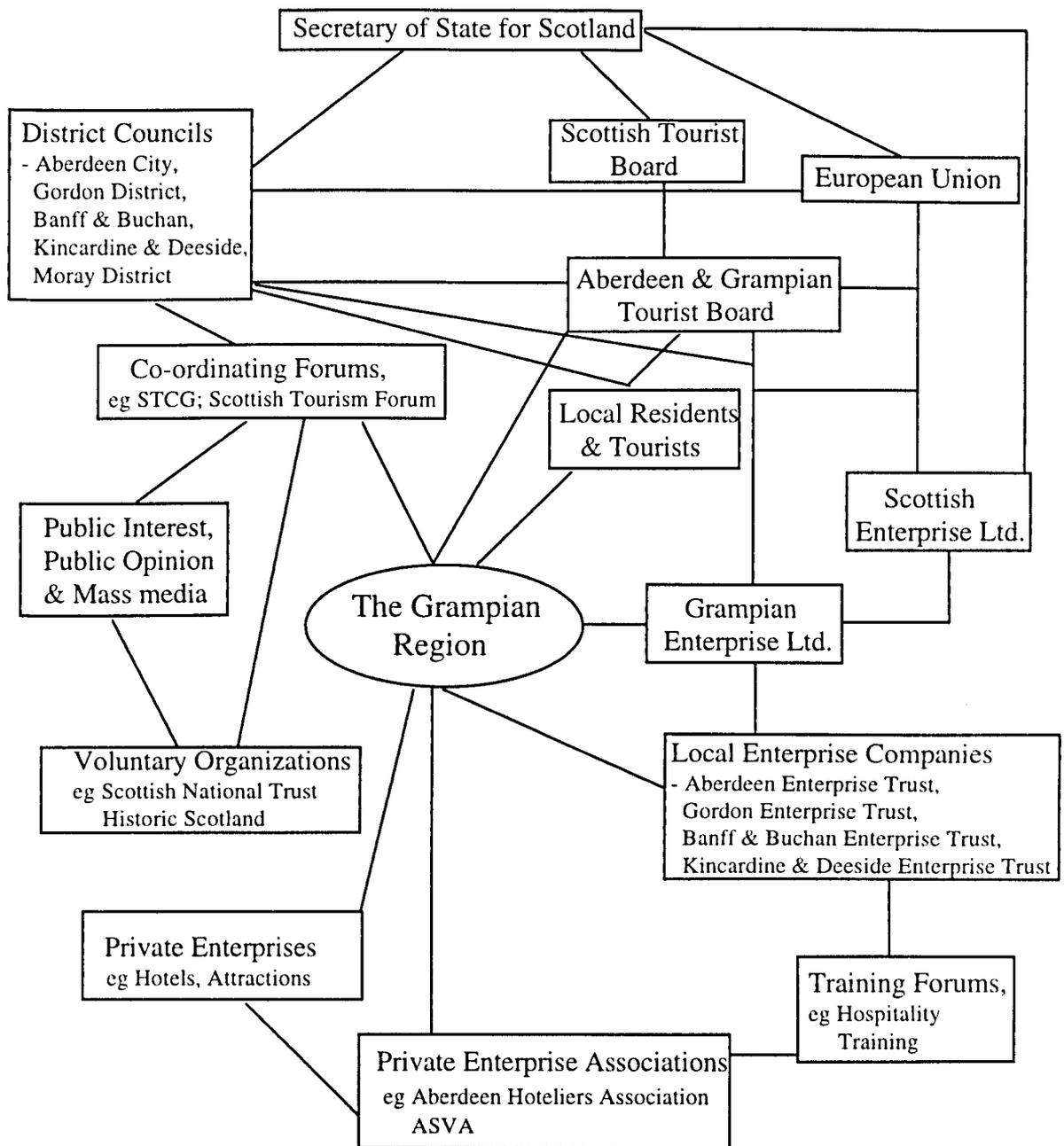
Image promotion in Grampian involves those who are directly involved in the delivery of tourism, such as individual firms, non-commercial organisations, Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board. It also involves those who have other roles in addition to tourism, such as Enterprise Companies and Local Authorities who promote an image of the region.

Effective image promotion requires co-ordination. However, there is currently no policy for the promotion of Grampian's image. Nonetheless, by looking at the context and conditions in which the organisations involved with the generation and manipulation of images operate, this helps to understand the way that Grampian projects itself. Therefore, study of tourism policy networks that do exist gains an insight into the way certain groups behave in Grampian's tourism. This helps to explain why different images are promoted by different organisations for different reasons, and to ascertain the potential for an image policy network. The fragmented nature of the industry does however question how successful any image policies could be.

6.2 The Structure of Grampian's Tourism Industry

There are a number of organisations involved directly and indirectly in Grampian's tourism industry. Evaluation of the complex inter-relationships between industry members identifies the potential for image promotional policy development. Those perceived to be most influential in image promotion, and potentially in related policy-making, in conjunction with their main inter-relationships are reviewed in Figure 6.1 below.

Figure 6.1: The Fundamental Structure of Grampian's Tourism Industry



The administrative framework for Grampian region's tourism industry, as shown in Figure 6.1, primarily consists of the public, private and voluntary sectors of the industry. These sectors are influenced by local residents and tourists, public interest, public opinion and mass media. All of these groups are inter-dependent and "act to control or restrain one another's activities" (Elliot, 1997, p.219).

In the above diagram, the key role of the government in the tourism industry's infrastructure is indicated by its positioning at the top. This shows that government decisions will affect all industry members either directly or indirectly through inter-relationships with other organisations. The singular power of the government to provide

“the political stability, security and the legal and financial framework which tourism requires” (Elliot, 1997, p.2) renders it integral to an administrative network. There are of course a greater number of government departments involved in tourism both directly and indirectly than shown in Figure 6.1. However, on a regional level, it was considered that the Secretary of State for Scotland, ultimately responsible for tourism in Scotland, has the greatest influence upon Grampian’s tourism industry. Responsibility for tourism in Grampian is assigned to the Scottish Tourist Board, Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board, the District Councils and Grampian Enterprise Limited.

The Scottish Tourist Board (STB) is a national tourism organisation funded by the government and by subscriptions from members. The main role of the STB is to market Scotland to UK residents and promote Scotland overseas, in collaboration with the British Tourist Authority. The Scottish Tourist Board works conjointly with Scottish Enterprise Limited, whose main tourism remit is to develop tourism in Scotland. Perhaps the most important link for Grampian is the relationship with Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board. The STB provides funds and advises the Area Tourist Board, supplying expertise and co-ordinating projects on a national level that would not be economically viable for only one region to undertake by themselves and allowing comparison between areas of Scotland.

The Scottish Tourist Board is likely to play the most important role in any Scottish image promotion policy due to its place within the administrative framework of the tourism industry, the size of the organisation and associated control over resources. Representing a mid-way position between the government and individual enterprises, the Board may have the greatest potential for successful image promotional policy implementation. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter V, the STB are aware of the importance of image perception in destination promotion.

With the STB promoting an image of Scotland and its component parts to both domestic and overseas visitors, the budget for promotional activities is relatively high. However, the main objective for the STB is to increase visitors to Scotland as a whole rather than to particular regions. Therefore, on a regional level it is the Area Tourist Board which could potentially play the most important role in Grampian’s image policy development and implementation. However, with the STB promoting the region overseas, the market for the

Area Tourist Board's image promotion is primarily domestic visitors, and the budget to do this is considerably less than that of the STB. This separation of markets may be detrimental for image promotion of Grampian abroad since the Scottish Tourist Board may promote other more traditional tourist areas, such as Edinburgh or the Highlands and Islands, to potential overseas visitors at the expense of Grampian because of the greater numbers that these areas attract.

Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board operates programmes under contract to the STB, offering tourism advisory services to the industry and supplying information to tourists. The Area Tourist Board works closely with the Enterprise Companies and Local Councils in tourism development of the region. The diverse membership of Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board, including many from the private sector and council representatives, provides it with the potential to play an important role in co-ordinating the objectives of the tourism industry. However, the last two years has seen disharmony amongst the members (Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board, pers. comm., 1997), repercussions of the rationalisation of Scotland's tourist boards, leading to many rescinding their membership. This was particularly notable in Banff and Buchan due to the closure of the local Tourist Information Centres.

In April 1996, the 32 Area Tourist Boards which existed throughout Scotland were reduced to 14 by the government with Aberdeen and Grampian forming one of the new Boards. However, since Grampian has had a collective marketing strategy for the last 13 years, this rationalisation process will potentially have less effect on Grampian than other tourist boards. Newly formed tourist boards may therefore learn from the benefits and limitations Grampian has experienced whilst promoting a region as a destination, as studied during this research.

The joint marketing venture of Grampian's Tourist Boards was formed in 1983 as NESOT (North East Scotland Co-ordinating Committee for Tourism) and became Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company in 1993 and latterly Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board in 1996. With one organisation responsible for the promotion of Grampian, it could be assumed that such an organisation would play an integral role in regional image promotional policy, particularly during implementation. However, the current funding crisis in the Tourist Board and uncertainty over its future

(Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board, pers. comm., 1997) has led to prioritisation of short-term target meeting, rather than a long-term view of increasing tourism in the region, questioning the potential for image policy development in Grampian.

When the Area Tourist Boards were rationalised, funding by district councils was made discretionary. This has led to disparity between the levels of expenditure by each of the councils. Money spent on promotion has become skewed accordingly, Tourist Information Centres correspondingly closed and publications withdrawn where sponsors could not be found. The perceived bias of this decision towards Aberdeen and Deeside has served to anger some of the Boards members and they have resigned. Whilst this means that the membership is now less representative of the region's industry, overall membership of Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board has not fallen and therefore the additional income derived from membership fees has not suffered. However, it does suggest that the Tourist Board's ability to act as a co-ordinating forum has been reduced.

Uncertainty hangs over the Area Tourist Board with the discretionary expenditure of the district councils given on a six-monthly basis, allowing only short-term planning. This problem is further exacerbated by the tourism review presently being undertaken by the District Councils, analysing the role of the Tourist Board, the potential ramifications of which include future funding reductions and office closure.

The five district councils were initially assigned responsibility for tourism in 1983. However, responsibility for the region's tourism, along with financial support has now been given to the Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board. There still remains a reciprocal relationship with representatives of the district councils being members of the Tourist Board and the Tourist Board having an input into the tourism-related developments proposed by the councils. In view of recent funding cuts and uncertainty over future funding, this is a strained relationship with the organisations meeting very infrequently. This disharmony amongst industry members is not a good foundation for any effective tourism policy development.

Relations between central and local government are also not always genial, with tensions around, amongst other factors, funding cuts made by central government for local authorities. Priorities may also differ. Therefore, the two levels of government are related

but not equal in tourism-related activities, further reducing the possibility of unified policy development.

The Single European Act of July 1987 introduced a further dimension to Grampian's tourism framework, the European Union (EU). Tourism is included in the remit of the Directorate General XXIII, also responsible for Enterprise Policy, Distributive trades and Co-operatives. Despite the significance of tourism receipts to member countries, it has not been given a separate initiative. This may in part be because northern member states, generally less reliant on tourism for national income, do not want the further redistribution of resources which would result from greater emphasis placed on tourism development within the EU. This therefore questions the importance placed upon tourism by the European Union as a whole. Indeed, tourism was only formally included as an EU policy responsibility as late as 1992 through its inclusion in the Treaty on the European Union (CEC, 1995).

The significance of tourism is now being recognised at the European level "as awareness has grown concerning tourism's ability to promote closer relations between EC member states, its importance as an economic activity within the community, and the large number of community policies which, directly or indirectly, have an impact on the industry" (Davidson, 1992, p.25). Following the first Tourism Action Plan (1993-1995), a multi-annual programme for European Tourism (1997-2000) has now been initiated by the EU. The main aim of the programme is to "stimulate quality and competitiveness of European tourism to contribute to growth and employment" (European Commission Representation in Scotland, 1996, p.42). The main objectives are to: improve knowledge by developing related information; improve the legislative and financial environment; increase the quality of tourism by promoting sustainable tourism and increase the number of visitors from third world countries by promoting Europe as a tourist destination.

Clearly, Grampian will benefit from the member states working towards these objectives. However, perhaps the most significant aspect of the EU's involvement in tourism is access to its structural funds. The fund can be divided into a number of objectives. In June 1994, North and West Grampian were designated as an Objective 5b area. Objective 5b is "the economic diversification of vulnerable rural areas with a low level of socio-economic development where two out of these three criteria are met; a high proportion of agricultural

employment; a low level of agricultural income, and a low population density or a high level of out-migration (Duff, 1995, p.34).

When assigned 5b status, the Scottish Office; Grampian Enterprise Limited; District Councils; Scottish National Heritage and Local Enterprise Companies created a regional plan. The main aim of the plan is “reducing the disparities between north and west Grampian and the UK and European economies and to ensure self-sustaining economic prosperity” (Scottish Office, 1994, p.23). Aiming to economically diversify the local economy, funding has been granted for projects within the region, including Archaeolink, a new attraction based at Oyne near Inverurie. This interactive visitor centre has been designed to be the starting point of an archaeological trail throughout the district, yet to be completed, tracing the lives of inhabitants thousands of years ago. The European Social Fund provided a conditional matching grant, met by Gordon District council; Grampian Enterprise Limited; Scottish National Heritage and Grampian Regional Council, with some funding from the European Regional Development Fund. Whilst European Union funding does not encompass promotional strategies per se, developments benefiting from Objective 5b funding will improve the tourism product, which if effectively marketed will improve the destination image perceived.

A threat to European funding for any regional development in Scotland is Agenda 2,000. The six countries joining the European Union have need of heavy investment which may take precedence over Scottish requirements. Therefore, future European funding is far from guaranteed.

Clearly, the European Union’s involvement in tourism has benefited a number of European areas to date. However, controversy exists between some member states about some tourism competencies, limiting the potential to meet objectives. Policy development within the EU is still minimalist due to the controversy amongst member states and the lack of recognition given to tourism.

The European Union does not play a significant role in UK tourism either now or in the foreseeable future. Thus, it seems very unlikely that the EU will play an integral role in image promotion at a national level let alone in promotion of a regional destination. Therefore, for Grampian the role that the European Union will play is likely to be in

tourism development, improving the tourism product. Consequently, the region will need to look to other players to provide image promotion which compliments such developments.

Indirectly, tourism is also affected by other European Union policies, such as environmental directives; culture promotional policy; enterprise policy; common transport policy; education and vocational training and consumer protection. This is because, at the European as well as the UK level, there is a strong overlap between tourism and other industries. Such overlapping boundaries limits the potential for effective policy-making due to the number of players involved with different objectives (discussed in more detail in Chapter VII).

Linked to the Area Tourist Board, District Councils and the European Union are the Enterprise Companies, whose remit for tourism, on both a regional and local level, focuses primarily on development. In 1991, Grampian Enterprise Limited (GEL) was established, replacing The Scottish Development Agency and the Training Agency in Grampian. GEL encompasses the Grampian region excepting Moray District, a potential complication for research since the division of Grampian necessitates either the co-operation of Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise, or the exclusion of this district in regional research. With an image of Grampian promoted by the work of a number of GEL's divisions, such as those responsible for tourism and industry development, Grampian Enterprise Limited has the potential to play an important role in image promotional policy development for the region.

The potential for policy development is enhanced by the development of an area strategy by GEL in association with the Scottish Tourist Board, district councils, Scottish Enterprise Limited and Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board, and through membership of other co-ordinating forums, such as the Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating Group (STCG) and associated working parties.

The Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating Group's remit is to publish the national strategic plan and undertake strategic initiatives that will improve Scotland's tourism product and to act as a forum for discussion of tourism-related issues, and where appropriate, take action. Chaired by the Minister with special responsibility for tourism, membership is: Highlands

and Islands Enterprise; Scottish Enterprise, Historic Scotland; Convention of Scottish Local Authorities; Scottish Tourist Board; Scottish Arts Council; British Tourist Authority; Scottish Museums Council; Scottish Tourism Forum; Scottish Sports Council and Scottish Natural Heritage.

On image, the STCG identified that “although much of Scotland’s product is good, the brand image is very weak” (STB / STCG, 1994, p.25). However, the group considered that it was solely the responsibility of the Scottish Tourist Board to improve this situation, ignoring the importance of other players in image promotion. The STCG appears to be delegating responsibility rather than co-ordinating policy development, identifying targets rather than methods to achieve them. By leaving this important role to one organisation, the STCG is potentially limiting the effectiveness of image promotion.

The effectiveness of the group may also be limited by the continuing budget cuts for many of the organisations involved, which mean that each is attaching greater priority to attainment of their own objectives rather than communal goals. Whilst a number of responsibilities and therefore goals and objectives may overlap between these organisations, others may be contradictory, limiting the potential for policy development.

Another advisory committee for the government that has limited potential for policy development is the Scottish Tourism Forum. In 1994 the self-appointed Scottish Confederation of Tourism, membership being the Area Tourist Boards in Scotland, was disbanded and reformed as the Scottish Tourism Forum with a wider membership base. This suggests that the Area Tourist Boards are not seen by the government to play a particularly significant role in the future of UK’s tourism, which corresponds with the rationalisation of area tourist boards in 1996.

Lower level players in the region’s tourism network, excluded from membership of the STCG, also have the potential to influence policy development. Local enterprise trusts, as well as performing a number of other functions for businesses in their districts, play a supportive role in the region’s tourism industry. These district enterprise companies offer advisory, practical and financial assistance to local businesses and compile courses jointly with private enterprise associations. Close links with the private sector have led to provision of courses including training for industry employees to raise the standard of

service, the results of which will enhance the tourist experience. Local enterprise companies have the potential to play an important role in image promotional policy development, particularly implementation, due to influence they can exert on small businesses in the industry for whom they supply finance or training.

The majority of firms within the tourism industry are small, private sector enterprises. These include providers of accommodation, food and beverages, attractions and transport. Although individually these tourism providers would not be able to influence image promotional policy development to any degree, they could potentially play a key role in policy implementation (as discussed later in this chapter). The power of individual firms can be increased by becoming members of the Area Tourist Board or of an association.

One of the most important private enterprise associations in Grampian is the Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (ASVA). Established in 1988 to foster a greater degree of cooperation among attractions and with the Scottish Tourist Board and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, ASVA initiates or commissions research, organises seminars and employs a code of practice for members with a system of inspection to ensure maintained standards. Whilst this association would potentially be a player in the development of image promotional policy, ASVA declined to be interviewed because the association considered the subject irrelevant to them. However, ASVA's activities, including establishing and monitoring their own classification scheme of attraction standards, indicate that promotion of high quality attractions is important to the association. This suggests that the importance of image promotion is acknowledged implicitly, a common theme among those involved in destination image promotion. The cumulative resources of individuals within the association indicates that if the belief system is indeed conducive, potentially the association could play a role in image promotion policy development.

The influence ASVA may have on image promotion for Grampian may be limited by the location of the association in Edinburgh, suggesting that any image promoted would be at a national level, or even biased towards the central belt. However, with no such association at a regional level, ASVA can potentially play an important role in policy implementation through associations within the region.

Similarly, Hospitality Training, Grampian Hotel and Catering Association may influence policy development. Established in 1990, resulting from an investigation initiated by local hoteliers and conducted by the council, the remit of the association is cost-effective training, running courses conjointly with the council and local enterprise trusts. The growth of membership from an initial 12 to 65 by 1994 shows the industry's commitment to training and the potential for successful policy implementation through common aims.

Voluntary organisations, such as the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland, are also an important part of the tourism industry framework. These non-government organisations (NGOs) provide information and undertake promotional activities, provide ancillary services and collaborate with private enterprises in training and management (Fayos-Sola, 1996). Voluntary organisations therefore have the potential to play an important role in image policy development because of the resources they can bring to a policy arena. Indeed some organisations, such as Historic Scotland are involved in the Scottish Tourism Forum and the Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating Group.

With environmental issues becoming more important to the general public, the conservation of land and historic sites are becoming increasingly popular. Members of the public may form public interest groups which can play a role in the region's tourism industry. These groups are "active in the tourism area, particularly in the environmental and conservation field" (Elliot, 1997, p. 219), such as the region's Green Society. These bodies can be ad hoc, permanent, formal or informal. Such public interest groups are influenced by public opinion and mass media and are important vehicles for informing other industry members of public opinion. Public interest groups may also include or consist of industry members, local residents and tourists. The role played by these citizens in tourism policy-making is likely to be indirect, through the influence upon other members of the policy arena. Public interest is also more likely to be focused upon restricting the number of visitors to an area than the image promoted, therefore their direct input to image promotional policy may be limited.

One group which may be affected greatly by tourism is the resident population. However, their level of involvement in policy development is likely to be very low level due to the main link being through the electoral system. Since tourism is only one issue for councillors, this is unlikely to be an effective tool for influencing such policy development.

Tourists can be directly involved in policy development through requested feedback, or indirectly by their response to an implemented policy, in terms of visitor numbers. Clearly the perceptions of visitors and non-visitors should be paramount to any image policy development due to the role that image plays in destination selection.

Whilst only key players and the main inter-relationships between them have been discussed here, as shown in Figure 6.1 above, it is clear that the complexity of the industry renders policy development complicated. Potentially different priorities can cause conflict. However, willingness of different industry sectors to work together is evident from the participation in the tourist boards' voluntary accommodation classification system, the success of which could be attributed to a common aim. Therefore, it could be argued that to maximise the effect of image promotion it is important for all industry members to believe benefits can be gained from co-operation. Communal objectives and co-ordinated activities can yield "greater profitability" and associated "social and cultural benefits" (Department of National Heritage, 1997, p. 27) by industry members working with, rather than against, each other. To co-ordinate tourism activities requires a facilitator. In the absence of other strong players in the tourism industry, the Scottish Tourist Board appears to fill this role at a Scottish level and Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board at the regional level. The government is therefore also important, primarily as a source of funds for the Tourist Boards, but also as provider of other functions for the tourism industry.

6.3 The UK Government's Role in Tourism

The rationale for government involvement in tourism is "based not only on the nature and extent of perceived economic and social benefits of tourism but also on the impracticality or inability of the enterprises, representative organisations or individuals to undertake certain functions. Economic factors, nevertheless, are usually to the fore" (Pearce, 1992, p.6). The government has four main roles to play in tourism. It enables the industry to function, instigates promotional activities, provides funding and regulates the industry.

The government enables the industry to function by providing a framework within which enterprises can evolve. Price stability, economic prosperity and rising incomes, conditions conducive to tourism activity, are potentially derived from inflation restrained through economic policy (Department of Employment, 1992).

Much of the support work needed for the tourism industry, such as statistical surveys, is also conducted by the government through national tourism organisations (NTOs), whose main remit is to maximise visitor numbers to the United Kingdom and associated revenue. Therefore, the government can facilitate co-ordination of different interests through these semi-autonomous organisations, allowing development of potentially effective marketing and promotional activities whilst enjoying economies of scale.

National tourism organisations have a limited reciprocal relationship with the government. The British Tourist Authority (BTA), responsible for promotion of Great Britain overseas, advises central government on tourism matters that affect Britain as a whole, such as expenditure plans, in association with national tourist boards (TACC, 1982). The Scottish Tourist Board (STB) and Area Tourist Boards (ATBs) also advise the Scottish Office on related issues. In addition, the BTA and STB are outlets for central government's economic and regional policy (Williams and Shaw, 1991), a relationship which encourages the appropriate provision and improvement of tourist amenities, facilities and support work in Great Britain.

It would not be viable, on an economic or organisational level, for the private sector to perform much of the support work conducted by the public sector. However, the government recently invited contributions from members of the industry and the public to the policy review of the Scottish Tourist Board, to consider the effectiveness of the organisation and whether any of its current activities could be undertaken by the private sector. The government facilitates the accumulation of information and expertise from the private sector, which is the main knowledge base for the industry.

The third major role played by the government in tourism is investment. This may be necessary for tourism and wider economic development, providing large scale capital investment, such as for airports, ferry terminals and infrastructure, thereby improving the tourism product. Capital is primarily invested in tourism development through grants or subsidies. Financial incentives are needed in an industry where recoument of investment is less assured than in other industries due to difficulties in passing on the cost to visitors. Government expenditure can be indirectly recouped through taxation of increased visitor expenditure on other aspects of the tourism product.

As well as improving the tourism product in order to generate greater visitor revenue, government investment in tourism-related ventures also has the potential to create employment. While this is a direct objective of the public sector, it is not likely to be a priority of the private sector, although clearly an advantage to the industry. However, the new governments proposal to introduce a minimum wage may have profound effects upon employment in an industry where wages are 20% lower than in other sectors (OECD, 1988).

The government also regulates the industry primarily to protect the consumer, the visitor. This can be achieved indirectly through economic controls of, for example, currency flows, consumer protection, licensing, bonding, accommodation classification systems and taxation. The price and quantity of tourism products can also be directly regulated by the government, illustrated by limiting the number of airlines allowed to fly specific routes, protecting existing suppliers from increasing competition, and operating a regulating body to control the prices charged by airlines. Regulation of the tourism industry may provide a minimum standard for many aspects of the tourism product, in an effort to project an image of quality to potential visitors.

Despite the role that government plays, any policies directed at tourism are likely to be complicated by incorporation of a number of objectives. These include economic, environmental, social, educational and politically diplomatic criteria (Ferguson, 1988). The number of potential objectives is reflected by the number of government departments either directly or indirectly involved in tourism. Multiple objectives may potentially cause problems for policy development. If the objectives are too widespread, it may not be possible to meet them with a single policy. In addition, some objectives may conflict with each other.

Policies directed at tourism will also affect other industries, such as financial assistance granted to low profile destinations which may also help attract manufacturing industries, and improvements to the infrastructure, affecting the transport industry. Policies developed for other industries may also affect tourism indirectly, illustrated by deregulation of coach services and airlines in the UK which has made travel cheaper and easier (Department of Employment, 1992).

Tourism itself is a new area of policy development for the government (Hall & Jenkins, 1995), since until recently many policy-makers have regarded tourism as a non-essential discretionary activity (Bull, 1991). Indeed, tourism has only recently emerged as an important consideration in the public sector (Hall, 1994). This together with the additional complexity of policy-making associated with image promotion, to be discussed, has resulted in only a small number of relevant policies developed.

Although the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (was Department of National Heritage until 1997) has sought to address tourism issues, there is as yet little evidence of destination image promotion at any level being afforded priority status. For example, little reference is made to image promotion in their 'Success through Partnership' Strategy (1997). This may be because promotional issues are already the responsibility of National and Area Tourist Boards.

6.4 Destination Image Promotion: A Historical Perspective

Destination image promotion began in the early nineteenth century with the first attempts to promote urban areas in town directories at a time when an industrial image was associated with growth (Barke & Harrop, 1994). Although "authorities came to realise that publicity was an essential ingredient in the battle to attract visitors" (Steward, 1996, p.2), the government of the time refused to sanction advertising expenditure. Aided by erosion of local self-government, this restricted the growth of promotional activities.

In 1921, resorts were granted general advertising powers. During the next decade local authorities were given more money by the government for promotional activities. However, these activities were restricted through centrally defined development parameters.

A mass market for tourism was established in the mid twentieth century with the introduction of paid holiday time, shorter working hours, higher disposable income and greater personal mobility (Shaw & Williams, 1994). At this time, locally based promotion was strengthened. Until the 1970s, tourism had been a low priority for local government. However, the recession of the 1970s led to realisation of the economic importance of tourism, particularly in Scotland where destinations lagged behind the promotional level of England and Wales (Gold & Gold, 1995). This was aided by the 1969 Development of Tourism Act which led to the formation of specific bodies for tourism and state appointed

bodies, such as the Countryside Commission, becoming more actively involved in promotion. In Scotland, councils began to work with marketing agencies.

In the 1970s, the UK government became less interventionist (Ward & Gold, 1994), enabling local authorities more freedom for promotion. As national policies for regional economic development dissolved after the election of the Conservative party to power in 1979, further emphasis was placed on local promotion.

The new Labour government may change the emphasis placed upon promotional activities, potentially following a more interventionist approach. Some evidence for this was shown in their 'Breaking New Grounds' document based on industry consultation produced during the last days of the Conservative government, in which the party recognised the importance of the public sector in supporting the work of the private sector through provision of services such as research (Garland, 1997). Potentially, the tourist boards may be restructured again or budget allocation may alter.

Whatever unit area tourism organisations become responsible for, the level of competition now experienced by destinations necessitates effective promotion. "There was a time when all a destination had to do to attract summer business was to remind people of the existence of the destination. There is increasing importance placed on giving potential visitors compelling reasons to visit" (English Tourist Board, 1994). Indeed, the "corollary of the expanding supply of tourism services throughout the world is increased competition between destinations for visitors and their spending" (Laws, 1995, p.26). Place identities have also been weakened due to lost traditional sources of employment, emphasising the problem of destination competition.

Effective promotion necessitates co-ordination of destination promoters which may be best achieved through policy development. However, due to the nature of the industry, the potential for effective image policy development and implementation is limited.

6.5 The Potential for Tourism Image Policy Development

Policy is a subjective concept, with policies and policy-making viewed through a 'conceptual lens' (Allison, 1971). The development of a policy is a process, not a single decision but typically an interaction of decisions (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984) and non-

decisions. Behaviour as well as intentions, inaction as well as action are part of this dynamic process.

There are a number of stages in policy-making, most pertinent of which for tourism and image promotion policy are agenda setting, policy implementation and evaluation. The policy-making process does not necessarily occur in chronological order as problems do not always precede solutions and policies are often formulated as they are implemented. Policies are only made when a particular combination of problem, solution and participants is achieved. There are, “considerable doses of messiness, accident, fortuitous coupling and dumb luck” involved in policy-making (Kingdon, 1984), coming together at critical junctures in time.

At critical times, problem and political streams are brought together by a policy entrepreneur to put an issue at the top of the agenda, leading to the development or adaptation of an associated policy (Parsons, 1995). The problem stream brings problems to the attention of policy-makers through indicators, events and feedback, whilst the political stream incorporates the national mood, organised political forces, the government and any political bargaining. The policy stream is therefore where “ideas float around, confront one another and combine” (Parsons, 1995, p. 193). In a ‘primeval soup’ (Kingdon, 1984) some ideas float to the top and others sink to the bottom. How a policy develops is moulded by the participants, those in the soup, and their values. A policy entrepreneur capitalises on existing belief systems and highlights an issue when the entrepreneur decides it will achieve maximum benefit for him / her.

Interviews with industry members revealed that the climate of ideas is potentially conducive to image policy development with all respondents recognising the significance of image in destination selection. However, in Grampian’s tourism industry there is no political entrepreneur to capitalise on this climate of ideas and develop a policy for image promotion. The closest is probably Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board who themselves do not have an image promotional policy internally. This therefore limits the potential for industry-wide image policies.

There are a number of potential participants in a tourism policy-making arena, as discussed in section 5.3, who communicate through a policy network. As a “cluster or complex of

organisations connected to each other by resource dependencies and distinguished from other clusters or complexes by breaks in the structure of resource dependencies” (Benson, 1982), a policy network reflects the relative status of participants. Although tourism image-related policies have not been developed to date, the arena in which policies could be constructed would be similar to other tourism issues, that is to say as issue networks. There are an array of problems associated with such a network rendering effective policy development difficult.

The impact of the network on the development and implementation of a policy depends upon the resources participants have at their disposal and how they are exchanged, since “an organisation’s power and influence in a system is a function of its position or location in the overall resource exchange networks generated out of dyadic resource exchanges” (Smith, 1993). The type and amount of resources controlled by participants determines the power they will have in policy development. All members must have some resources to exchange before they are involved in the policy network. The amount and type of resources, such as information, in their control determines the role played within the network.

In tourism terms this means that those with greater control of resources can exert greater influence within a policy network. In Scotland, The Secretary of State for Scotland, Scottish Tourist Board and Scottish Enterprise Limited and perhaps some of the larger private sector enterprises, such as large hotel chains, are likely to exert a strong influence in tourism policy development due primarily to their economic powers. In Grampian, the key players are more likely to be Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board, Grampian Enterprise Limited, District Councils and private enterprise associations, with no single large private sector tourism enterprises based in the region.

The voluntary and private sectors bring expert information and powers of policy implementation to the policy arena and so their potential role should not be underestimated. However, the voluntary sector is currently most influential through working groups, such as the Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating Group and individuals through membership of Area Tourist Boards. Therefore, the role played is more an indirect influence on policy development than government organisations. None the less, voluntary organisations can be influenced through such groups if they are run effectively.

These resources would potentially be exchanged within a policy network to achieve the shared goals of members (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992). Frequency of interaction within the policy-making arena will vary between participants. Those with smaller exchangeable resources, such as small guesthouses, are likely to be involved on a more ad hoc basis than government agencies who, due to their larger resources of information and finance, may be involved more regularly. Access is relatively open to the group because of the plethora of participants who each have few exchangeable resources. The network would lack stability due to the nature of the industry, for example the constant change of smaller enterprises.

The structure of the network is determined by government objectives; the nature of the policy; available institutional arrangements; other policy networks; the number of participants; the participants themselves, their relative strengths and the level of interdependence between members. A high degree of interdependence is more likely to generate consensus, a prerequisite for policy success, since there is reliance on each other for the exchange of resources. However, in the tourism industry there is a low level of interdependence (as discussed later in 5.4). Due to the strong overlap between tourism and other industries, many organisations have diversified interests and conflict can arise where organisations have strong interests in other policy areas since networks are not mutually exclusive (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992) and can result in confusing and overlapping perspectives on images projected.

Arguably most important in tourism policy development are the government and interest groups consisting of industry members. Whilst the dominance of the private sector within tourism provision should render “the central role of private initiative...(in policy-making) ...incontestable” (Fayos-Sola, 1996, p.409), the role played by this sector is less central than government organisations. Tourism units are typically small so they are unlikely to be influential. However, the combining of resources generates greater authority. The power of an interest group determines the group’s ability to achieve its objectives within policy development. However, “there are a growing number of interest groups in the tourism policy environment and corresponding complexity of policy-making, leading to problems with achieving objectives and consensual politics” (Hall & Jenkins, 1995, p. 63). This reflects the diverse nature of tourism interests and the limited possibility of effective policy development.

There is unlikely to be a high degree of consensus within a tourism image policy network. The basic interest of increasing visitor revenue may be shared, but the means of achieving this target may be disputed. Similarly, all participants may agree that an attractive image should be portrayed to potential visitors, but may disagree on finer details, due to availability of resources, political motivations or lack of belief that promoting a positive image works. However, the voluntary regulation of the tourism industry, illustrated by participation in classification systems, avoids conflict through co-operation, prevents wide-ranging government authority and leads to greater involvement and power of the private sector in policy-making. Indeed, the government may become dependent upon this power resource for policy development and implementation.

Willingness to work together increases the potential for effective policy development as successful implementation necessitates consensus and co-operation, more likely to arise from discussion than dictation. Links between different levels of organisation vary in strength, with some organisations having a stronger influence upon organisations lower down in the chain than others. Also, the relationship is not one-directional in that those lower down the chain of command can also exert an influence on those above. Conflict may exist between levels of organisation and within the same levels, such as between government departments.

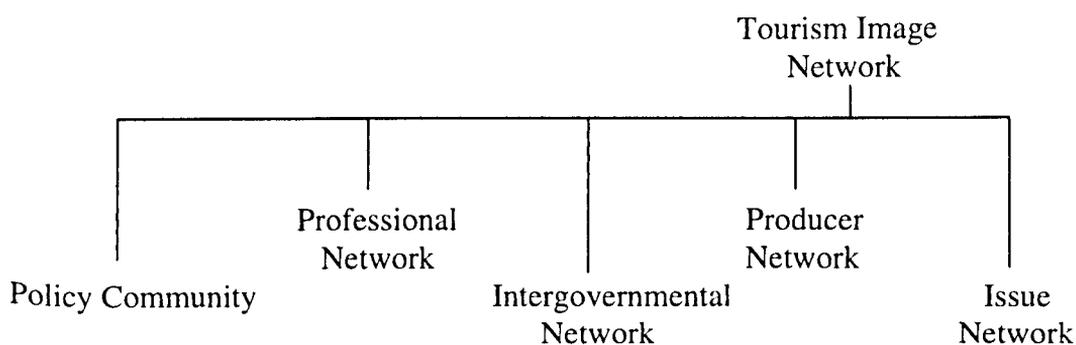
The lack of command and control relationships, enhanced by the diverse nature of the industry gives little capacity for top level objectives to be carried out further down the chain of command. Therefore, if an image promotional policy was developed by an Area Tourist Board, individual firms may not adhere to the policy. Alternatively, a promoted image could be altered in a bottom-up approach whereby changes made by individuals to the image promoted or promotional methods employed may lead to modifications in image promotion by associations and organisations they are involved with. Gradually, changes may filter through to higher levels.

Image-related policy implementation may be problematic lower in the hierarchy of tourism organisations since individuals may be more interested in portraying a good image of their own aspect of the tourism product than an image of the destination as a whole. Individual firms may also lack the resources with which to implement an image promotional policy.

Evaluation of image policy implementation, if undertaken, is limited by the number of factors, other than image promotion, involved in image formation (as discussed in Chapter V). Again, evaluation may not be undertaken due to a lack of resources or because the results would not conclusively measure the effectiveness of the policy.

All the inter-relationships between participants of potential tourism and image-related policy arenas discussed throughout this chapter can be illustrated by the positioning of such a network on a conceptual continuum, as proposed in Figure 6.2 below.

Figure 6.2: Potential Position of Tourism Image In a Policy Network Continuum



(adapted from Rhodes, 1988)

Figure 6.2 above shows the two bipolar extremes of the theoretical policy community and issue network. The proximity of the tourism image network to the issue network is an indication of the large number of participants with relatively open access to the policy arena, constantly changing membership and associated interests. The tourism image network differs from an issue network in that resources are not equally distributed among the group, and therefore power in the policy-making process is skewed. However, the resources are not controlled by as few as would be found in a policy community. A policy community is an effective governance mechanism if there are a few participants, each with a degree of control over resources, shared beliefs and similar priorities. These prerequisites are not apparent in the tourism industry.

Whilst the climate of ideas in a tourism image network is likely to be similar, a shared ideology, integral to a policy community (Jordan, 1981), is unrealistic. Although positive image perception may be seen as key to attracting visitors, not all participants may believe that image promotion can change perception. However, the main factor which distances the

proposed network from a policy community is the constantly changing large number of participants. Therefore, the consensus enjoyed by a policy community, and the policy outcomes which result, can not be experienced by a tourism image policy network.

As the predicted position of a tourism image policy network on the continuum in Figure 6.2 above shows, the policy-making process does not satisfy the interests of all members. The number of inter-relationships that exist between the potential members of a tourism image policy network, as shown in Figure 6.1, the number of those members and the unequal distribution of resources between the participants, highlights the complexity of policy development. If the policy network involved, as has been suggested, is uncoordinated, it may not be strong enough to create a clear, positive image with disagreement over the image to be portrayed and the relative importance assigned to image promotion over other aspects of promotion, such as factual information.

The number of tourism industry members and lack of central control renders policy development and effective policy implementation problematic. Policy implementation may prove problematic, resulting in non-implementation or unsuccessful implementation (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984). A policy may be ineffectively implemented, in part because "lower level actors take decisions which effectively limit hierarchical influence, pre-empt top decision-making, or alter policies" (Barret & Fudge, 1981). This is very likely with tourism-related policies as the high number of lower level enterprises may not want, or be able, to comply with policies made by other industry members, particularly larger organisations. Effective policy implementation necessitates co-operation from all relevant parties, unlikely in the tourism industry. Alternatively, a policy may be developed on the foundation of inadequate information, defective reasoning or unrealistic assumptions, or external circumstances may cause unsuccessful implementation.

Non-implementation, where the policy is not executed, may result from a change in circumstances in which the policy was made, highlighting the dynamic characteristic of the policy arena. The participants involved in policy-making may have changed, such as a new government may have been elected, another issue may have taken priority, or implementation of other policies may have indirectly affected this issue.

To judge the success of promotional activities and related policy implementation necessitates evaluation throughout the development process due to changing political and social factors, and should be considered at the formulation stage. Continual evaluation is essential since whilst techniques of persuasion become more sophisticated and effective, people develop resistance to manipulation. However, tourism policy monitoring and evaluation are complex and varied tasks (Jenkins & Sorensen, 1994) due to the number of factors influential in the visitor's decision-making process (as discussed in Chapters IV and V).

A policy may be evaluated as a failure when considering its primary objectives, although other positive benefits were attained by its implementation. In reality it is rare for tourism policies to be critically evaluated, due to lack of resources and possible threat to various interests in the policy-making process in an arena becoming increasingly politicised (Hall & Jenkins, 1995). The tendency for tourism policies to be developed in an ad hoc or piecemeal fashion further exacerbates the difficulty of policy evaluation.

Any tourism or image-related policy development is likely to be incremental, with existing policies being adapted rather than abandoned. Although rational policy development would take a fuller account of current needs and deal with them accordingly, it is a prescriptive ideal with a number of limitations to its application (see Lindblom, 1959; March & Simon, 1958; Wildavsky, 1979, Dye, 1992).

Rational policy change necessitates abandoning existing policies (Simon, 1947), analysing relevant issues and formulating policies to maximise social gain (Dye, 1992). However, to abandon previous policies may lead to sunk costs associated with past policies. The development of rational policies also unrealistically necessitates perfect knowledge of the present and future. Policy-makers seek to maximise their own rewards which are not necessarily synonymous with societal gains. The full impact of policy implementation is unknown, rendering comparative cost-benefit analysis of alternatives inaccurate. Similarly, policy-makers are pragmatic, stopping when they find a method that will work. Truly rational policy development is therefore impractical in time and cost (Lindblom, 1959) and unworkable. However, to the extent it can be attained, rationality is desirable. Unfortunately, the fragmentation of the tourism industry is a further barrier to rational policy-making.

Incremental policy-making, as illustrated in tourism-related policies, assumes the legitimacy of past policies and makes modifications for future implementation. It precludes radical change, avoiding associated conflict, accepting only alternatives that cause little economic, physical, organisational and administrative dislocation (Dye, 1992). There is considerable overlap between tourism and other policy areas, such as transport and fiscal policy, therefore the number of interested parties is greater than the extensive number directly involved in the industry. Incremental policy development may face less opposition from such a range of participants and potentially lead to more effective policy implementation.

Basing future policy on existing policy utilises previous investments, with new policy development requiring resources for research and potentially further resources in policy development, implementation and evaluation. Policy-makers may also believe that abandonment of a previous policy admits its failure.

Although the fragmentation of the tourism industry and lack of leadership provides a number of obstacles to image policy development, those responsible for tourism promotion in Grampian (as shown in Figure 6.1) over the past few years appear increasingly aware of the importance of the image of the region. This was identified in interviews (discussed in Chapter VII) and indicated by the commissioning of a study which included analysis of visitors' images of the area (GEL, 1993). Therefore, broadly speaking, perhaps the climate of ideas necessary for policy development exists.

Even with the necessary consensus in belief systems, image promotion may never be fully integrated due to the diversity of industry members. Further, it may lie outside the realms of effective policy because, in such a fragmented industry, recipients can not be controlled and related policies can not be made statutory.

A more fundamental issue is whether the image perceived of a destination can be created or altered through related policies. This study proposes that positive image promotional policy can influence the image perceived by potential visitors. Although there is no specific policy network for the image promoted of Grampian, in a similar way to existing consortiums, potential participants would be likely to consist of representatives from tourist boards,

enterprise companies, local councils and relevant associations. However, success may be limited by the poorly integrated nature of the network, indicated by the location of a potential policy network in Figure 6.2. The fragmentation of the policy environment suggests that the strength of image promotional policy would become diluted accordingly.

6.6 Significance of potential Image Policy Development

The fragmented nature of the tourism industry renders tourism and image policy development problematic. Whilst access to the policy arena would theoretically be relatively open, it may be closed to many due to the vast number of potential participants, all of whom could not be accommodated into the process without the operation breaking down. Therefore, the opinions of some sections of the tourism industry may be ignored and a policy developed with which all tourism industry members do not necessarily agree. Consensus of participants is also unlikely due to the variety of interests of those involved.

The financial dependence of many tourism organisations on the Treasury for finance renders them subjective in policy development. If industry members do not agree with a policy but can not influence policy formulation, they are unlikely to help implement the policy. Due to problems with monitoring such a large industry, the smaller enterprises can therefore influence the outcome of the policy.

There is presently no specific tourism image promotional policy for Grampian. However, the study of a potential image policy network helps to explain variations in image and the power relations which lie at the root of different projected images. Co-ordination of image promotion within the region will potentially have been improved by the recent rationalisation of the tourist boards within Scotland. However, the image(s) being promoted may not be the choice of districts recently absorbed into the regional tourist board. An image policy within which all interested parties could play a role in its development and implementation is likely to be most successful as the effectiveness of image promotional policy will be significantly influenced by the attitude of participants towards the success of the policy.

Until recently, there has been insufficient recognition of the significance of tourism and image promotion. The government has recently acknowledged the importance of tourism and the role of the private sector, highlighted in a recent tourism strategy, 'Success through

Partnership' (Department of National Heritage, 1997). Indeed, a combination of private and public finance can be used to develop tourism in key localities, suggesting a potential solution to the fragmentation of the industry and associated problems with developing image promotional policy.

On a regional level, consortiums within Grampian appear to have had some success in tourism policy planning, although the process appears slow, with strategic plans often out of date before they come to print (Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company, 1993). In view of the recent budget cuts however, organisations have become very short-term target-orientated (Aberdeen and Grampian Tourist Board, pers. comm., 1997), potentially at the expense of industry wide objectives.

In Grampian there is potential to develop tourism image-related policies, with the climate of ideas seemingly ready. However, the effectiveness of policies may be limited by the lack of leadership for policy development, the fragmentation of the industry and the attitudes of those responsible for the promotion of Grampian as a visitor destination towards the contemporary images perceived and portrayed of the region.

Chapter VII: Contemporary Visitor Images of Grampian: The Supply Side View

7.1 Introduction

Having identified the complex and diverse network of organisations involved with tourism in Grampian, the task of this chapter is to examine the attitudes among industry members to the images perceived and promoted of Grampian. The organisations which are likely to have the most influence or power in constructing, deciding and promoting an image of the region are those with greatest resources, such as the tourist boards, district councils, enterprise companies and private sector associations. Those with the least power or influence on constructing, deciding or promoting an image of the region are those with fewer resources, such as single private sector firms.

It was most appropriate to interview those with the greatest potential to influence the image promotion for Grampian. How industry members themselves perceive the Grampian region and the importance they attach to image promotion is likely to influence the effectiveness of promotional activities.

If the image perceived of Grampian by industry members is similar to that perceived by visitors to the region, the image (s) promoted is likely to be a relatively accurate reflection of the reality for the visitor. This reduces the potential for an image-reality gap and any of the associated negative implications, potentially increasing the effectiveness of image promotion. If image is perceived as an important aspect of destination promotion by tourism organisations, emphasis is likely to be placed upon image promotion. Although the effectiveness of promotional activities is reliant upon potential visitors using them as credible sources of information in destination selection, emphasis on the promotion of the region's image (s) will help to give Grampian an identity and potentially attract more visitors.

Various aspects of image promotion concerning Grampian were evaluated through a series of interviews with industry representatives. Information gathered was then substantiated or negated by brochure content analysis and policy analysis. The variety of aspects of image promotion considered led to an array of issues, as discussed below.

7.2 Image and Tourism - An Accepted Importance?

Representatives interviewed from the main regional tourism organisations, key members of the industry, shared the broad belief that image is an important component of the region's tourism, suggesting that image is an accepted part of tourism and that broadly speaking the climate of ideas may be right for policy development. All of those interviewed recognised image as a critical factor in destination selection, identifying a more significant role for image within the process than Nicosia (1966); Howard-Sheth (1969); Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (1968) and Sheth-Newman (1991).

Whilst this suggests that the view of image being important in destination selection may not be widely held by others in the tourism industry, the lack of emphasis in these models could also reflect the acknowledgement of the indirect importance of image rather than consideration of image as a separate factor. This is similar to the potential and actual visitors' responses to factors important in destination selection where image was not specifically mentioned as an important factor.

The representative from Grampian Enterprise Limited also acknowledged that the ability to create what the client wants is difficult. The influence that promotional activities could have on an individual's image formation, and therefore destination selection, was perceived differently by members of the tourism industry, but over-rated by all when considered in terms of the models of image formation reviewed in Chapter V.

Although the industry over-estimated the role of promotional activities in image formation and destination selection, the need for effective image promotion was identified. However, assuming effective promotion requires continual modification of both the message (what image is promoted) and promotional tools used (what media is used for image promotion), as well as how the industry perceive the region and the importance they attach to image promotion, the region's promotional activities are not as effective as possible.

7.3 Promotional Literature - An Appropriate Tool for Image Promotion?

Acknowledging that there are a number of media vehicles used to convey an image of the region (Crompton, 1979; Gitelson & Crompton, 1983; Murphy, 1985; Gunn, 1988; Stabler, 1988 and Bojanic, 1991), the instrument considered by this research to be the chief tool used by the region for image promotion was the Area Tourist Board's main brochure.

According to Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Marketing Company, the content of its promotional literature is market-led, based on perceptions of visitor demand. Research is intermittently conducted at Tourist information Centres to ascertain visitor requirements, illustrated by the portrayal of a 'stronger' image of Grampian based on its inherent strengths in response to a questionnaire completed by visitors following the Castle Trail in 1986 (GH&ATMC, 1993, pers. comm.).

Whilst the content of promotional literature may be demand-led, the design of the main promotional tool used was considered by all industry representatives to have stagnated. The interviewee from Grampian Enterprise Limited suggested that this reflected the stagnation experienced in the visitor market, and was perhaps the cause of it. The same things are mentioned consistently, and although important, repetitive promotion was considered unnecessary. The similarity between editions may be explained by the use of the same in-house brochure designer for at least the last ten years.

The interviewee from Hospitality Training, Grampian Hotel and Catering Training Association believed that effective image promotion is achievable using promotional literature and related advertising because image is what a destination projects itself to be through promotional literature. This suggests that image promotion is synonymous with image perception. There are, however, differences between the two concepts because of their subjective nature and the other factors which play a more significant role in image formation than promotional activities (Ashworth & Voogd, 1994).

There was a conflict of opinion between the tourism industry representatives as to the most effective form of image promotion. While all but one of the tourist board representatives believed promotion of a 'strong' image (taken to mean a single, clear image) was most effective, the representative from Moray District considered it more effective when counter-acting a negatively perceived image. This may be explained by the greater potential change in image from negative to positive than weak to strong. If this is true, negatively perceived aspects of Grampian may be successfully counter-balanced by positive image promotion.

The positive influence upon image by factors other than promotional activities was acknowledged by some industry members, such as recognition by Kincardine and Deeside

Tourist Board of the mass media incidentally promoting an image of Grampian through coverage of local events. However, the potential negative coverage by such media, for example in news items, was not mentioned, suggesting that the interviewees may believe all publicity is good.

One limitation to the effectiveness of Grampian's image promotion was considered by the interviewee from Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism and Marketing Company to be competition from the Highlands and Islands due to its close proximity and similarity. Other limitations included remoteness, poor access of the region and the need to counteract the industrialised image perceived of Aberdeen (Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism and Marketing Company and Aberdeen Hoteliers Association interviewees). Therefore, any image promotion undertaken needed to address these issues.

Although image was accepted by all industry representatives as important and limitations to image promotion identified, insight into visitors' perceptions, until recently, was accumulated only by *ad hoc* independent research, such as the empirical work for this study and informal conversations with visitors at Tourist Information Centres. The lack of tourism research is perhaps a reflection of the lack of leadership and organisation within the industry.

Both Grampian Enterprise Limited and the Tourist Boards believed the region's visitor survey initiated by GEL (as discussed in Chapter III) would now identify image perceptions of Grampian, with the criteria for identifying changes being repetition of the survey every two years. However, the survey does not access individuals who have not visited the region before, therefore the results can not give an indication of the effectiveness of image promotion. This was reflected by the disparity found between images promoted by Grampian's tourism organisations and images perceived by respondents to the visitor survey.

7.4 The Contemporary Projected Image(s) of Grampian

The image of Grampian, with the exception of Aberdeen, is promoted by the Area Tourist Board (ATB) to emphasise an open unspoilt area with strong historic links, that has not been over-developed for tourism, according to Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism and Marketing Company. The traditional qualities of the area are also highlighted by the

ATB's promotional material, particularly distilleries and castles. Study of appropriate brochures revealed that the image promoted to the overseas market by the Scottish Tourist Board is based on the Royal connection and Whisky. Conversely, the image portrayed to the domestic market is of an ideal location for a short break, weekend break or for business travel since, according to Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company, it is acknowledged that the region is perceived by visitors as a short-stay second holiday destination (evidence of which is shown in Chapter VIII).

All of the key promoters of Grampian acknowledged the importance of promoting an image of the region's attributes to all markets, suggesting that they may share a common objective, a necessary prerequisite for effective policy development (Department of National Heritage, 1997). Noted attributes for the organisations included the variety of things to see and do, including theme trails, gardens and parks; quality assurance, with particular emphasis on the quality of accommodation; hospitality and friendliness of local people; scenery; cleanliness and accessibility through good transport links, reducing the potential negative effect of distance needed to travel to the region.

When compared to positive characteristics of the region described by visitors and non-visitors, differences can be identified. Whilst the potential and actual visitors and the organisations remarked upon the scenery, friendliness of local people and cleanliness of Grampian as notable attributes of the region, other aspects commented upon were different. Potential and actual visitors did not particularly consider there to be a wealth of things to see and do in the region, nor that the accommodation was of particularly good quality or that access to the area was enhanced by good transport links. This suggests there is a difference between the image promoted and that perceived and also that the organisations involved do not understand the visitor perceptions of the region.

The most identifiable image promotion of the region for the interviewees was the marketing of the area as 'Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen' (Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism and Marketing Company). This name, a result of market research, was perceived by industry members to promote a romantic image, similar to that of the Highlands and Islands. It also recognises the importance of the hills as a component of the region's image. However, the representative of Moray Tourist Board considered the word 'Highlands' inaccurate because Grampian has more hills than mountains.

In comparison to the image the industry was promoting, all industry members interviewed believed the image perceived of the region to be fragmented. They also considered there to be a general belief that there is nothing to do in Grampian, and therefore it is perceived as a short stay destination and unsuitable for children due to the restricted selection of activities believed to be available.

Moray Tourist Board believed there to be two particularly negatively perceived aspects of the region, that the weather is bad in Grampian and the region is geographically isolated. Whilst no other organisations mentioned these negative perceptions, the potential and actual visitors themselves did mention them to some extent. Therefore, it would appear that the interviewee from Moray Tourist Board has a realistic idea of how potential and actual visitors perceive the region.

Whilst the interviewee from Moray Tourist Board denied that these perceptions accurately reflect the reality of Grampian, this may be a biased response since it is the Tourist Board's role to counter such perceptions. This questions how objective destination promoters can be if they are promoting images based upon their own perceptions of the region rather than how actual visitors perceive it. This may reduce the number of visitors to the area, as the image promoted is not the image of a destination that individuals want to visit.

Organisations such as tourist boards are evaluated on the volume and value of visitors, so they clearly have a vested interest in promoting attractive images of the region. This explains part of the power relations struggle between the different districts in the region, each wanting their area promoted over others. Those involved in image promotion do not know or incorporate the images that all the industry members want to project. However, since image is an important factor in destination choice, image promotion needs to be approached effectively. This research suggests that this involves systematic analysis of visitor perceptions rather than just intuition.

Moray Tourist Board suggested that the negatively perceived attributes, such as the poor weather and remoteness, had been 'counter-promoted' in their promotional literature by use of appropriate pictorial and textual evidence in their main brochure. However, the belief that visitors' experiences of Grampian exceeded their expectations indicates a positive

image-reality gap, as opposed to the usual negative image-reality gap, and therefore implies that image promotion is not effective and that individuals doubt the credibility of promotional literature (as suggested in Chapters V and VI).

The content of Grampian's main holiday brochure was studied to analyse any change in image promotion over time and to identify the counter-promotion of such negatively perceived attributes. Although there have been a number of classification systems developed for content analysis (see for example Dilley, 1986 and Ryan, 1995), where differences between instrumental and expressive values and orientations were considered, this was thought to be unnecessary and unsuitable for this research. Therefore, a more basic level of content analysis was conducted, where comparisons were made of text, photographs and lay-out to study the overall image projected over time.

A high degree of similarity was found between brochures produced in the 1990s, with the format remaining substantially the same. The Area Tourist Board representative interviewed reported that changes are made to brochures as a result of two things. Firstly, through research conducted throughout the UK and secondly by Tourist Information Centre staff, who note when visitors comment upon the level of information on a particular aspect of Grampian. However, analysis of the main brochure did not identify any such changes.

The title of 'Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen' on the front cover has remained ostensibly the same over the past few years, with only the colour of writing changing, increasing emphasis on 'Highlands' and differentiation between Aberdeen and other areas of Grampian. The cover itself has changed annually, with each district choosing a photograph to represent its area on a rotational basis. However, the reason for having done this is more likely to have been for political pacification of the District Tourist Boards rather than an objective consideration of the most appropriate image for promotion. For effective image promotion integrated image promotion is surely needed throughout the literature, including the cover. Therefore, responsibility of the cover on a rotational basis, when overall responsibility lies with the same people each year, is unlikely to produce an integrated image.

The photographs used on the front cover often emphasise the scenic nature of the region and the weather is always depicted as good. In a region which allegedly receives more than

the UK's average number of overcast or windy days, this is perhaps contributing towards an image-reality gap, but reinforcing the claim by the Moray District representative that the image of good weather is being promoted. A positive point is that the cover is the one aspect of the brochure which appears to be updated each year.

The interior of the brochure has also changed little. The same photographs are often used, occasionally differing in size or location. Other pictures used were evidently taken at the same time as previously used photographs, illustrated by the same boy sitting outside a particular castle in the 1993 brochure and in 1995 he is standing, with everything else staying the same. Whilst image goes beyond photographs (Neisser, 1976), because of the reliance placed on visual stimuli by individuals, pictures are an important mechanism for image promotion.

One noticeable change is the increasing inclusion of photographs depicting physical activities, acknowledging increasing importance placed by individuals on health and fitness (STB, 1995). Culture and heritage as well as the traditional image of tartan and whisky have remained generously represented through photographs and written copy.

The inside front cover has only undergone subtle changes over the past few years, with different shades of colour used for titles and in the UK sketch map. Written copy has also remained the same, emphasising the accessibility of Grampian. The inside back cover has also remained very similar, using the same format to show potential visitors what to see and where to go.

The back cover has changed however over the past few years. Until 1993, advertisements for hotels were printed here. Subsequently, photographs of the Highland Games have been viewed through a haze, with a diary of forthcoming events in Grampian superimposed. Indeed, such space saving techniques appear to be increasingly used throughout the brochure, with photographs, pictures and text often overlapping.

The format and content of Grampian's brochure has therefore changed little over the past few years. This suggests either the Tourist Board is satisfied with present image promotion or they do not consider the issue important. The interviewee from Grampian Enterprise Limited suggested that the lack of change was because the region's promoters are not fully

aware of continually changing demands from potential visitors and the image needed to encourage perception of Grampian as a visitor destination.

The results of the visitor survey showed that the content of promotional literature had not heavily influenced the image perceived by non-visitors to the region. It is acknowledged that a greater number of those with no experience of Grampian will not have read promotional literature. However, the lack of image clarity relating to regional attributes, such as scenery, local residents, gardens and parks and architecture, all heavily featured within the promotional literature, suggests that the image promotion is not effective. This may be because it has lost its impact through repetition.

Whilst the Area Tourist Board has not conducted any research itself on the effectiveness of the brochure on image perception, results of this research suggest that the brochure has not succeeded in establishing a clear, single image of Grampian. This may be a reflection of a number of different images being promoted. This could be because, as highlighted by findings from the potential visitor survey (discussed in Chapter VIII), promotional literature is not considered particularly significant in the formation of individuals' images of the region. With reference to Grampian in particular, this could either be because brochures in general are considered to be misleading, or that the region's brochures are out of touch.

Industry members, other than the ATB, proposed that a change in emphasis with each production of promotional literature containing less information on where to stay and more on why to visit would attract more visitors. Further, a re-evaluation of the regional image portrayed may be necessary, as proposed by the representative from Grampian Enterprise Limited, after Grampian allegedly tried to create a traditional image with limited success. The traditional image described was based on aspects of the region such as heritage, bagpipes, tartan and whisky. These comments indicated that industry members agreed that promotional literature, and more specifically image promotion, was valuable to tourism, but also indicated that there was variation in the image (s) projected.

7.5 Variations in the Projected Image(s)

Not surprisingly, the players in Grampian's tourism defined image in different ways. In part, the nature of the variation encountered reflects the geographical remit of the

organisations and their political objectives. Organisations such as Grampian Enterprise Limited (GEL), whose remit is the whole of the Grampian region, tended to accept the notion of an overall image of the region, something more than a collection of components. Conversely, the more geographically focused groups, such as the district tourist boards, tended to downplay the regional image in favour of district specific images.

The promotion of different images, dependent upon the size of area that organisations are responsible for, reveals different layers of image which seem to vary with geographical or administrative boundaries. This is likely to convey a confused message to the recipients of such image promotion, leaving them with an unclear image of Grampian as a visitor destination.

Indeed, no single image of the region was identified by members of 'the industry', suggesting a lack of cohesive image promotion, perhaps a reflection of political pressures and again the fragmentation of the industry. Many of the tourism industry members interviewed (excepting Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company and Aberdeen Hoteliers Association) believed that this was reflected by each district within Grampian being perceived, by potential and actual visitors, to have its own image. Whilst the representative from Moray agreed with the notion of different images for the other districts in the region, they did not consider their district to be perceived to have one single image. This representative felt districts of Grampian are different but more similar to each other if compared to the rest of Scotland.

Another distinction at a district level was that the areas that Queen Victoria visited were believed to have a higher profile image than elsewhere, according to the Kincardine and Deeside Tourist Board. This suggests that 'royalty' is one of a number of components of the region's image. There are also pockets of Grampian, such as Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Huntly, towns North of Aberdeen, where the attractions do not conform to the image that people have of the area, for example the falconry in Huntly, adding to the complexity of the region's image.

The dominant image perceived of Aberdeen by potential and actual visitors was believed to be as Oil capital of Offshore Europe by Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company (as was), potentially a double-edged sword, with possible imagery of

a dirty industrial city. This image was not the image promoted by the tourism industry to all potential visitors however, but more by the success of the oil industry, associated media attention and promotion aimed at business visitors. The main image promoted in general visitor brochures is the variety of things to see and do in the historical city, emphasising the diversity of the region's capital rather than its industrial success.

The importance of Aberdeen should not be understated due to the large number of visitors that the City attracts, for example 44% of the region's visitors in 1993 (TMS, 1994). Whilst it should not be promoted at the expense of the other districts in the region, as a large city it has different characteristics to the rest of the region, and so perhaps promotion of a single image of the region is not practical.

Indeed, in contrast to other respondents interviewed, a representative of the Hoteliers Association, less directly involved in image promotion of the region, considered there to be no single image of the region promoted. This suggests that it is easier for those on the periphery of image promotion, as one of many whose top priority is not promotion at a regional level, the fragmented nature of image promotion is more readily identifiable.

However, this respondent also considered that due to a lack of resources, there are no major attractions and therefore very few opportunities for tourism, reflected by the council placing tourism far down the hierarchy of importance. This is shown by only one person at the council working on tourism-related activities for 25% of their time. It can be deduced from this industry member's response that their co-operation in policy development could not be guaranteed because they did not recognise either the region's tourism potential or the possible benefits of image promotion. In an industry where there is not really a dominant player, all players need to perceive the benefits of a policy for implementation to be successful (Department of National Heritage, 1997). If this interviewee truly represented the view of other private sector members, the potential effectiveness of any image policy development will be limited.

The Area Tourist Board interviewee believed there was a need for a different image to be portrayed to different visitor markets. This is reflected in the different brochures produced for domestic and overseas visitors by the Area Tourist Board and the Scottish Tourist Board. The promotion of a different image for different markets reiterates the demand-led

nature of image promotion. At first this may seem unethical, however as long as the reality is promoted, it is merely emphasising the aspects of the destination that Grampian promoters believe that that particular visitor market is most interested in. These aspects of the destination are therefore likely to form part of the individuals' image of the region when they visit. Therefore, such promotion can be seen as promoting an image that it is believed the market being targeted will perceive when they visit.

Each district also has different hopes for development. Gordon district wants to increase the number of visitor attractions, Banff and Buchan wants to increase the accommodation available and Kincardine and Deeside want to further develop the Royal connection. If these developments go ahead, the product provided by each district will be further differentiated. Once again, this questions the use of a region as a practical unit area for promotion and identifies potential for conflict between members of the Area Tourist Board. If a tourism organisation can not attain cohesion internally, there is little hope for the whole industry to be cohesive.

7.6 Rationale for Variations

Variation in the way that the region's players perceive the image of Grampian to be promoted reflects the characteristics of the organisations involved. These issues, to varying degrees, help to explain the lack of cohesion and conflict which exists among industry members and therefore the potential for effective image promotion.

The geographical or administrative focus of the organisations determines whether a regional or district perspective is considered. This was identified by the interviews, with GEL and the ATB perceiving a regional image and the district tourist boards perceiving district level images. Whether these differences can be reconciled to promote a single image of Grampian, and indeed should a single image of the region be portrayed, are questions to be addressed by Grampian's tourism organisations.

Whether a firm or an organisation is based in the public, private or voluntary sector is also likely to influence their perspective on image promotion due to different priorities. This may have been reflected by ASVA not considering image promotion as a relevant issue to their association. The main focus for an individual firm in the private sector is likely to be on improving their own profit margins rather than the district or region improving their

situation. Therefore, if visitors stay at one guesthouse at the expense of another in the region this would be seen to be an improvement to the individual firm but not to the Area Tourist Board.

Priorities of organisations, be they financial, growth-orientated, to increase their market share or merely to survive, also influence the level of conflict or co-operation amongst industry members. As discussed in Chapter VI, in an environment of budget cuts for many of the key public sector players, such as the ATB, GEL and district councils, organisational objectives and targets supersede any communal goals. The main goal of deriving more revenue from visitors was shared, but the means of achieving this was not. Effective image promotion would be a method of attaining this goal.

The relative power and influence each firm or organisation could play in a policy network for image promotion is a reflection of the resources it controls (Smith, 1993), such as the funding available for promotional activities. This is likely to be related to the size of the organisation. It is those who could be said to have control over the most resources, such as the Tourist Board and district councils who appear to be in greatest conflict, suggesting that co-ordinated image promotion or policy development is unlikely at the present time.

7.7 Conflict and Consensus

Due to the number of firms and organisations involved (see Figure 6.1, Chapter VI), each with their own priorities, there is a strong foundation for conflict between image promoters, potentially reducing the effectiveness of image promotion unless the industry can be co-ordinated by a policy entrepreneur. Whilst organisations may aim to enhance and complement others' work, all industry members interviewed acknowledged image promotion was not unified. This may be because there appears to be no direct dialogue between organisations on this issue since there is no real policy arena for tourism, let alone for image promotion.

Any changes made to promotional activities, even without associated policies, are very incremental. This may be because the resources, particularly finance and appropriate personnel, are not available for rational change. It could also be because the promotional activities currently undertaken are considered effective. However, results from the visitor

survey conducted by this research suggest that the image promotion activities conducted by Grampian's promoters are not effective.

Whilst no-one admitted outright there was conflict, comments strongly suggested it. The tourist boards perceived the least conflict, with those on the periphery of image promotion identifying greater disharmony. This maybe because the tourist boards are each one of few organisations directly involved in image promotion, that is to say it is their responsibility, who because they are so closely involved do not see or are not willing to admit that there is any conflict amongst destination promoters.

A common theme identified by all except Aberdeen's Tourist Board and Kincardine and Deeside Tourist Board, was the perceived over-promotion of Aberdeen at the expense of other districts in Grampian. Whilst the choice of front cover for the regional promotional literature was rotated annually between the five districts, the content of the promotional literature, designed at a regional level, was considered biased towards Aberdeen. This raises the issue of power relations between the district tourist boards. Aberdeen City's Tourist Board, because it contributed the largest proportion of the promotional budget for the region (GH&ATMC, 1993, pers. comm.), co-ordinated the production of associated material and attracted 44% of the region's visitors (TMS, 1994) was likely to be the dominant player and therefore likely to bias promotional activities in its favour.

The political relations problem has been exacerbated by the location of the new singular tourist board in Aberdeen, and the closure of a number of Tourist Information Centres throughout the other districts. Although since April 1998, Aberdeenshire and Moray district contribute a larger budget to the Tourist Board than Aberdeen City, because of the location of the Tourist Board there is still a feeling of Aberdeen being promoted at the expense of the other districts. However, the funds obtained from the districts will be spent on promoting the districts who provide the funds, therefore the promotional emphasis may change over the coming months.

Although it could be considered natural for each district to continually want a greater proportion of advertising space, an agreement needs to be seen to be made between each district involved to ensure full co-operation. The suggestion by the Kincardine and Deeside Tourist Board that their district has a stronger image than Grampian as a whole suggests

once again the potential limitation of regional promotion, that it may inadequately portray the diversity of the area.

The fragmented image promoted was considered by the industry representatives to be reflected by the fragmented image perceived by potential visitors. The demarcation of Moray district was also seen to cause fragmentation issues for promotion by Hospitality Training and Grampian Enterprise Limited (GEL), as it is included in the political region of Grampian but excluded from the remit area of GEL. However, with the recent clarification of roles played by enterprise companies and tourist boards in tourism, development and promotion respectively, this should become less of an issue.

In light of the fragmented image promotion of Grampian, potential improvements to current promotion were considered. It was believed by Kincardine and Deeside Tourist Board that an emphasis should be placed on the promotion of a traditional image of Scotland as it is perceived to attract visitors. A need to emphasise the quality within the region, backed by good service, was identified by Hospitality Training, reflecting a desire to aggressively target high spending visitors.

The socio-economic profile of visitors contacted by this research identified that it tends to be people from the higher classes who visit Grampian. These people are an ideal market because the level of expenditure they can spend in a destination is likely to be higher than for the lower classes. Therefore, it appears profitable to target the higher socio-economic classes. However, it may be unrealistic to exclusively target this market due to the low number of overall visitors to Grampian. Recent campaigns following this strategy including the Tartan Collection, which is being used to market Scotland. Whilst Hospitality Training considers the campaigns to have been successful, it is impossible to measure the effect of such promotional activities, as they are only one factor in image formation and destination selection (as discussed by Crompton, 1979; Gitelson & Crompton, 1983; Murphy, 1985; Gunn, 1988; Stabler, 1988 and Bojanic, 1991).

In addition to target marketing, the industry members interviewed suggested that more money should be spent on the promotion of a stronger, more 'positive image' of Grampian. For example, one image that could be promoted according to Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company is an environmental image, which would be

especially attractive for visitors from such nations as Germany, promoting a clean area with a good environment. Promotion of the region should also counter-act any negative perceptions, such as remoteness or poor access (Moray Tourist Board). Therefore, it can be concluded that a single image may not adequately portray the region to potential visitors.

When asked what image (s) of Grampian should be promoted, the promotion of images relating to oil and granite, images already perceived by potential and actual visitors, were greeted with caution from the industry. The representative from Grampian Highlands and Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company suggested that potential visitors may imagine oil rigs on the beach or cold and blustery weather may be associated with granite. A need to promote the positive cultural side of Grampian, such as Universities, gardens and parks was identified by Aberdeen Hoteliers Association, as well as a focus being needed for the whole region, a single attraction, such as the royal connection with Balmoral. However, the range of literature currently produced which is market specific to specialist groups, reflects the diversity of the region. Therefore, the development and promotion of a magnet attraction in combination with a diverse regional background was the favoured scenario for many.

The lack of harmony identified between the region's image promoters is not conducive to effective promotion or policy development. The conflict identified between Grampian's image promoters suggested that any related policy development would be hampered by a lack of consensus between participants. No formal policy-making exists at a regional level, in fact there is no real forum for dialogue between relevant organisations, indicative of tourism generally and a reflection of the fragmented nature of the industry (Hall & Jenkins, 1995). Due to the lack of co-ordination at regional level, policy analysis at a Scottish level is valuable for evaluation of what may happen if policies were developed on a regional scale and to study potential effects of national policies on Grampian.

7.8 Opportunities for Consensus

At a national level, a number of working groups are involved in the development of national tourism policies. These groups, generally chaired by the Scottish Tourist Board, are constituted by members of the public and private sector of the industry. Relevant working groups include the Tourism and Environment Task Force, the Seasonality Working Group, Tourism Training in Scotland and the Transport Working Group.

Working relationships between industry members are improving. The Tourism Review (Lang, 1993), the Ministerial Tourism Advisory Forum and development of the Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating Group (STCG)'s framework for Scottish Tourism have strengthened relationships between the private and public sectors of the tourism industry (STB, 1995). This, in conjunction with cross-industry working groups established to help implement objectives of the group, may reduce problems associated with policy implementation. The significance of the private sector within the policy-making process has also been recognised by the UK and Overseas Marketing Group which was restructured to incorporate members of the private sector.

The development of the Scottish Tourism Forum (1994) has also provided a focal point for the private sector to define its views on industry needs and present co-ordinated proposals to the government, aiding collaboration between private and public sectors (STCG, 1994). This forum recognises that promotion of places within Scotland has been fragmented and also has not been as effective as it could be. However, since it is a national forum, future image promotion initiated by this group is likely to be focused upon Scotland rather than at the regional level. Whilst the industry has been consulted upon the forum's strategic plan, the government agencies intend to play an important lead. This may be successful if the government and industry continue to consult as the strategy is implemented and refined.

The present weak image perceived by potential visitors results in part from the lack of collaboration that has existed between public and private tourism sectors (STCG, 1994). However, with recent consolidation of the tourist boards throughout Scotland and rationalising the remit of enterprise companies and tourist boards, and the working groups now in existence, conflict between organisations may have been reduced and the potential for effective image promotion increased.

The Scottish Tourist Board has recognised there is competitive advantage to be gained from promotion of a strong brand image for Scotland. They suggest that Scotland's domestic image should be based on the clean, green, unspoilt environment with natural produce, dramatic scenery, romantic heritage, different culture and friendly people. Whilst this fits with the information collected from interviews with industry members, it does not reflect the responses from the visitor survey. When describing the factors that were

important in their choice of a holiday destination, weather, the costs involved and knowing friends and relatives in the area elicited the greatest number of responses. None of these factors featured in the tourist boards' perception of the image that should be promoted. This indicates that either, and most likely, the promoters are not aware of what potential visitors want from a destination or Grampian can not offer the weather or low costs individuals want from a holiday.

Evaluation of image policy implementation potentially equates to measurement of effective image promotion, the limitations to which have in an abstract way been discussed (in Chapter V). As an indication of the effectiveness of image promotion, the STB (1995) measured changes in individuals' propensity to visit Scotland after an advertising campaign in parts of England and Northern Ireland. Those areas where advertising was most intense enjoyed the largest increase in propensity to visit, suggesting effective image promotion.

Learning from this, Grampian could therefore either target the areas from which fewest visitors come or in areas where individuals are more likely to be attracted through specific advertising campaigns. Findings from the visitor survey undertaken by this research suggest that it may be most advantageous to target those on the east side of the UK, who have a clearer image of the region. Due to the bias associated with promotional activities, the stimulus of the promotional campaign existing may be more effective than the information conveyed.

There is no set agenda in Grampian's tourism policy-making, instead a range of issues are considered, with specific issues discussed on an *ad hoc* basis. There is, and is likely to remain, no specific policy on image promotion of Grampian, unlike at the national level where the image to be promoted is discussed and associated policies may be developed. However, in the absence of image promotional policy, marketing plans highlight strengths of the area, such as the unspoilt scenery and royal connections, additionally addressing negative images, such as weather and lack of entertainment. Therefore, the Area Tourist Board decides which aspects of the region should be promoted without consulting the other members of Grampian's tourism industry.

Image promotion does not appear to be a priority in tourism for Grampian's public sector. Instead main priorities are increasing visitor expenditure, reducing seasonality and

developing tourism in peripheral areas. However, image promotion may serve to achieve these objectives and may provide the shared goal of potential policy participants needed to successfully develop a related policy. Members of the private sector interviewed during this research expressed the desire for a sound and focused forum with the ability to respond to opportunities for Public Relations, suggesting a climate of co-operation for policy-making. Because the private sector is not accountable to the public for their performance, unlike the public sector, the private sector may be less constrained in setting its priorities which may allow them to be more concerned with measures whose effectiveness can not be directly measured, such as image promotion.

Promotional policy is likely to be most effective if the unit area for promotion is appropriate. The issues of separation and use of the region as a practical unit of area for promotion were identified as important by members of the tourism industry. There was a strong belief by those responsible for the promotion of Grampian that individuals need to be attracted first to Scotland and then promotional differentiation of areas within Scotland becomes beneficial, with emphasis placed upon the promotion of a traditional Scottish image. Scotland is product driven rather than geographically driven, it is the marketing of available activities that encourages visitors to different areas within Scotland, believed Grampian Enterprise Limited. This suggests Grampian does not possess an image distinct from the rest of Scotland, reflecting the view of several of the respondents contacted by the visitor survey who used their image of Scotland in formation of their regional image.

Whether a specific policy for image promotion could be effective is debatable. The limited importance placed on promotional activities in image formation by respondents contacted by this research, questions the effectiveness of image promotional activities. In addition, the fragmented nature of the industry and the lack of command and control relationships gives policy implementation problems. However, this research suggests the development of image promotional policy would bring further cohesion to the industry and lead to greater control over potential visitors' perceptions of a destination.

On a regional level, such as for Grampian, a policy arena similar to the Scottish Tourism Forum appears to be the only potential network for image promotional policy. Findings from this research suggest that an image policy issue network would be similar to that shown in Chapter VI (Figure 6.2). The large number of members in Grampian's tourism

industry and the lack of consensus identified between the key players in the region's promotion precludes a policy community. However, the unstable nature of the industry, the incremental nature of policy-making due to the fragmentation associated with tourism and the lack of command and control relationships within it question the effectiveness of an issue network.

The timing may also be right for image promotion to be considered as an issue worthy of policy development. Both those responsible for the promotion of Grampian as a visitor destination and those responsible for image promotion at a national level have recognised the importance of image promotion. Therefore the political stream may be flowing in the right direction. Increasing competition from existing and new destinations, in conjunction with the cutbacks in funding, may provide the problem stream. Therefore, the only element of policy development lacking is the policy entrepreneur. Due to the lack of key players in the industry, a policy entrepreneur may not be forthcoming, however, and therefore image promotional policy development may not occur.

7.9 Image and Tourism Policy Failings

The key public and private sector organisations interviewed as responsible for the generation and management of Grampian's image indicated that the perception of image is significant in the process of destination selection and thus important to the generation of visits and tourism development generally. However, issues of fragmentation, differing and often competing objectives between public and private sector tourism bodies and differing budgets reflects a weak and incoherent policy network for tourism. Thus, despite the importance given to the role of a regional image what we have is a number of differing internally generated images, the lack of a single effective image, and as yet no forum for achieving a more cohesive policy framework which could unite the tourism industry and provide guidance on the image issue.

Despite the acknowledgement of the role of image in tourism this seems to be founded upon conventional wisdom rather than any research into the behaviour of the market. What emerges are a number of images subjectively created by the tourism industry which are not necessarily those which are identified by the visitors themselves. Moreover, images are being utilised by the tourism industry without recourse to any form of assessment as to their value in marketing terms. Measurement of the effectiveness of using specific images

would seem to be an increasingly important action in order to increase effectiveness and avoid wasting of increasingly scarce resources. However, this too would imply a degree of policy development and co-ordination which is not present.

The research highlighted in the following chapter provides substantive information regarding how actual and potential visitors perceive Grampian and evaluates the significance of image in their decision making processes.

Chapter VIII: Contemporary Visitor Images of Grampian: The Demand Side View

8.1 Introduction

Successful image-related tourism policy development necessitates understanding of the decision-making process of destination selection. Without it, resources may be wasted by employment of ineffective promotional tools or messages. Therefore, this chapter focuses upon the perceptions and priorities of potential and actual visitors to the destination of Grampian.

Prior to the research being addressed, the data collected from potential and actual visitors to Grampian was analysed to ascertain how representative the sample of respondents was of the UK population. Comparison of data from the sample with national statistics revealed that the respondents surveyed were reasonably representative of the UK population, with a slight bias towards the higher socio-economic classes (as discussed in Chapter III). Therefore, valid generalisations can be made from the data collected and the aims studied by this research.

8.2 Experience of Grampian

Studying respondents' experience of Grampian identified differences in image perception, and other characteristics, between visitors and non-visitors to the region. It was necessary to first ascertain whether individuals could delimit the Grampian region to determine if past visits could be accurately located. The results, illustrated in Figure 8.1 show that 31% of respondents could not locate Grampian. Only half of those who stated they could locate Grampian could correctly name any cities or towns within the region. When asked where in Grampian they had visited, 71 respondents stated somewhere outside regional boundaries, showing a lack of knowledge of the administrative boundaries used to delimit Grampian.

In light of these results, it could be suggested that promotional activities may benefit from incorporation of geographical information, such as maps. The interviews with industry members revealed that there is, however, reticence within the industry to include the geographical location of the region within promotional titles. This is because previous promotion of the region as the North East of Scotland was, the industry felt, perceived by

visitors to have a negative effect due to industrial associations made with North East England. However, North East England does not purely possess the industrial image it may once have had. Therefore, Grampian may benefit from that area's new image and appeal as a visitor destination if it incorporates 'North East' back into its promotional titles.

An industrial image of Grampian exists even without using the term North East, illustrated by the perception of a number of respondents that beaches are polluted from the oil rigs adjacent to the shore spoiling the coast line. This misperception can be addressed by image promoters through pictures of the unspoilt beaches and coastline. Therefore, awareness of the region's location could be raised without increased perceptions of heavy industry.

Acknowledging that regional boundaries may be more important to destination promoters than visitors, if a region is the destination's unit size for promotion, arguably the first stage of promotion is product awareness, including geographical location. However, since image is not regionally or spatially specific, to differentiate Grampian from the rest of Scotland, thereby attracting visitors to the region rather than the country, elements of the image which are unique to Grampian need to continue to be promoted.

Almost half (48%) of the respondents stated that they had visited Grampian. Figure 8.2 shows that of these 416 people, 48% visited in the last year. A further 21% visited between 1 and 5 years ago and 26% over 5 years ago, many of whom specified the visit had taken place during their childhood.

Figure 8.1: Location of Grampian

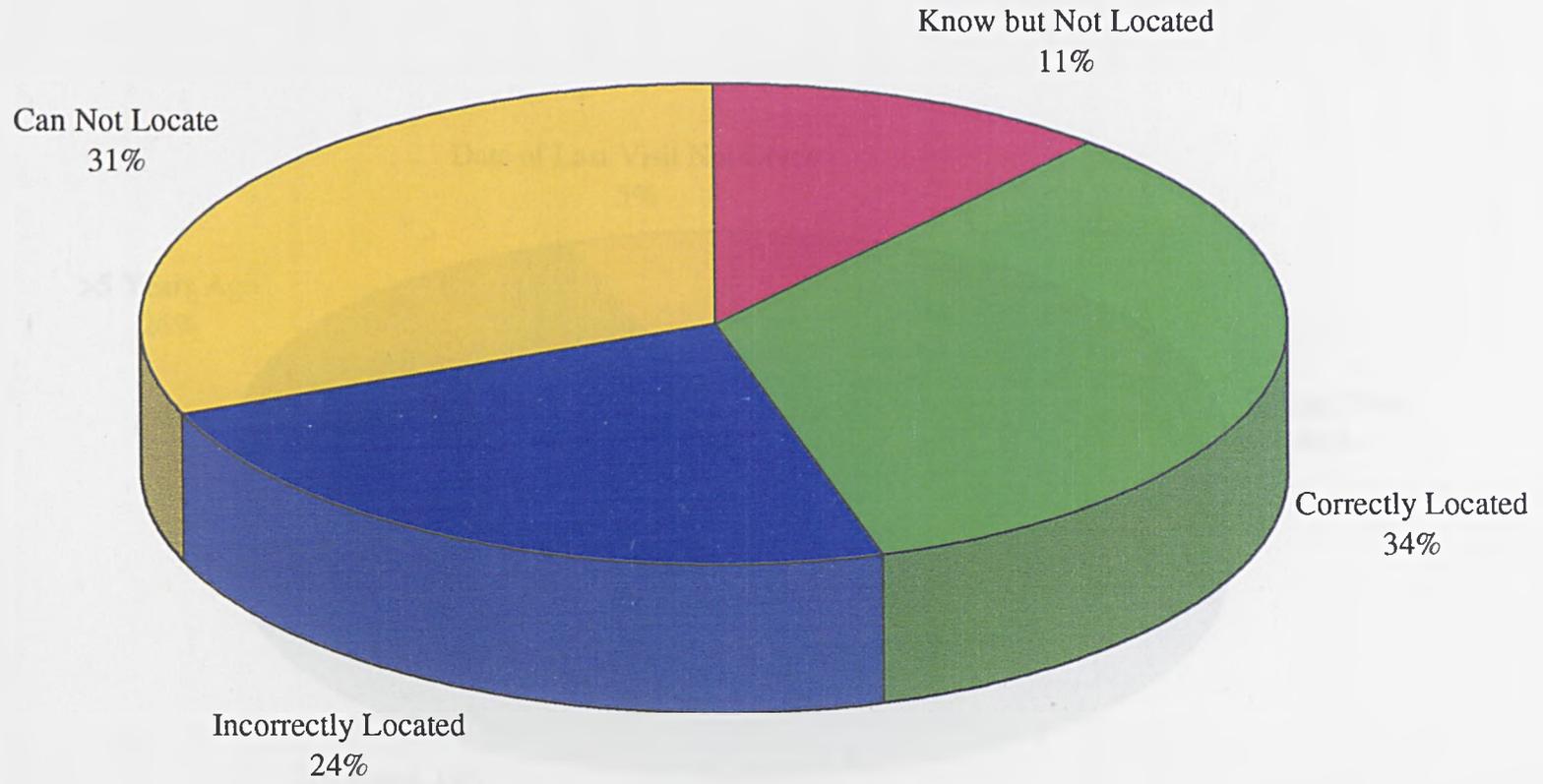
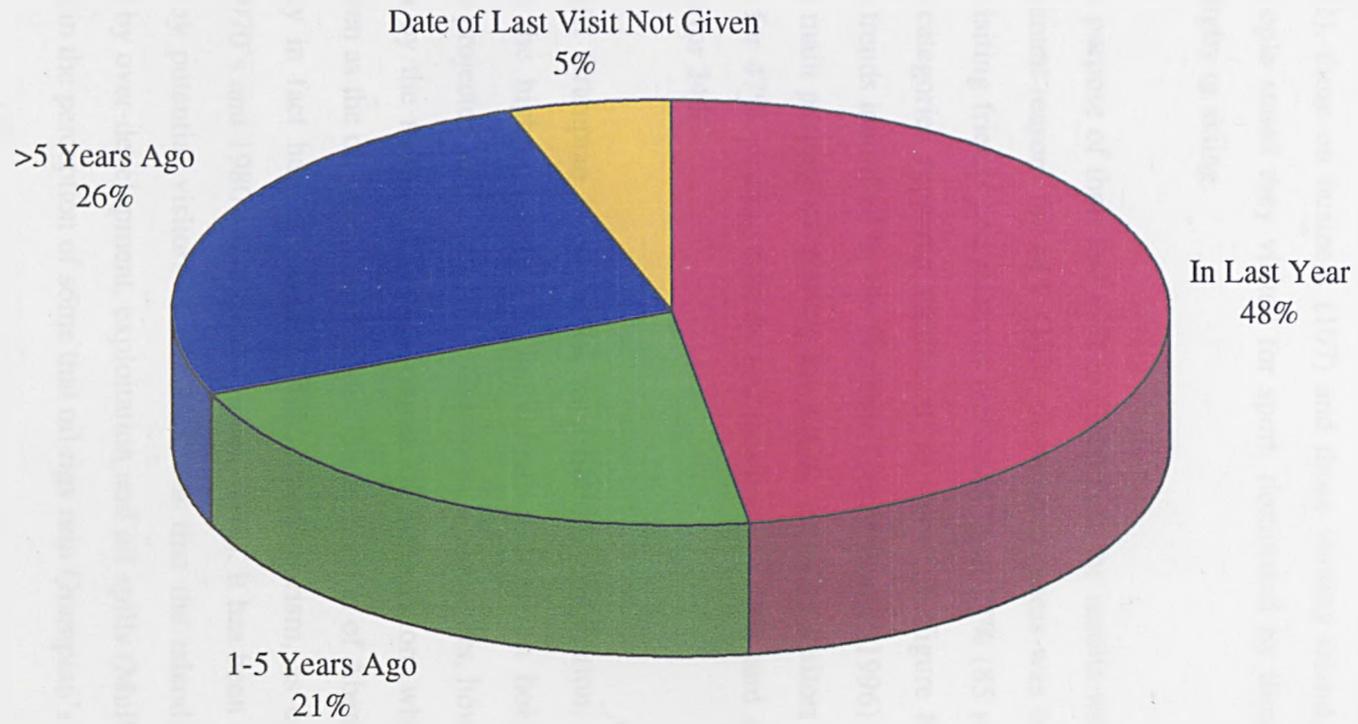


Figure 8.2: Date of Last Visit to Grampian



8.2.1 Main purpose of Visit to Grampian

To ascertain the reasons for individuals visiting Grampian, respondents were asked to state the main purpose of past visits to the region and more specifically the reason for their last visit. This information was considered to be valuable to develop visitor profiles. The reason why people visited the Grampian region, illustrated in Figure 8.3, was dominated by those on holiday (132), those on business (107) and those visiting friends and relatives (85). A further 16 people stated they visited for sport, dominated by those watching or playing football and rugby or skiing.

When asked the main purpose of their last visit to Grampian, the results were similar. On holiday was a predominant reason for 44% (183), those on business was only 1% higher with 116 (28%) and visiting friends and relatives increased from 21% (85 respondents) to 26% (106). No other categories appeared significant, as shown in Figure 8.4. This fairly accurately reflects the trends identified by the Scottish Tourist Board (1996) for Grampian. From this source, the main purpose of visiting the region given by visitors from 1993 to 1995 was on holiday for 47%, visiting friends and relatives for 19% and on business or attending a conference for 24%.

These statistics suggest Grampian is perceived as a holiday destination, rather than a business centre, with the highest number of individuals visiting on holiday. This is reflected by the image projected of the region by Grampian's promoters, however arguably not the one projected by the media and other sources of information, where the image centres around Aberdeen as the oil capital of Europe. The projection of Aberdeen as the oil capital of Europe may in fact have a negative effect upon tourism, as experienced by Shetland during the 1970's and 1980's (Butler & Fennel, 1992). It has been suggested that the image perceived by potential visitors to Shetland was that the islands had been or would soon be ruined by over-development, exploitation and oil spills (Mullay, 1991). An element of this is seen in the perception of some that oil rigs ruin Grampian's coastline.

There are also a number of visitors whose main purpose was business, who could be targeted to encourage return for holiday purposes through the portrayal of the region as a visitor destination. There is also a reasonable proportion of individuals visiting friends and relatives in the region, who could be encouraged to experience other aspects of the region whilst visiting. In conjunction with the purpose of visit, the length of stay was also studied.

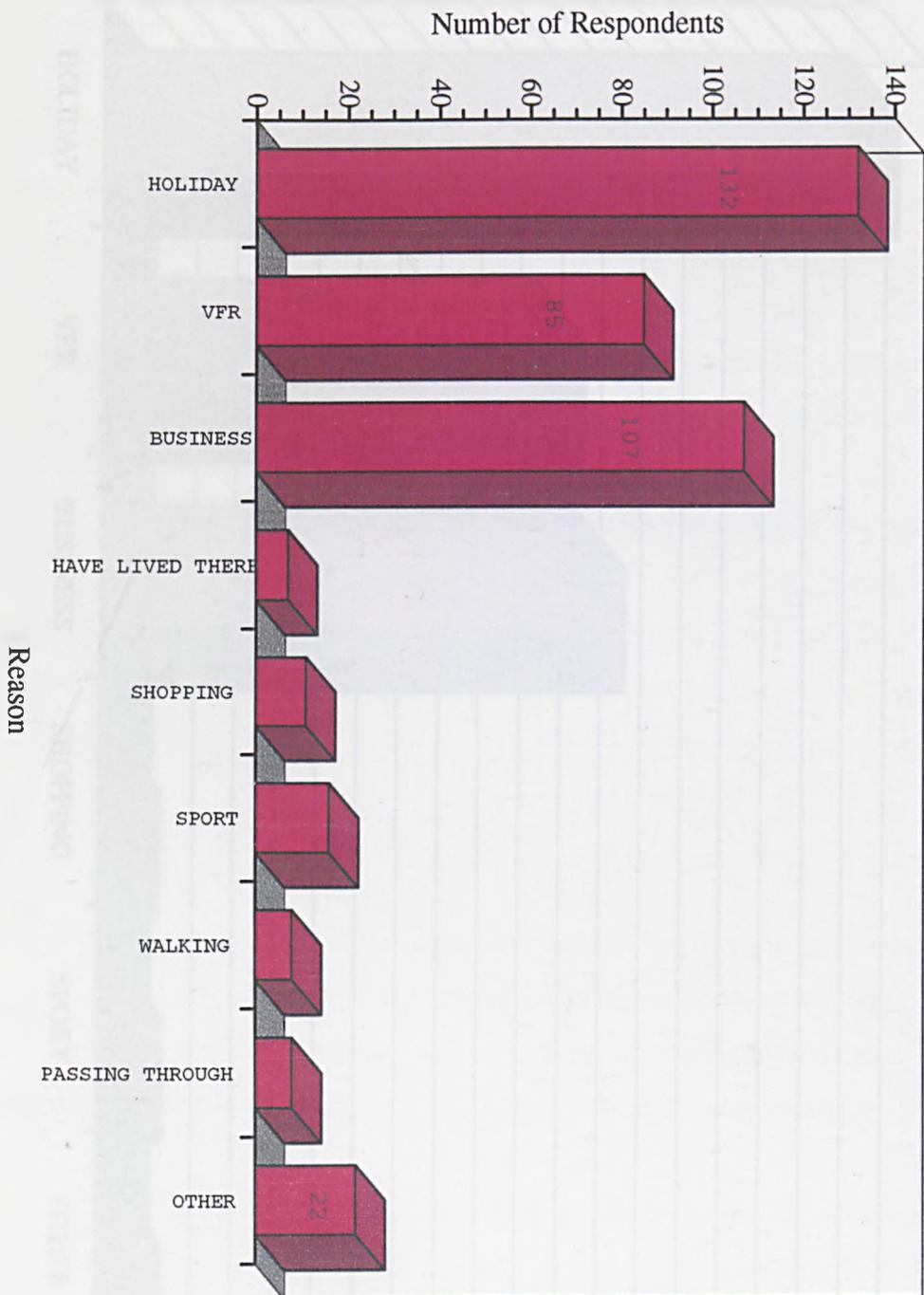
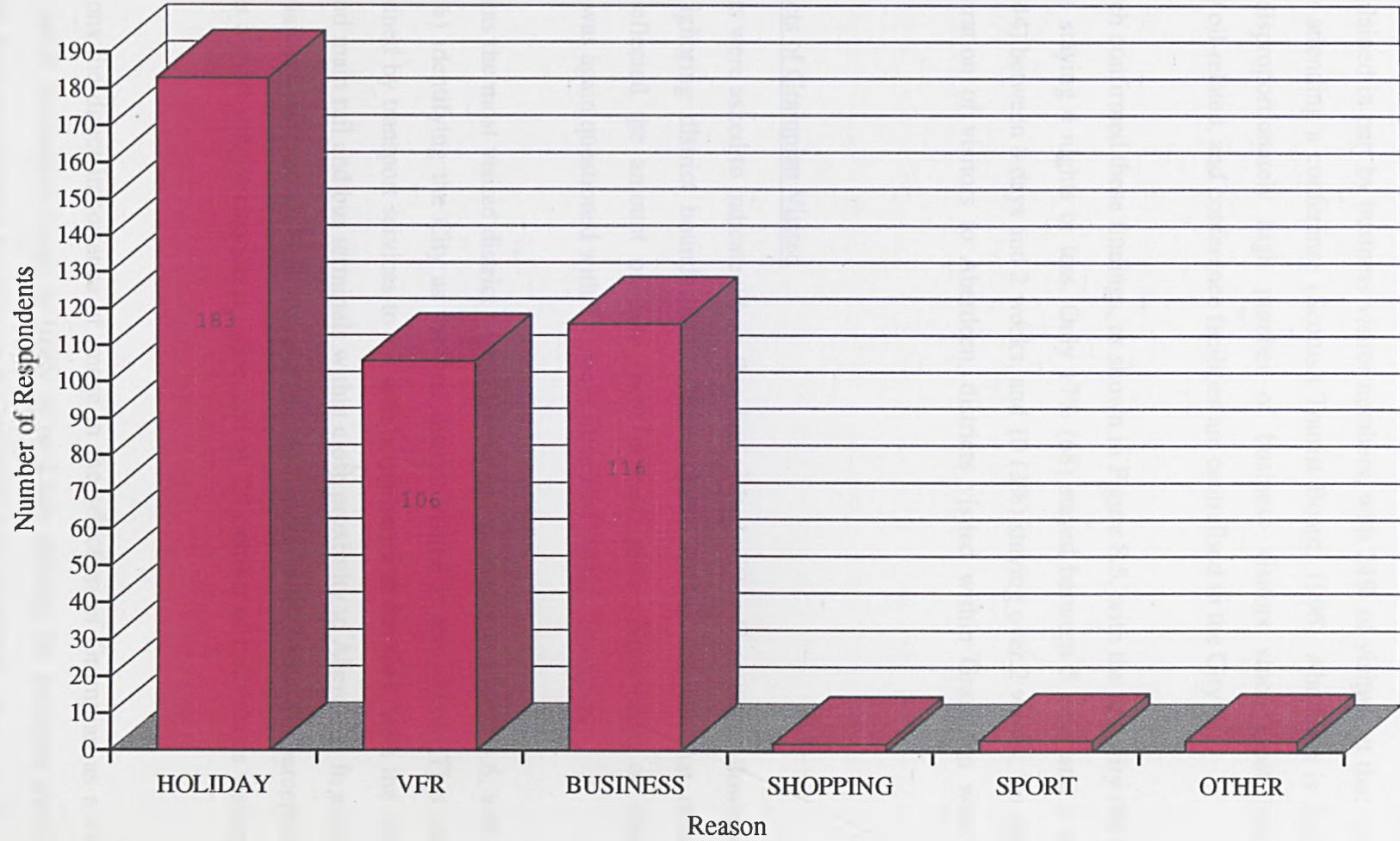


Figure 8.3: Reason for Visiting Gramplan

Figure 8.4: Main Purpose of Last Visit to Grampian



8.2.2 Length of Visit to Grampian

Grampian appears predominantly a short-stay destination. The average length of stay for domestic visitors between 1993 and 1995 is 4.3 nights (Scottish Tourist Board, 1996). This may be explained in part by business visitor numbers, with 24% of visitors at that time on business or attending a conference (Scottish Tourist Board, 1996). Aberdeen is likely to attract a disproportionately high number of business visitors since most industry, particularly oil-related, and conference facilities are centralised in the City.

This research confirmed these findings, as shown in Figure 8.5, with the majority (69%) of respondents staying 4 nights or less. Only 17% (68) stayed between 5 days and 1 week, with 11% (44) between 8 days and 2 weeks, and 10 (3%) staying over 2 weeks. To analyse the concentration of visitors to Aberdeen, districts visited within Grampian were also considered.

8.2.3 Districts of Grampian Visited

Respondents were asked to indicate where they had visited within Grampian, allowing free responses, ignoring district boundaries. It was assumed in the analysis that order of responses reflected the amount of time spent in each place. Knowledge of regional boundaries was again questioned with 71 places identified outside Grampian.

Aberdeen was the most visited district within Grampian, as shown in Figure 8.6, with 194 people (53%) identifying the City as the first district visited in the region. This can be partly explained by transport services to the area being based in the City, with the airport, ferry port and main rail and bus terminals within close proximity to Aberdeen. In addition, 76 people visited Grampian on business, confirming the proposition that the perception of the region as a short-stay destination is influenced by the number of individuals visiting on business.

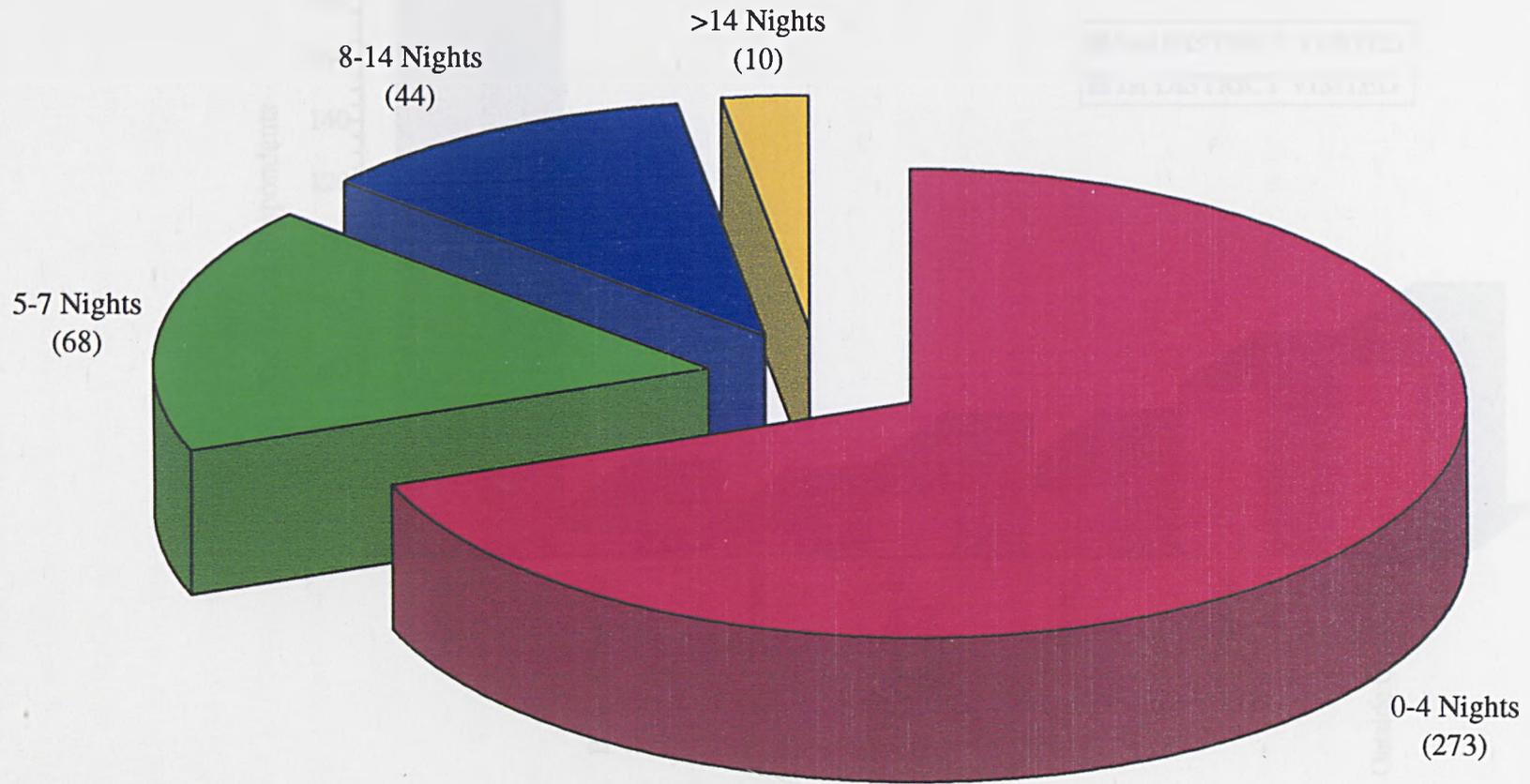
This questions the direct importance of image in the selection of Grampian as a visitor destination, since destination image is likely to be a low priority for business travellers. However, the business visitor's experience of Grampian may encourage them or others to return for a holiday. To ensure this, accurate image promotion targeted at the business

visitor once in Grampian, for example brochures at accommodation, would be necessary to ensure there was no 'image-reality' gap (as discussed in Chapters II and V).

After Aberdeen, Moray district and Kincardine & Deeside were most popular. Moray is the district in the North West of Grampian and Kincardine & Deeside is the most Southern district in the region, suggesting that proximity to other areas outside the region may be a reason for visiting. Various places had been visited or toured through by 55 people. In conjunction with the 10% (41 respondents) who identified two districts visited, it could be suggested there is scope for promotion of other districts once visitors have arrived in the region.

Having studied the experiences of those who had visited the region in detail, comparisons were then made between the image perceived of visitors and non-visitors to the region. This analysed the role of experience in image formation and therefore allowed refinement of image formation models to incorporate the significance of this factor. It also identified any potential image-reality gaps which could be addressed by promoters of Grampian.

Figure 8.5: Length of Last Visit to Grampian



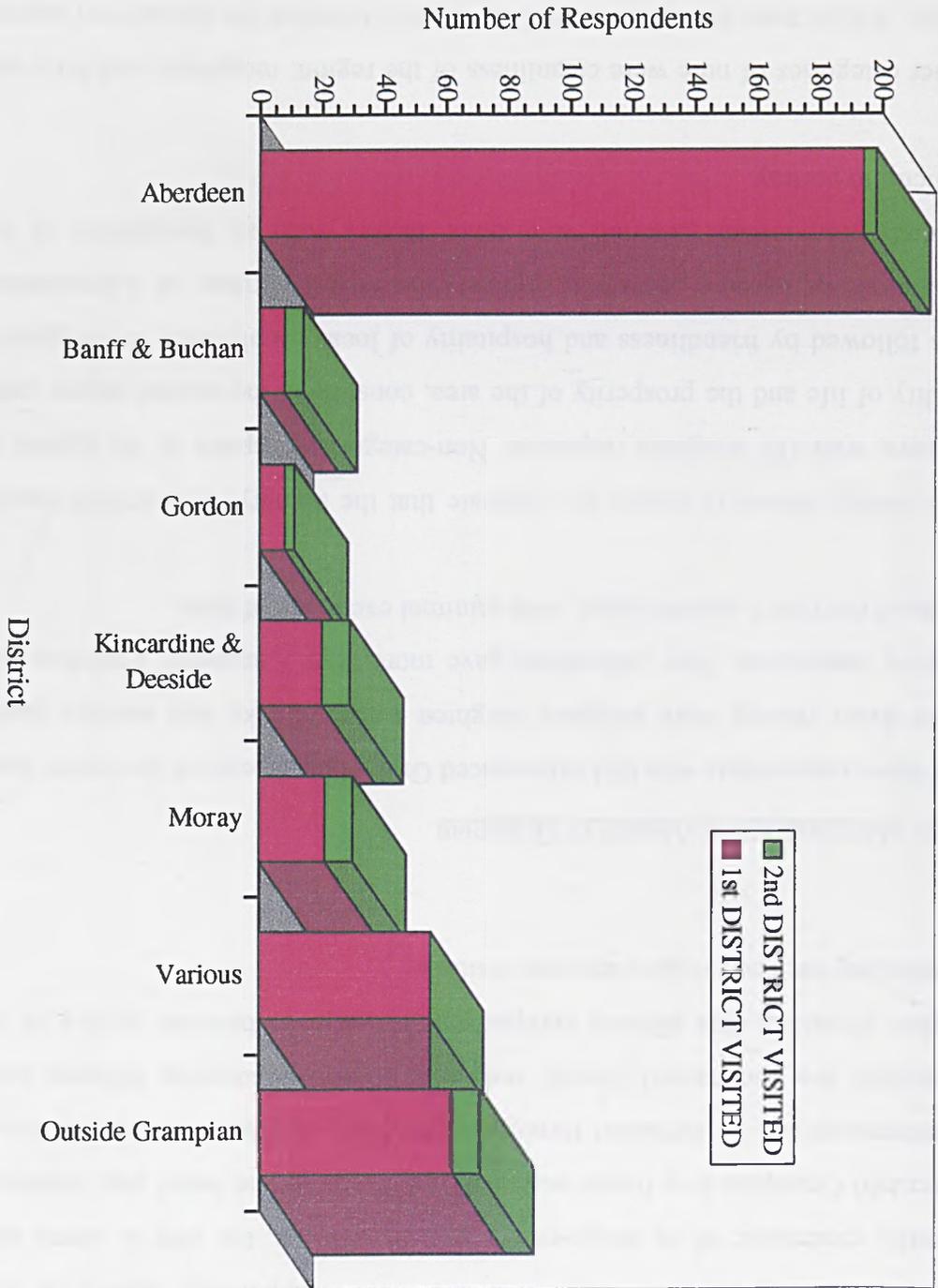


Figure 8.6: Which Districts in Grampian were Visited

8.3 Image Perceived of Grampian by Potential and Actual Visitors

To identify the image associated with a low profile destination, the perceived image of Grampian, and its components, were studied. Respondents who had visited the region were asked to identify the most impressive and most disappointing aspects of Grampian, to identify experience of an image-reality gap. In addition, the way in which an individual described Grampian to a friend was analysed, based on the belief that understanding of a phenomenon can be furthered through explanation to others. A more detailed image of Grampian was ascertained through responses elicited concerning different aspects of the region. Resulting data allowed comparisons to be made between groups of respondents, particularly between visitors and non-visitors.

8.3.1 Most Impressive Aspects of Grampian

For those respondents who had experienced Grampian, aspects of the region that impressed them when visiting were assigned weighted values to take into account their perceived relative importance. Few individuals gave more than 3 answers. Therefore analysis was made of the first 3 aspects stated, with minimal exclusion of data.

The results, shown in Figure 8.7, indicate that the scenery in Grampian most impressed visitors, with 182 weighted responses. Non-categorised aspects of the region, such as the quality of life and the prosperity of the area, constituted the second largest category. This was followed by friendliness and hospitality of local people with 51 weighted responses. This could be because scenery is arguably the easiest attribute of a destination to depict through promotional material, with other factors such as friendliness of locals more difficult to portray.

Other categories of note were cleanliness of the region, mountains and hills and the open space. Whilst there is some potential for overlap between the category of scenery and that of mountains and hills, so many respondents stated the hills specifically that a separate category was made. However, this suggests that the natural attributes of Grampian are what impressed visitors the most. Assuming potential visitors would be impressed in a comparable way to past visitors, this information could be used to over-compensate for disappointing aspects of the region, creating a positive image of Grampian.

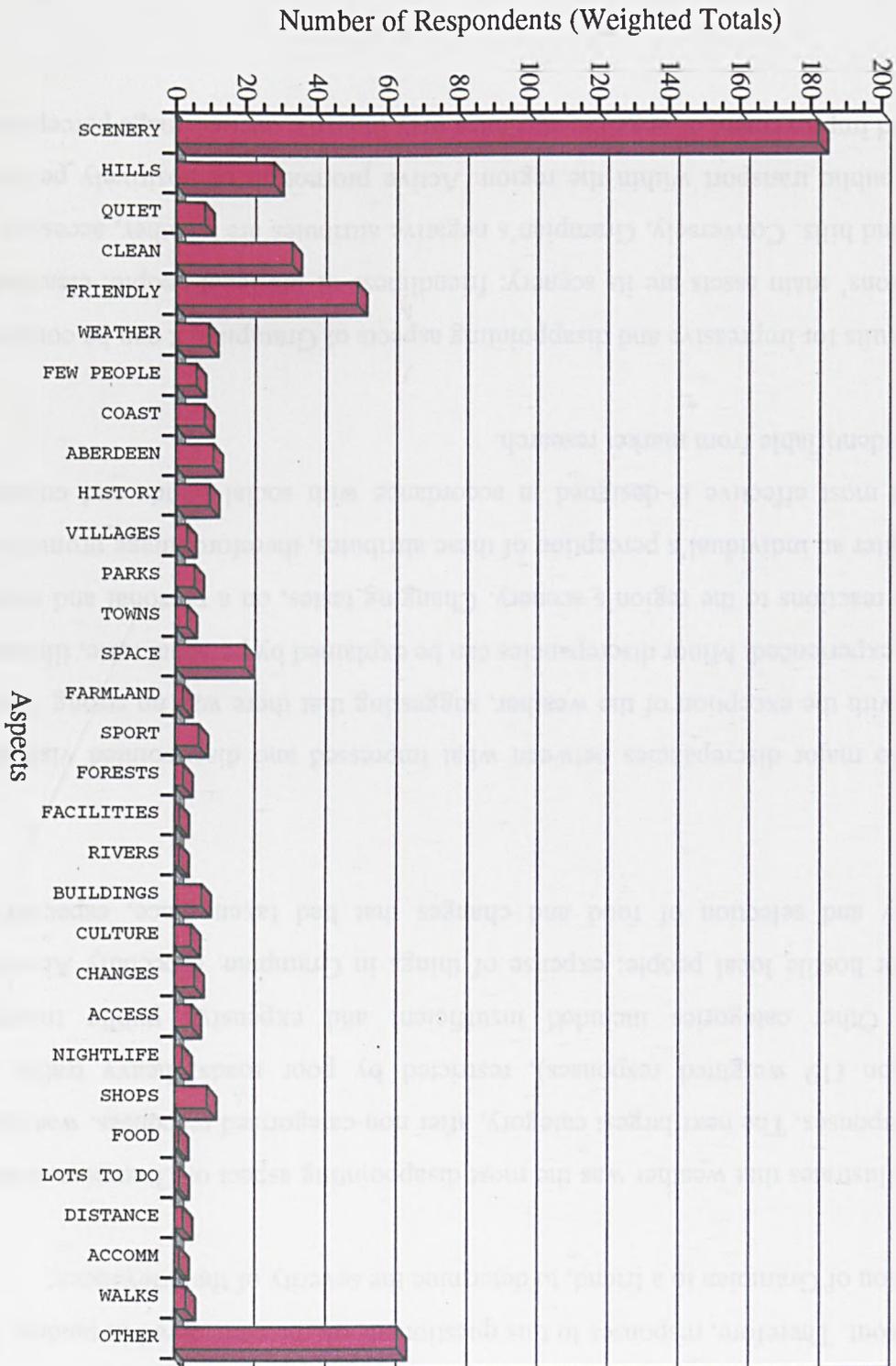


Figure 8.7: Impressions of Grampian

8.3.2 Disappointing Aspects of Grampian

Studying aspects of the region which disappointed visitors is important to reduce dissatisfaction, which may lead to the individual not returning to the destination and/or portraying a negative image to others. However, people will always find something to complain about. Therefore, responses to this question should be considered in tandem with the description of Grampian to a friend, to determine the severity of the grievances.

Figure 8.8 illustrates that weather was the most disappointing aspect of Grampian, with 53 weighted responses. The next largest category, after non-categorised responses, was access to the region (19 weighted responses), restricted by poor roads, heavy traffic and roadworks. Other categories included insufficient and expensive public transport; unfriendly or hostile local people; expense of things in Grampian, especially Aberdeen; poor quality and selection of food and changes that had taken place, especially in Aberdeen.

There are no major discrepancies between what impressed and disappointed visitors to Grampian, with the exception of the weather, suggesting that there was no strong 'image-reality' gap experienced. Minor discrepancies can be explained by personal taste, illustrated by different reactions to the region's scenery. Changing tastes, on a personal and societal level, may alter an individual's perception of these attributes, therefore image promotion is likely to be most effective if designed in accordance with social trends and consumer preferences identifiable from market research.

From the results for impressive and disappointing aspects of Grampian, it can be concluded that the regions' main assets are its scenery; friendliness of the local people; cleanliness; mountains and hills. Conversely, Grampian's negative attributes are weather, access to the region and public transport within the region. Active promotion of positively perceived attributes and improvement of negative attributes may improve overall image perception of Grampian.

The image perceived of Grampian, a low profile destination, appears general rather than focused upon specific attractions, with no main attributes stated specific to the region. If the image perceived of a destination is generic, attraction of visitors is difficult due to lack of reasons to visit, as highlighted by respondents when asked why they did not intend

visiting Grampian in the future. This reiterates the suggestion that the first level of image created is a general holistic image of a destination and as the level of knowledge increases, images of different attributes of the destination are created. Whilst models adapted to destination selection, such as Nicosia (1966); Howard-Sheth (1969); Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (1968) and Sheth-Newman (1991), identify the development of image perception as knowledge is accumulated through information searches, they do not divide image into the two levels considered here. Arguably, the effectiveness of image promotion will be limited if only an holistic image is considered.

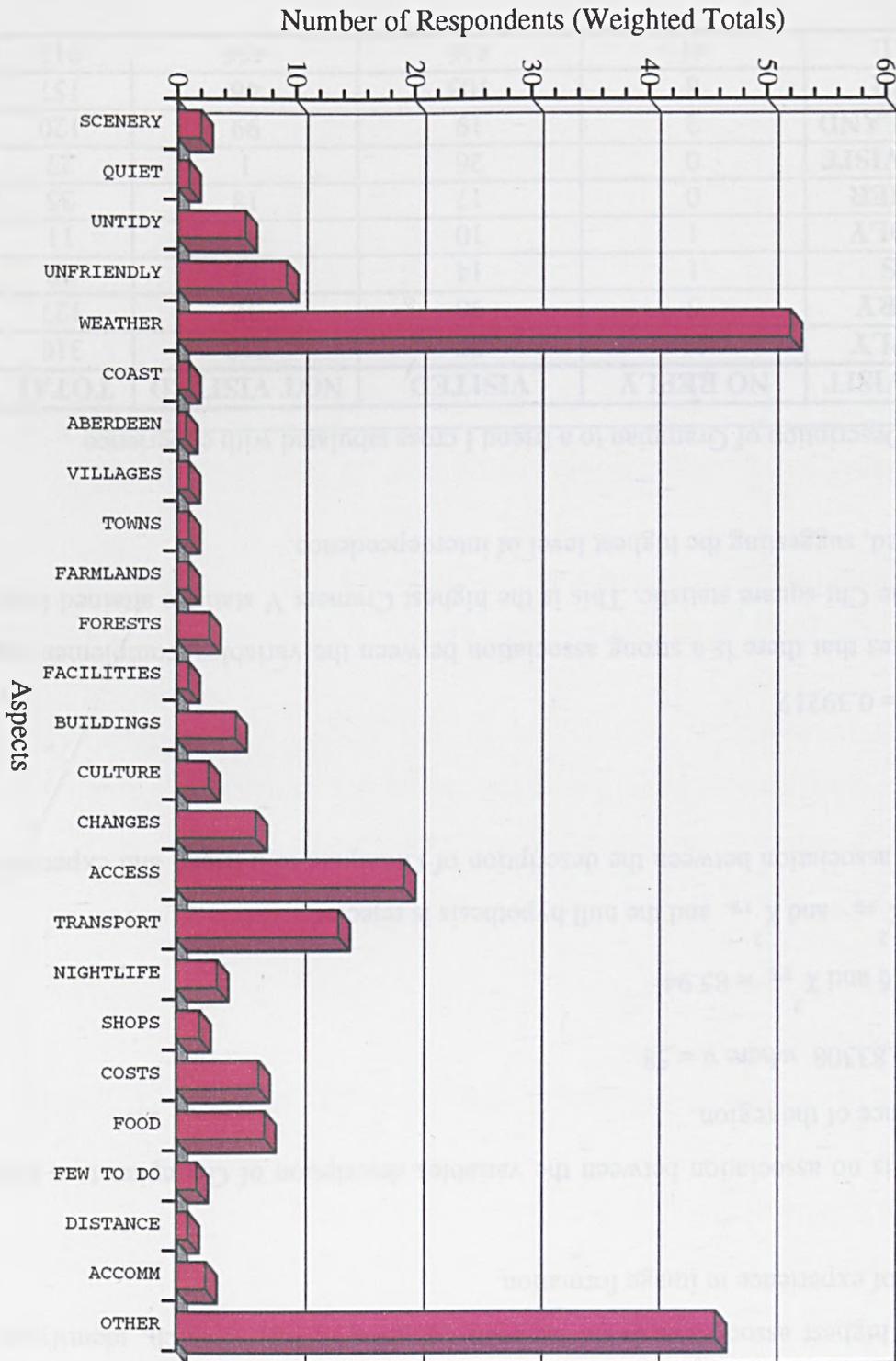


Figure 8.8: Disappointments of Grampian

8.3.3 Description of Grampian to a Friend with Reference to Previous Experience of the Region

To differentiate the image perceived by visitors and non-visitors to Grampian, the description that would be given to a friend was cross tabulated with experience. The results elicited the highest association found between variables in this research, identifying the importance of experience in image formation.

H_0 = there is no association between the variables description of Grampian to a friend I and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 280.83308 \text{ where } v = 58$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 76.76 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 85.94$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is an association between the description of Grampian to a friend and experience of the region.

$$\text{Cramers V} = 0.39217$$

This indicates that there is a strong association between the variables, complementing the results of the Chi-square statistic. This is the highest Cramers V statistic attained from the data collected, suggesting the highest level of interdependence.

Table 8.1: Description of Grampian to a friend I cross tabulated with experience

FRIEND/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	21	77	212	310
SCENERY	5	90	32	127
HILLS	1	14	33	48
FRIENDLY	1	10	0	11
WEATHER	0	17	18	35
WORTH VISIT	0	26	1	27
NE SCOTLAND	2	19	99	120
OTHER	8	103	46	157
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Table 8.1 shows that 212 respondents with no experience of Grampian failed to give a description of the region to a friend, suggesting that they believed they were unable to do so. Those who had visited Grampian had a larger portfolio of descriptions of the region. The most notable attributes mentioned first by respondents who had visited Grampian were

scenery (90 responses), poor weather (17), the belief that Grampian was worth a visit (26) and geographical location (19), as well as non-categorised factors (103).

For those who had not visited Grampian, the first notable attributes of the region were scenery (33 responses), mountains and hills (33), poor weather (18), geographical location (99) and non-categorised attributes (46). The first attributes described more often by those who had not visited Grampian were the mountains and hills, poor weather, forests, geographical location of the region and cleanliness of the area.

H_0 = there is no association between the variables the second description of Grampian to a friend and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 133.30706 \text{ where } v = 60$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} = 79.08 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 88.38$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%} \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is an association between the second description of Grampian to a friend and experience of the region.

Cramers V = 0.27019. This indicates that there is a strong association between the variables, complementing the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.2: Description of Grampian II to a friend cross tabulated with experience

FRIEND/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	31	259	344	634
SCENERY	3	32	12	47
HILLS	0	7	26	33
PEACEFUL	1	6	3	10
FRIENDLY	1	16	4	21
WEATHER	2	10	17	29
NE SCOTLAND	0	3	13	16
OTHER	1	30	24	55
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Table 8.2 shows that a second attribute of the Grampian region was described by 279 respondents, with respondents who had visited Grampian being marginally more forthcoming. The most notable attributes mentioned second by respondents who had

visited Grampian were scenery (32 responses), friendliness of locals (16), poor weather (10) and non-categorised factors (103).

For those who had not visited Grampian, attributes of the region mentioned second were notably scenery (12 responses), mountains and hills (26), poor weather (17), geographical location (13) and non-categorised attributes (24). The prominence of scenery once again in descriptions of Grampian reflects the importance of scenery in the image perceived of Grampian and potentially in relation to destination image perception per se. The second attributes described more often by non-visitors were again the mountains and hills, poor weather, geographical location and cleanliness of the area.

H_0 = there is no association between the variables the third description of Grampian to a friend and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 83.80901 \text{ where } v = 58$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} = 79.08 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 88.38$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ but $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} < \chi^2_{1\%}$. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted at the 1% level, but rejected at the 5% level.

There is an association between the third description of Grampian to a friend and experience of the region at the 5% level.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.21424$$

This indicates that there is an association between the variables, complementing the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.3: Description of Grampian III to a friend cross tabulated with experience

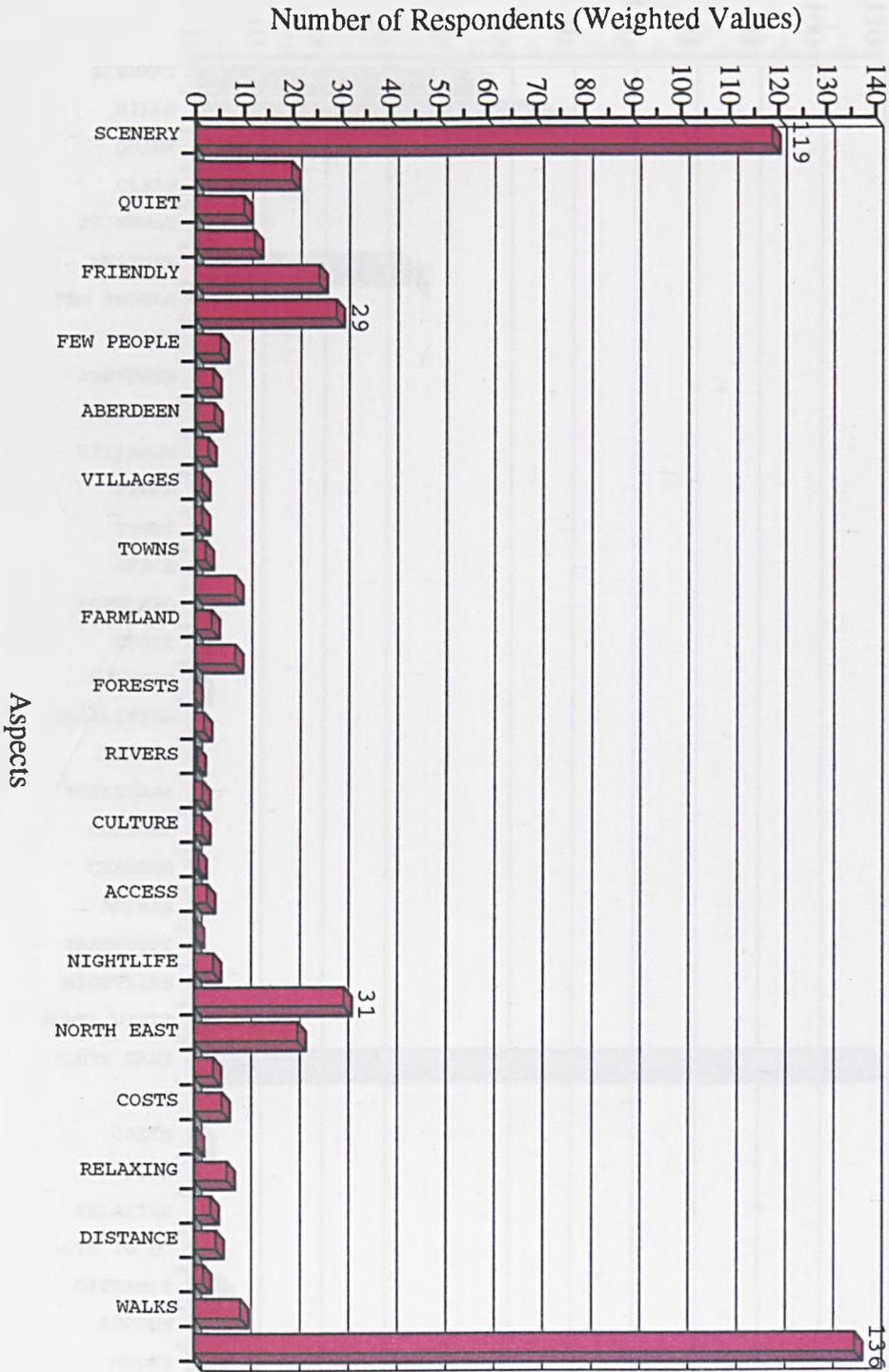
FRIEND/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	34	339	399	772
SCENERY	0	8	5	13
HILLS	1	1	8	10
WEATHER	1	9	6	16
OTHER	1	21	20	42
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

A third attribute of the Grampian region was described by 141 respondents, evenly split between those with and without experience, as shown in Table 8.3. The most notable

attributes mentioned third by visitors to Grampian were scenery (8 responses), friendliness of the locals (7), poor weather (6) and non-categorised factors (21). For non-visitors, attributes described third were notably scenery (5 responses), mountains and hills (8), poor weather (6), and non-categorised attributes (20).

Again weighted values were assigned to the first three aspects of Grampian described by past visitors. As Figure 8.9 shows, scenery, with a value of 119, was the most frequently mentioned attribute, excepting those not categorised. The belief that the region was worth visiting, with a value of 31, and weather (29) were also notable attributes. In comparison, Figure 8.10 depicts weighted descriptions given by non-visitors to Grampian. The geographical description of the region as the North East of Scotland was the most popular category, with a value of 110, followed by other factors (74), hills and mountains (57), scenery (44) and weather (34).

Comparison of descriptions made by visitors and non-visitors may be most discernible in Figure 8.11 where descriptions made by both groups can be seen on the same diagram. Poor weather was frequently mentioned by both groups and, to different degrees, so too was beautiful scenery. The higher number of non-visitors who described the region in geographical terms often knew nothing else about Grampian, highlighting the enrichment of imagery by experience (Dann, 1995). However, the ability to locate Grampian is a good basis for future information accumulation. Using visitors as a base group, arguably, the attraction of mountains and hills may be over-estimated by non-visitors and the friendliness of locals under-estimated. Cleanliness, space, lack of people and worthiness of a visit were indicated more by those who had visited the region than those who had not. Image promotion could address these identifiable differences between the two groups to reduce the image-reality gap.

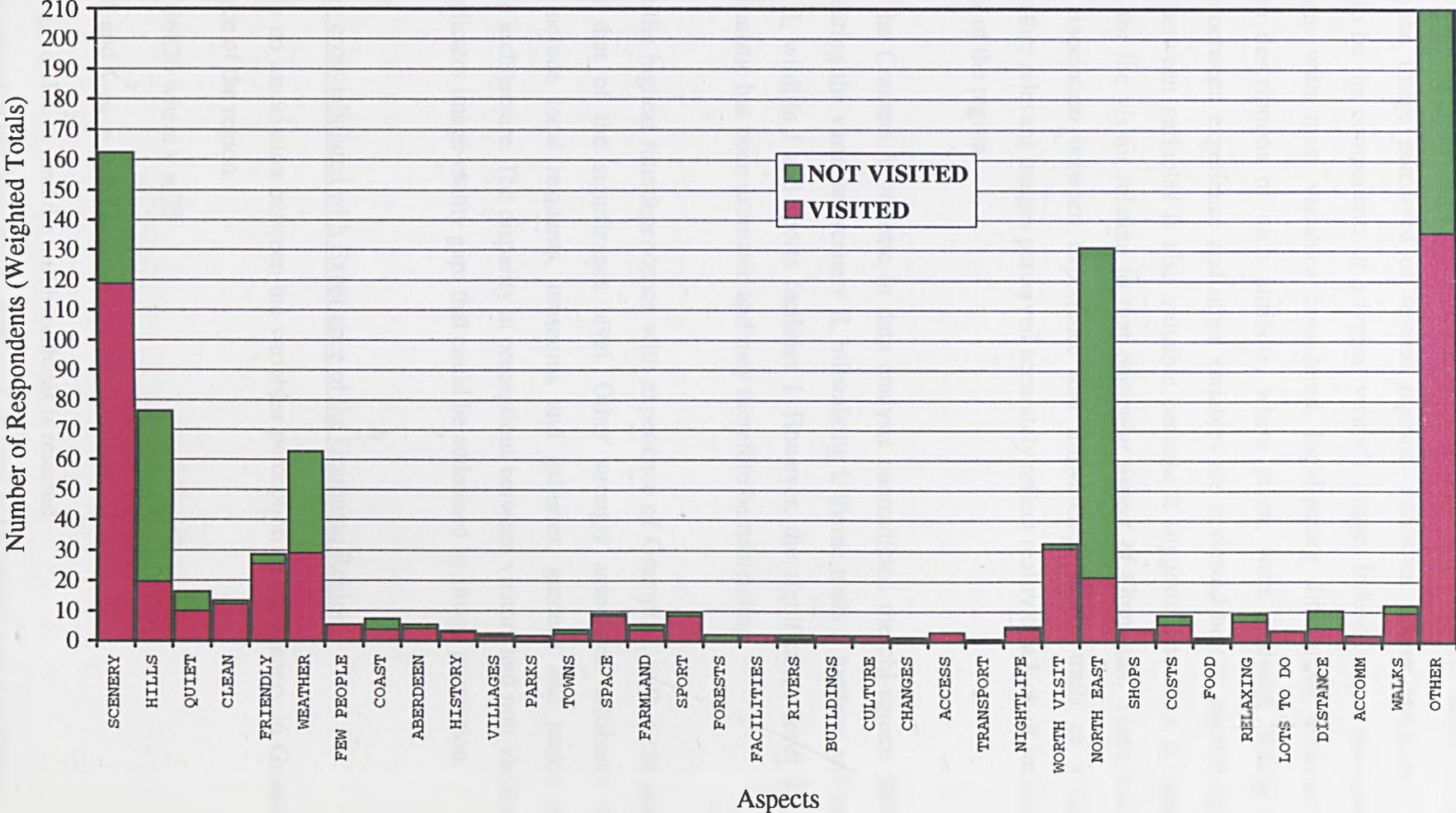


**Figure 8.9: Description of Grampian to a Friend
(Those Who Have Visited the Region)**



**Figure 8.10: Description of Grampian to a Friend
(Those Who Have Not Visited the Region)**

Figure 8.11: Description of Grampian to a Friend



8.3.4 Cross tabulations of Experience of the Destination with Attributes of Grampian

Differences between visitors and non-visitors to Grampian were studied further through analysis of the image perceived of several regional attributes. These attributes were considered to be the components of a typical visitor's image. Indeed, experience proved interdependent with most variables considered, highlighting differences between the groups. Two descriptions of each attribute, where given, were analysed. Whilst any associations between experience and other variables are reviewed below, identifying no association between variables is also valuable because it suggests that there is 'image-reality' gap for the visitor relating to that particular aspect of Grampian. There was no significant association between experience and hillwalking, theme trails or wildlife, suggesting either relevant images perceived accurately reflect reality or a lack of interest in these aspects of the region.

The use of the Cramers V statistic in data analysis contradicted the chi-square statistic when considering the variables scenery II, hillwalking I, theme trails I, gardens and parks II, beaches II, wildlife I and sports facilities I. However, the significance level for the Cramers V statistic has been estimated and may therefore be misleading.

Scenery has the highest interdependence with experience of Grampian, with a chi-square value twice that of the significance level. Other strongly associated attributes with experience include local residents, museums and galleries, gardens and parks, food available and architecture. The disparity in perceptions between visitors and non-visitors to Grampian indicates image-reality gaps that could be addressed by image promotion.

8.3.5 Scenery cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

H_0 = there is no association between the variables perception of the scenery in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 184.86826 \text{ where } v = 78$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 99.62 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 109.92$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%} \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is an association between the perception of scenery in Grampian and experience.

Cramers V = 0.31449

This indicates that there is a strong association between the variables, complementing the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.4: Scenery I cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

SCENE/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	17	51	98	166
GOOD	1	16	16	33
VERY GOOD	0	6	4	10
EXCELLENT	1	25	3	29
AVERAGE	0	12	3	15
BEAUTIFUL	3	92	113	208
LOVELY	1	15	9	25
WONDERFUL	2	7	4	13
NICE	1	29	25	55
IMPRESSIVE	7	57	33	97
RUGGED	0	20	34	54
VARIED	0	22	2	24
HILLY	2	10	51	63
GREEN	2	0	9	11
OTHER	1	33	42	76
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Table 8.4 above shows that 747 respondents described their image of Grampian's scenery. For both groups, the first description of scenery as beautiful was most popular with 92 visitors and 113 non-visitors describing it as such, representing 22.8% of responses. The next popular description of scenery was impressive and breathtaking, with 97 responses (10.6%), followed by mountainous with 63 (6.9%) and rugged (54, 5.9%).

Non-visitors to Grampian described the region more frequently as beautiful (113 responses compared to 92), rugged (34 compared to 20), mountainous (51 to 10), green (9 to 0) and unclassified responses (42 to 33). Visitors to the region used three descriptors significantly more frequently, excellent by 25 people, average by 12 and varied by 22.

H_0 = there is no association between the variables second perception of the scenery in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 46.59570 \text{ where } v = 45$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 61.63 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 69.92$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} < \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is accepted.

There is no association between the second perception of the scenery in Grampian and experience of the region.

Cramers V = 0.15937

This indicates that there is a weak association between the variables, contradicting the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.5: Scenery II cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

SCENE/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	37	383	394	814
BEAUTIFUL	1	12	8	21
HILLY	0	5	8	13
OTHER	0	5	19	24
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Table 8.5 illustrates that 99 people gave a second description of the scenery in Grampian. Non-categorised descriptions represented the largest number of responses with 24 (2.6%), followed by beautiful with 21 (2.3%), and mountainous with 13 (1.4%). Cross tabulating the second description of Grampian's scenery with experience, indicates a higher response from non-visitors, contradicting the lower number of references to scenery in description to a friend by these respondents. Notable descriptions by non-visitors were beautiful (8 responses), rugged (7), mountainous (8), green (8) and non-categorised responses (19). Of visitors, 12 described it as beautiful, 5 as green with 5 non-categorised responses.

8.3.6 Local residents cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

H_0 = there is no association between the variables perception of the local residents of Grampian and experience of the region.

$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 110.90721$ where $\nu = 57$

$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 75.60$ and $\chi^2_{1\%} \approx 84.72$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is an association between the perception of the local residents of Grampian and experience of the region.

Cramers V = 0.24324

This indicates there is an association between the variables, complementing the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.6: Local residents I cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

LOCAL/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	16	65	133	214
AVERAGE	0	26	4	30
NICE	3	16	13	32
FRIENDLY	10	188	181	379
V. FRIENDLY	3	20	13	36
HELPFUL	0	11	3	14
SCOTTISH	2	0	37	39
UNFRIENDLY	1	6	3	10
OTHER	5	62	55	122
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

It can be seen from Table 8.6 that 699 respondents described the local residents of Grampian. The most popular description was that people were friendly, with 379 such responses (41.5%), followed by 122 (13.4%) responses that were not categorised due to their diversity. Other notable categories were Scottish, with 39 responses (4.3%), very friendly (36, 3.9%), nice (32, 3.5%) and average (30, 3.3%). The use of the term 'Scottish' suggests that either the residents of Grampian conform to people's stereotype of Scottish people, or generalisations are being made in the absence of knowledge.

Cross tabulating the perception of locals with visits to Grampian, there are two notable differences. All 39 people (4.3%) who described local residents as Scottish had not visited the region, suggesting general indisputable terms are used in the absence of knowledge. Of those who described the residents as average, 26 out of the 30 had visited Grampian. There was also a greater number of people who had visited the region that felt that locals were very friendly (20 compared to 13) and helpful (11 compared to 3).

H_0 = there is no association between the variables second perception of the local residents of Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 15.38820 \text{ where } v = 27$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} = 40.11 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 46.96$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} < \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is accepted.

There is no association between the second perception of the local residents of Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.09150$$

This indicates that there is no association between the variables, confirming the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.7: Local residents II cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

LOCAL/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	37	370	415	822
FRIENDLY	1	15	9	25
OTHER	1	20	23	44
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

A second description of local residents was given by 91 respondents, as shown in Table 8.7 above. The largest number of these responses were non-categorised (44 representing 4.8%). However, two descriptions worthy of note were friendly by 25 people (2.7%) and helpful by 9 (1%), with twice as many respondents with experience using this description.

8.3.7 Peace and Quiet cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region.

H_0 = there is no association between the variables perception of the level of peace and quiet in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 81.19094 \text{ where } v = 40$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} = 75.60 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 84.72$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ but $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} < \chi^2_{1\%}$. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted at the 1% level and rejected at the 5% level.

There is an association between the perception of the local residents of Grampian and experience of the region at the 5% level.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.21086$$

This indicates that there is an association between the variables, confirming the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.8: Peace and Quiet I cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

PEACE/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	17	78	125	220
GOOD	12	145	190	347
VERY GOOD	1	11	15	27
EXCELLENT	1	30	10	41
AVERAGE	6	47	27	80
WONDERFUL	0	9	3	12
QUIET	1	9	28	38
VARIED	0	25	9	34
OTHER	3	41	28	72
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Of the 690 respondents who responded, depicted in Table 8.8 above, the most frequent description of Grampian's peace and quiet was good or high, with 347 responses (38%). A more modest 80 respondents (8.8%) viewed this attribute of the region as average, 41 (4.5%) felt it was excellent, 38 (4.2%) perceived it as very quiet and 34 (3.7%) as varied.

Cross tabulated with experience of Grampian, differences between the groups could be identified. The image perceived of the region's peace and quiet is described in general positive terms by those with no experience, with 190 non-visitors compared to 145 describing it as good, 28 (compared to 9) as very quiet and 47 (compared to 27) as average. However, 30 visitors described the peace and quiet as excellent compared to 10 non-visitors, and 25 visitors described it as varied compared to 9 non-visitors, reiterating the use of general terminology in the absence of knowledge derived from experience.

Only five people described the level of peace and quiet in the Grampian region in a further way, giving no significant analysis.

8.3.8 Sports Facilities cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

H_0 = there is no association between the variables perception of the sports facilities in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 62.99086 \text{ where } v = 36$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 50.97 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 58.57$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is an association between the perception of the sports facilities and experience.

Cramers V = 0.18573

This indicates that there is an association between the variables, confirming the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.9: Sports Facilities I cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

SPORT/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	21	169	187	377
GOOD	5	96	72	173
VERY GOOD	1	11	6	18
EXCELLENT	3	18	9	30
AVERAGE	2	68	71	141
POOR	3	16	30	49
VARIED	2	5	4	11
OUTDOOR	1	7	12	20
PLENTIFUL	1	3	7	11
LIMITED	0	5	38	43
OTHER	2	12	14	28
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Table 8.9 above shows that 536 respondents described their perception of sports facilities in Grampian. The most popular description was that the facilities were good, as indicated by 173 respondents (18.9%), followed by average with 141 responses (15.4%), poor with 49 responses (5.4%) and limited with 43 responses (4.7%).

Cross tabulated with experience of Grampian, non-visitors appear to have a lower opinion of the sports facilities available. Twice as many visitors to Grampian described the facilities as excellent (18 compared to 9). Conversely, 30 respondents with no experience of the region used the description poor compared to 16 of those who had visited. In addition, 38 respondents who had not visited Grampian described the sports facilities as limited, compared to only 5 who had visited the region. Differences in images perceived of Grampian's sports facilities between the groups suggests that either those who have not visited the region have higher sporting standards or are unaware of the available facilities. There were 11 second descriptions of sports facilities in Grampian. However these responses were varied and gave no significant results.

8.3.9 Heritage and Castles cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

H_0 = there is no association between the variables perception of the heritage and castles in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 77.78935 \text{ where } v = 50$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} = 67.50 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 76.15$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected at both the 5% and 1% level.

There is an association between the perception of the heritage and castles in Grampian and experience of the region at the 5% and 1% level.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.20640$$

This indicates that there is an association between the variables, confirming the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.10: Heritage and Castles I cross tabulated with Experience of Grampian Region

HERITAGE/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	19	145	163	327
GOOD	1	61	57	119
VERY GOOD	2	19	12	33
EXCELLENT	7	29	26	62
AVERAGE	0	19	7	26
BEAUTIFUL	1	3	8	12
IMPRESSIVE	1	7	8	16
PLENTIFUL	2	12	33	47
INTERESTING	4	56	63	123
WELL KEPT	0	8	4	12
OLD	1	2	14	17
WORTH VISIT	1	10	3	14
OTHER	1	20	27	48
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Of the 586 descriptions of Grampian's heritage and castles, the most popular, as shown in Table 8.10 above, was that it was interesting, with 123 responses (13.5%). This was closely followed by 119 responses (13%) that it was good. Excellent was the response given by 62 people (6.8%), with 48 (5.3%) non-categorised responses and 47 people (5.1%) described heritage and castles as abundant.

Cross tabulated with experience of the region, the largest disparity between the groups involved the description of abundant and numerous, with 33 non-visitors and 12 visitors using this description. Additionally, those with no experience described heritage and castles notably more often as beautiful (8 compared to 3), and old (14 compared to 2), whilst those with experience described these attributes more often as very good (19 responses compared to 12), average (19 compared to 7), wonderful (7 to 1) and worth visiting (10 to 3). These results suggest visitors to Grampian have a clearer image of Grampian's heritage and castles than non-visitors. This can be linked to the influence of heritage as part of the Scottish tourism product and reflects the importance of heritage in Scotland's culture.

A second description of Grampian's heritage and castles was given by 23 respondents. The largest number, 8 (0.9%) used the further description of interesting, 6 of whom had no experience of the region and 3 people used the description of well kept and 3 as old. The low number of additional descriptions rendered statistical analysis futile.

8.3.10 Visitor Attractions cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

H_0 = there is no association between the variables perception of the visitor attractions in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 77.70393 \text{ where } v = 50$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} = 67.50 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 76.15$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%} \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%}$. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is an association between perception of Grampian's visitor attractions and experience.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.20629$$

This indicates that there is an association between the variables, confirming the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.11: Visitor Attractions I cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

ATTRACT/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	20	174	200	394
GOOD	4	67	44	115
VERY GOOD	1	14	9	24
EXCELLENT	1	11	6	18
AVERAGE	1	40	24	65
POOR	3	1	6	10
VARIED	2	6	9	17
OUTDOOR	0	4	9	13
PLENTIFUL	1	25	22	48
INTERESTING	1	7	9	17
LIMITED	0	10	23	33
OTHER	6	38	69	113
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Of the 519 descriptions made of Grampian's visitor attractions, the most popular, as shown in Table 8.11 above, was good with 115 responses (12.6%), very closely followed by the 113 non-categorised responses (12.4%). Other notable descriptions were average, with 65 responses (7.1%), plentiful with 48 (5.3%) and limited with 33 (3.6%).

Cross tabulated with experience of the region, visitors described the visitor attractions significantly more often than non-visitors as good (67 compared to 44) and average (40 compared to 24). Conversely, non-visitors more often described them as limited (23 compared to 10) and responses too diverse to be categorised (69 to 38). These results suggest that individuals with no experience of Grampian are less aware of the visitor attractions that exist within the region.

A further 21 people went on to give a second description of the visitor attractions in the region. However, 11 of these gave non-categorised responses, and 4 respondents described the attractions as varied, 3 of which had experience of the region. Again, these results gave too few responses to justify statistical analysis.

8.3.11 Food cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

H_0 = there is no association between the variables food available in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 90.60255 \text{ where } v = 44$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 60.46 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 68.67$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is an association between the perception of variables food available in Grampian and experience of the region.

$$\text{Cramers V} = 0.22275$$

This indicates that there is an association between the variables, confirming the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.12: Food I cross tabulated with Experience of the Grampian Region

FOOD/VISIT	NO REPLY	VISITED	NOT VISITED	TOTAL
NO REPLY	17	108	174	299
GOOD	7	95	60	162
VERY GOOD	1	15	8	24
EXCELLENT	3	21	12	36
AVERAGE	4	63	53	120
POOR	0	17	4	21
SCOTTISH	1	5	25	31
THE SAME	2	7	10	19
OTHER	4	62	89	155
TOTAL	41	416	456	913

Table 8.12 above, shows that of the 614 descriptions of food available in Grampian, more non-visitors than visitors responded. Significant categories were the description of food as good, with 162 responses (17.7%), 155 non-categorised responses (17%), and those who viewed the food as average or reasonable, with 120 responses (13.1%). Less significantly, 36 people (3.9%) thought the food was excellent and 31 (3.4%) traditional.

Cross tabulated with experience of the region, traditional or Scottish is the only response that non-visitors gave significantly more often than visitors, excepting non-categorised responses, with 25 responses compared to 5. Visitors more frequently rated the standard of the food, such as good (95 responses compared to 60), very good (15 compared to 8), excellent (21 to 12) and poor (17 to 4). The frequent description of food made by non-visitors as traditional suggests either a further illustration of using a safe generalisation in the absence of knowledge or no appreciation of cosmopolitan influences within the region. Experience appears to allow judgements to be made of the food's standard, perhaps difficult to portray through image promotion, in the same way as it is difficult to portray the

friendliness of local people. For these aspects of the region, it may be necessary to use different techniques for promotion, such as benchmarks, perhaps in the form of grading systems for food outlets, showing the standard and range of food available within the region.

A further 61 respondents gave a second description of the food available in Grampian. The majority of these responses were non-categorised due to their diverse nature. These 45 responses (4.9%) were divided evenly between the two groups. Other further descriptions were too few to give any significant analysis.

The comparison of images perceived by visitors and non-visitors to Grampian highlights the significance of experience in the process of image formation through identification of associations between variables. However, this research maintains that an image can be formed even in the absence of experience, which will then be modified or expanded by experience. For example, all UK residents perceive an image of Hawaii, yet few will have visited. It is information accumulated from other sources which creates this image. For low profile destinations in particular, where there is an absence of other sources of information, image promotion has the potential to play an integral part in image formation and hence destination selection.

Differences between the image perceived by visitors and non-visitors to the region also suggests that an image-reality gap exists. To begin to address an 'image-reality' gap it is necessary to understand how an image is formed, the influential factors involved and the inter-relationships between them.

8.4 Image Formation of Grampian

To identify factors perceived to be influential in image formation and associated inter-relationships, the importance placed on different sources of information in image formation of Grampian was analysed. This was then used as a basis for the development of an image formation model (as discussed in Chapter IX) to consider the relative importance of factors which can potentially be influenced by image promoters.

'Important' was the most common description of information sources in the image formation process, indicating people did not simply choose the middle response, arguably a

natural tendency. A point of interest is the small difference in numbers who rated sources of information as ‘unimportant’ and ‘very unimportant’ compared to an approximate three-fold magnitude difference between ‘important’ and ‘very important’. One explanation is that there is little perceived difference between a factor being ‘unimportant’ or ‘very unimportant’, whereas a factor which has exerted a notable effect on image perception can be more easily categorised by the strength of its importance.

The relative importance assigned to sources of information, as shown in Table 8.13 below, indicates the potential role promotional activities play in the process of image formation. However, these statistics show perceived importance, not necessarily synonymous with actual importance. Even if people can describe their perceived image of a destination, it may not be possible for them to remember, or indeed they may not realise, how all the sources of information have influenced the formation of that image. This further illustrates the subjective nature of the research.

Table 8.13: Importance of information sources in the formation of an image of Grampian

	No Reply	V. Unimp	Unimp	Neither	Imp	V.Imp	Other
Experience	272	113	91	166	151	120	-
Media Rep.	243	74	113	194	240	49	-
Promo Lit.	249	97	114	169	221	63	-
Articles	242	73	88	169	290	51	-
Word of mouth	238	87	61	145	268	114	-
Other	862	4	4	7	12	16	8
TOTAL	2106	448	471	850	1182	413	8

As can be seen from Table 8.13, the absolute numbers show promotional literature was not considered by respondents to be the most important factor in their image formation process. Experience and word-of-mouth communication were considered to be more important, suggesting a more secondary role for promotional material. The relative importance of each sources of information is discussed below.

8.4.1 Experience

The perceived unimportance placed on this source of information in image formation may reflect the number of respondents who had visited Grampian. Indeed, individuals with no experience of a phenomenon can not accurately attribute any importance to such an experience. However, experience was the most frequently rated information source as very

important, indicating the perceived importance of experience by the 416 people who had visited. Most visitors to Grampian were repeat visitors, indicating satisfaction of the tourism experience.

8.4.2 Media Representation

Media representation incorporates direct and indirect portrayal of a destination image, comparable to Gunn (1988)'s organic and inorganic categories, through media such as films, radio and television programmes. Direct representation may take the form of documentaries, generating an image of Grampian's past, or travel programmes, portraying a current image of the region. The quality of the programmes produced by Grampian Television were also seen by a number of respondents as a reflection of high quality of life in the region, reflecting indirect image portrayal. Grampian Television extends far beyond the administrative boundaries of the region, with coverage extending as far north as Orkney and Shetland, as far south as Fife and as far west as the Hebrides. Therefore television has the potential to play a considerable role in image formation.

Table 8.13 above indicates the largest number of respondents (240, 36%) saw media representation as important in image formation. Neither important nor unimportant was how 194 (29%) respondents perceived media representation, followed by unimportant, with 113 respondents (11%). When analysing these figures it must be remembered that the rankings given as a reflection of how important individuals perceive these sources of information to have been rather than how important they actually were, the two may be different.

8.4.3 Promotional Literature

The influence promotional literature had upon respondents' image of Grampian, as can be seen from Table 8.13, followed a similar trend to media representation. Ratings were slightly more evenly spread across the spectrum with more people selecting extreme values since people are more able to recall the influence of a direct form of advertising than indirect. Promotional literature was perceived to be very unimportant to 97 respondents (15%), potentially reflecting a low number of individuals exposed to promotional material as well as those who felt it very unimportant.

The lack of importance placed upon promotional literature by potential visitors may change if destination promoters take on board the findings from research such as Selwyn (1993), Sinclair (1995) and Dann (1996). Content analysis conducted by these researchers identified misrepresentations of destinations being promoted. For example, Dann (1996) found that there was an over-emphasis placed upon the concept of escaping from everyday life, and not enough upon contact with local residents. When potential visitors perceive promotional literature as an accurate tool for image promotion, then the importance attached to this source of information in the formation of a destination image will be increased. One conclusion that may be drawn from the divergence of importance ratings assigned to promotional literature and experience is that respondents tend to have more diverse views for attributes that are important than those that are unimportant (Beckwith & Lehmann, 1973).

8.4.4 Articles in Books, Magazines and Newspapers

Articles relating to Grampian can feature the area or focus primarily on another area or subject. Sources of information which could be deemed impartial to potential visitors, such as travel magazines, Holiday Which or Newspapers may have more credibility than promotional literature produced by the region itself.

The most notable statistic from Table 8.13 for the impact that respondents' felt articles had on their view of Grampian was that 290 (43%) believed articles had been important. This figure may indicate the number of people who read books, magazines or newspapers regularly.

8.4.5 Talking to Friends, Relatives and Colleagues

Talking to friends, relatives and colleagues directly or indirectly, through reference to other destinations, is shown, in Table 8.13, to be perceived influential in image formation. Word-of-mouth communication was considered as an important source of information in image formation for 268 respondents (40%). The main difference in the trend of ratings for this source of information compared to the others is that very important is the third highest rating given with 114 individuals (17%) choosing this option and only 61 (9%) stating that it was unimportant. This reflects the importance of talking to friends, relatives and

colleagues in image formation (see for example Nolan, 1976 and Woodside & Moore, 1987).

Word-of-mouth-communication is a point of disagreement amongst image formation models (such as Murphy, 1985; Gunn, 1988; Stabler, 1988 and Bojanic, 1991 as discussed in Chapter V) on how destination promoters can influence this source of information. This research concludes that it can only be affected indirectly by promotional organisations through the satisfaction of visitors who then give feedback on their experience to others. To attain visitor satisfaction, the image promoted needs to accurately reflect the reality (as argued in Chapter II).

This research hypothesised that friends and relatives moving between regions may provide new sources of information for image formation. Migration statistics for Scotland were studied to establish the rate of change of people living in the area and therefore speculate on the effect this may have on the pool of individuals visiting friends and relations. In 1991, 56,000 people moved to Scotland from elsewhere in the United Kingdom and 47,000 left Scotland (Government Statistical Service, 1993). When considering the United Kingdom as a whole, 918,000 people moved between regions during 1991. This net gain of people to Scotland increases the number of links with other friends and relatives who may potentially visit the new arrivals in Scotland, increasing this market size.

Table 8.14: Migration within the UK to & from Scotland: Inter-Regional Movement:1991

Region	No. Moved to Scotland from	No. Moved from Scotland to
United Kingdom	56,000	47,000
North of England	6,000	5,000
Yorks & Humberside	5,000	4,000
East Midlands	4,000	3,000
East Anglia	2,000	2,000
South East	20,000	17,000
South West	4,000	4,000
West Midlands	3,000	3,000
North West England	6,000	6,000
Wales	2,000	1,000
Northern Ireland	2,000	2,000

(Government Statistical Service, 1993)

It can be seen from Table 8.14 above that the greatest movement of people occurs between Scotland and the South East of England, with more people coming to Scotland from this

area (20,000) than migrating to it (17,000). Results from this research suggested that respondents from South East England had a clearer image of Grampian than people from other areas of the UK which may be influenced by contacts moving to the area, reiterating the importance of word-of-mouth communication in image formation.

8.4.6 Other Sources of Information

When asked to give details of other sources of information used in their image formation, individuals reported that music, paintings, literature, plays and prose; general knowledge; geography lessons and business in the area had contributed to their image of Grampian. The largest number of respondents who noted other sources of information as important, indicated the image or experience of other areas of Scotland had influenced them, questioning whether the image of Grampian can be separated from that of Scotland as a whole. Since Grampian is part of Scotland, its image is a sub-set of Scotland's image. However, differentiation between areas of Scotland allows scope for regional image promotion. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of regional promotion may be limited by visitors not recognising administrative boundaries, such as regional divisions, when selecting a destination. Therefore, the use of a region as a practical unit area is questioned.

Using the illustration of an individual's perception of the scenery as one attribute of a destination, Figure 8.12 below proposes an integrated image of Grampian, Scotland and the United Kingdom. Scenery was chosen because, according to respondents, it is Grampian's most notable attribute.

Figure 8.12: Potential Issue of Separation

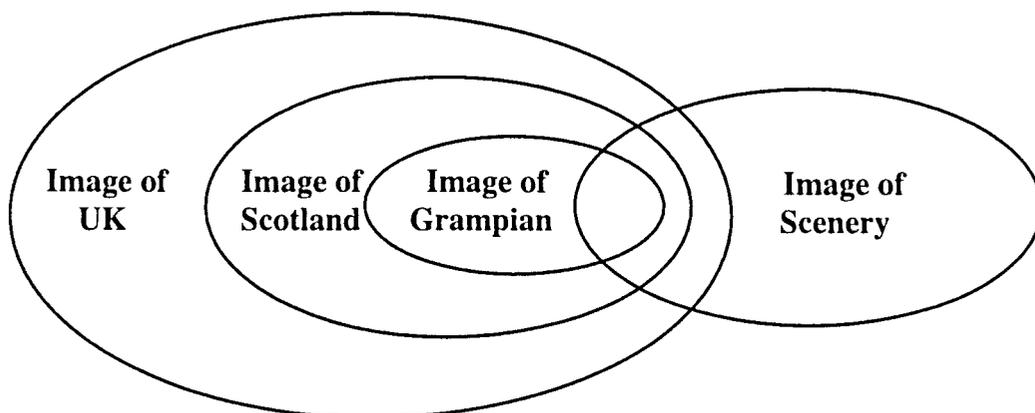


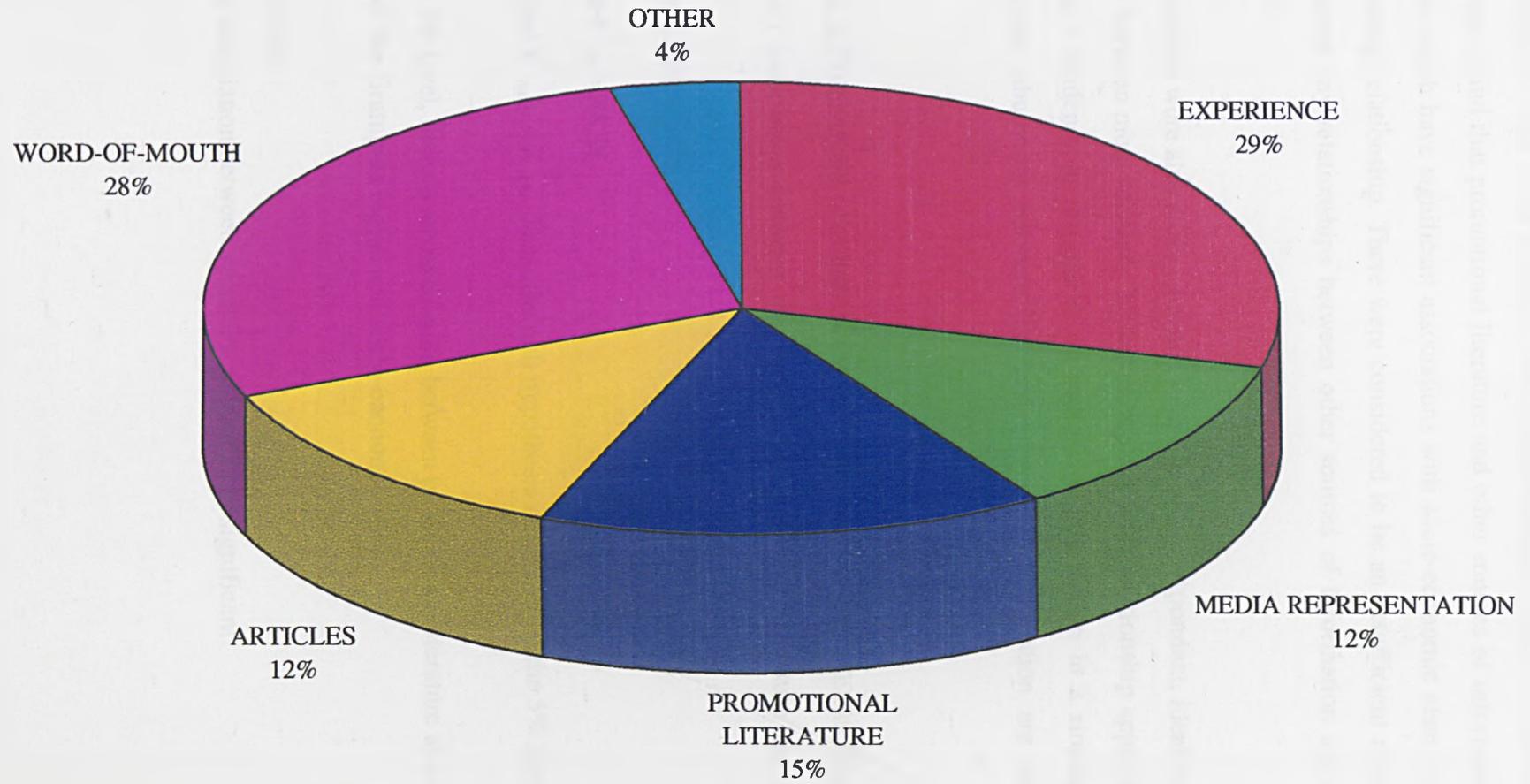
Figure 8.12 shows that an image of Grampian is likely to be formed as a sub-section of an image of Scotland. Similarly, a relationship more pertinent for overseas than domestic visitors, an image of Scotland is likely to be a sub-section of an image of the UK. The image an individual perceives of scenery is influenced by a number of factors, as discussed in relation to image formation. The image perceived of Grampian's scenery is also likely to be a sub-section of the perceived image of both Scotland and the UK.

Arguably, the relationship, shown in Figure 8.12 above, between a national and regional image differs between visitor markets. Individuals in closer proximity to a destination or interested in specific activities, are more likely to separate an image at a regional and national level.

From a promotional perspective, interviews conducted with members of the tourism industry revealed conflicting views on the issue of separation. The majority of interviewees believed that the image of Grampian is inseparable from that of Scotland. Although, those interviewed stated that districts within the region were perceived by potential visitors to have individual images, when the region was considered in its entirety it was similar to the rest of Scotland. Branding and sub-branding can be used to differentiate between districts within a region and regions within a country. The Scottish Tourist Board, for example, uses different themes and images to promote different parts of Scotland in an attempt to differentiate the product and associated images.

The importance ratings given to different sources of information in the formation of an individual's image has implications for promotional activities. Although promotional organisations can potentially influence many of these sources indirectly, promotional literature is the only category that can be directly influenced (Gunn, 1988). Since greater emphasis is placed on experience and word-of-mouth communication, as shown in Figure 8.13, it may be pertinent for promoters to subdivide individuals who place importance upon promotional literature in an attempt to maximise image promotion effectiveness. One method of categorisation is by demographics. Therefore, relationships found between importance placed on sources of information and demographics were analysed.

Figure 8.13: Very Important Impact on Image of Grampian



8.4.7 Cross tabulated Sources of information with Age and Socio-economic Group

Sources of information were cross tabulated with socio-economic class to ascertain any associations. It was found that promotional literature and other sources of information are the two mediums which have significant associations with socio-economic class although neither have a strong relationship. There were considered to be an insufficient number of responses to discern any relationships between other sources of information and socio-economic classes.

Sources of information were also cross tabulated with age of the respondent, identifying an interdependence between most variables. However, the strongest relationship appears to be between age and a tendency to respond to all sources of information in a similar way. Therefore, all cross tabulations between age and sources of information are analysed together.

8.4.8 Importance of Promotional Literature Cross tabulated with Socio-economic Group

H_0 = there is no association between the variables promotional literature and socio-economic class.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 80.75564 \text{ where } v = 60$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} = 79.08 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 88.38$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} < \chi^2_{1\%}$. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected at the 5% level.

Therefore at the 5% level, there is an association between promotional literature as a source of information for the Grampian region and socio-economic class.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.13300$$

This indicates an association between variables, although not significant.

Table 8.15: Promotional Literature as a source of information cross tabulated with SEC

PROMO/SEC	NO REPLY	V.UNIMP	UNIMP	NEITHER	IMP	V.IMP	TOTAL
NO REPLY	15	3	4	2	2	0	26
CLASS I	41	27	33	39	56	11	207
II NM	106	36	45	74	101	25	387
II M	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
III NM	29	6	14	21	20	10	100
III M	24	10	7	9	16	7	73
IV M	8	2	2	4	8	4	28
V NM	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
V M	1	0	0	2	4	1	8
NO JOB	2	1	0	2	0	0	5
FORCES	1	0	1	1	1	1	5
STUDENTS	4	4	4	8	3	0	23
HOUSE	17	6	4	7	10	4	48
TOTAL	249	97	114	169	221	63	913

There appears to be a relationship between increasing importance placed upon promotional literature as a source of information with decreasing socio-economic class. Evidence of this can be seen in Table 8.15 and the statistical analysis above. A possible explanation is that the image perceived by individuals from higher socio-economic classes may result from a wider variety of information. However, it should be noted that the sample size of respondents from lower socio-economic classes was smaller than for higher classes, potentially leading to an over-emphasis on a small statistical base.

If the statistical base can be used to make generalisations, to maximise the effectiveness of promotional literature relevant organisations may wish to promote an image of the region through this medium to lower socio-economic classes.

8.4.9 Importance of Sources of Information Cross tabulated with Age

H_0 = there is no association between the variables promotional literature and age.

For all information sources:

$$v = 25, \chi^2_{5\%} = 37.562 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} = 44.314$$

For promotional literature, $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 84.08110$ and Cramers V = 0.13572

Both these results indicate an association between the two variables.

For articles, $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 73.83605$ and Cramers V = 0.12718

This indicates no association between variables, conflicting with the chi-square statistic.

For media representation, $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 76.29104$ and Cramers V = 0.12928

Both these results indicate an association between the two variables.

For word-of-mouth communication, $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 74.61694$ and Cramers V = 0.12785

This indicates no association between variables, conflicting with the chi-square statistic.

For experience, $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 66.78649$ and Cramers V = 0.12096

This indicates no association between variables, conflicting with the chi-square statistic.

There is an identifiable relationship between age and importance placed on sources of information in image formation. Trends are similar for promotional literature, articles and media representation in responses from different age groups. Very generally, increasing importance is placed upon these sources of information with increasing age. Therefore, image promoters may choose to target older potential visitors for whom promotional material, and other sources of information, has greater importance in image formation. This may be advantageous because of the statistical association found in this research between age and socio-economic class and therefore the increasing disposable income that could potentially be spent in a destination by older visitors.

8.5 Distance as a Function of Image

To study the relationship between clarity of image perceived and distance lived from a destination, political region was cross tabulated with descriptions made of Grampian. Visitor generation from the regions was studied through past experience and likelihood of future visits to Grampian.

8.5.1 Description of Grampian to a Friend with reference to Home Town

Respondents were asked how they would describe Grampian to a friend to determine general image perception. Individuals were encouraged to give a full response, describing several factors, shown by space allocated on the questionnaire (see Appendix 4). Weighted values were assigned to responses according to the order in which they were given.

This research has indicated that clarity of image increases disproportionately with proximity, and perhaps more significantly by longitude. There are several possible explanations for this. One possibility is that the clearer image perceived by those living on the East of mainland Britain relates to the higher number of respondents in the sample who had visited Grampian, as shown later in Table 8.18. In addition, for those living in Scotland, additional sources of information for Grampian's image are more readily available in the form of Scottish newspapers, television and radio stations.

This confirms the importance of distance in image formation and destination selection, as proposed in Chapter V, and potentially adding a further dimension to it. When descriptions used to describe Grampian to a friend are considered for each geographical region, this trend can be identified. Analysis was restricted to six factors to keep the sample size manageable.

To calculate the weighted description for each region, the weighted values assigned to each description were summated, shown in Table 8.16. Respondents from North West England commented most frequently on mountains and hills (weighted value of 13.5), whilst those from South East England commented most on the poor weather (value of 8.5) and geographical location of Grampian (value of 28).

Respondents from South West of England stated scenery as one of their descriptors more often than those from other regions (value of 6.5), but also had a weighted value of 24 for the description of Grampian being in North East of Scotland, suggesting a lack of depth to the image perceived. This superficial image perception may be attributed to the lack of stimuli experienced. The distance from Grampian renders it unlikely that many newspapers, television or radio programmes will be imported to this area. Therefore, any influence which these stimuli may have can not be experienced by those in South West

England. As a result, promotional activities may have to compensate for this lack of 'free' image promotion.

Respondents from the West of the United Kingdom appear to have a clearer perception of Grampian being mountainous or hilly than those from the East coast. Those from South England believed weather was worse than people living further North. This may in part be attributed to generalisations made about 'the far North' in national weather forecasts, meaning Northern Scotland, leading to misconceptions of the East coast's weather.

Table 8.16: Weighted Description of Grampian to a Friend by Home Town

	Scenery	Hills	Friendly	Weather	North East	Distance	Weighted Total
Highlands & Islands	2	0	0.75	0.75	0	0	3.5
Stirling, Angus & Fife	2	0.5	0	0.5	1	0	4
Edinburgh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Glasgow	1.75	1.75	0.75	1.75	5	0	11
South West Scotland	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Borders & Lothian	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
North England	1.5	3.25	0	2.5	6	0	13.5
North West England	6	13.5	0	2.5	10	0	32
Yorks & Humberside	1	1.75	0	1	6	0	9.75
East Midlands	1	0.75	0	0.75	7	0	9.5
West Midlands	7.5	7.75	0	3.25	15	0	33.5
East Anglia	1.75	0.75	0	1.5	2	1	7
South East England	6.25	5	1.5	8.5	28	1.75	51
South West England	6.5	14	0	5	24	3	52.5
Wales	1.5	1.75	0	1	3	0	7.25
Northern Ireland	0.75	1	0	1.75	3	0	6.5
Abroad	4	4	0	1	3	0	12

To take into consideration the number of respondents contacted from each political area when comparing image perceptions, an average weighted value was calculated from the weighted values in Table 8.16. The average weighted values are shown below in Table 8.17.

Table 8.17: Descriptions of Grampian by Region of Home

Home Town	Number of Respondents	Weighted Description	Average Weighted Value
Abroad	34	12.00	0.35
Northern Ireland	23	6.50	0.28
Wales	18	7.25	0.40
South West England	131	52.50	0.40
South East England	122	51.00	0.42
East Anglia	10	7.00	0.70
West Midlands	95	33.50	0.35
East Midlands	31	9.50	0.31
Yorks & Humberside	30	9.75	0.33
North West England	83	32.00	0.39
North England	31	13.25	0.43
Borders & Lothian	6	1.00	0.17
South West Scotland	15	1.00	0.07
Glasgow	100	11.00	0.11
Edinburgh	47	0.00	0.00
Stirling, Angus & Fife	50	4.00	0.08
Highlands & Islands	66	3.50	0.05

Arguably, respondents with a clearer image of Grampian would not use general descriptions to recapitulate the area, instead being more specific. This supports the proposal by Echtner & Ritchie (1993) that image is on two levels: a general overall image and images of individual aspects of the destination. When little is known about a destination, a general image is perceived. A more detailed image, relating to individual aspects of the region also develops as information is accumulated. As knowledge increases, continual refinements are made to the image perceived, reflecting the model of Fakeye & Crompton (1991). Therefore, it can be assumed that the higher the average weighted value of the six factors considered in the analysis, the less clear is the perceived image of Grampian.

Based on this assumption, Table 8.17 indicates that respondents from Edinburgh have the clearest image of Grampian, followed by people from the Highlands & Islands and South West Scotland. After other areas of Scotland, Northern Ireland has the next lowest incidence of these descriptions, followed by East Midlands and Yorkshire & Humberside. This verifies the suggestion that longitude influences clarity of image with Edinburgh, East Midlands and Yorkshire & Humberside all east coast or central areas. Additionally, the South East of England had a marginally lower average weighted value than the South West and Wales.

East Anglia has the highest average weighted value. However, with only 10 respondents from this area conclusions can not be drawn from these results. This is followed by the North of England. If distance from the destination was the main factor influencing clarity of image, people from the North of England would be expected to have a clearer image of Grampian than those in the South. However, it appears that the clarity of image, measured in this way, is comparable between the North and South of England.

It can therefore be suggested that at a certain distance from a destination, thereafter there are no differences in perceived image, but closer than this point, the image varies. In this research the boundary between England and Scotland may be identified as the appropriate distance from Grampian where clarity of image decreases. This may be because those living South of the national boundary perceive Grampian more as a sub-section of Scotland and hence share the same image, relating to the issue of separation. This suggests that image promotion is likely to be more effective if those beyond the point where clarity of image diminishes are targeted and Grampian is differentiated from the rest of Scotland. Meanwhile, those living closer to the destination, in this instance living in Scotland, may be most effectively attracted through more detailed image promotion.

To test whether destination selection is as closely linked to image perception, as suggested in Chapter IV, experience of Grampian was cross-tabulated with home town of respondents.

8.5.2 Experience of Grampian with Reference to Home Town

The relationship between distance from a destination and experience of Grampian was analysed, as shown in Table 8.18 below. Administrative regions in which respondents resided were assigned broad bands A-H, according to approximate distance from Grampian. A general trend was revealed that the closer respondents live to Grampian, the more likely they were to have visited the region.

Table 8.18: Home Town cross tabulated with Experience of Grampian

Home Town	Distance	Visited	Not Visited	Visited (%)	Not Visited (%)
Highlands & Islands	A	60	6	91	9
Stirling, Angus & Fife	A	36	9	80	20
Edinburgh	B	40	7	85	15
Glasgow	B	76	21	78	22
South West Scotland	C	12	3	80	20
Borders & Lothian	C	4	2	67	33
North England	D	13	17	43	57
North West England	E	21	58	27	73
Yorks & Humberside	E	16	13	55	45
East Midlands	F	12	19	39	61
West Midlands	F	22	73	23	77
East Anglia	F	4	6	40	60
South East England	G	42	76	36	64
South West England	G	41	86	32	68
Wales	F	2	15	12	88
Northern Ireland	E	7	16	30	70
Abroad	H	5	26	16	84
TOTALS		413	453	-	-

However, Table 8.18 shows several political regions do not have the corresponding numbers who have visited Grampian which would be expected using this basic scale. Regions with a higher incidence than expected include Edinburgh; South West Scotland and especially Yorkshire & Humberside which has 55% of respondents resident in this region having visited Grampian. Conversely, regions with a lower incidence than expected include North West England; West Midlands and Wales. Experience of the region also reflects the relative longitudes of respondents home town and the destination, with more visitors from the East of the UK to Grampian.

To determine whether the decision to visit Grampian was related to image perception, and whether reasons for visiting a destination change with increasing distance, experience of Grampian was subdivided into main purpose of visit. It was assumed that the dominant influence in destination selection for those travelling on business, and to a lesser extent visiting friends and relatives, was unlikely to be the image perceived of the destination.

8.5.3 Main purpose of last visit to Grampian with Reference to Home Town

The main purpose of last visit taken to Grampian was used in a cross tabulation with home town to avoid multiple responses from respondents who had visited Grampian on more

than one occasion. A high level of interdependence between these two variables was indicated by this analysis, suggesting that distance from the region affects the individual's reason for visiting Grampian.

H_0 = there is no association between the variables main purpose of last visit to the Grampian region and Home Town.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 364.66615 \text{ where } v = 108$$

Although Chi-square tables used did not extend beyond 100 degrees of freedom, values can be approximated, by assuming a continual decrease in value differentiation with increasing degrees of freedom.

$$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 133.26 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 145.16$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ and $\chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is a strong association between the main purpose of last visit and Home Town.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.25801$$

This indicates there is a significant association between the variables, reinforcing the results of the Chi-square statistic. This is one of the highest Cramers V statistics calculated from the data collected, suggesting a strong interdependence between the variables.

Trends identified in Table 8.19 below, again highlight the influence of longitude and proximity from Grampian, here on experience of the region.

Table 8.19: Main purpose of last visit to Grampian cross tabulated with Home Town

WHY/HOME	NO REPLY	HOLIDAY	VFR	BUSINESS	OTHER	TOTAL
NO REPLY	2	0	1	0	0	3
GRAMPIAN	17	2	0	0	0	19
HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS	7	14	21	20	4	66
LOCH LOMOND & STIRLING	16	10	13	11	0	50
EDINBURGH	9	10	14	14	0	47
GLASGOW	25	29	9	35	1	99
AYRSHIRE & SW SCOTLAND	2	4	4	5	0	15
BORDERS & LOTHIAN	2	1	2	1	0	6
NORTH ENGLAND	18	6	4	3	0	31
NW ENGLAND	62	11	3	6	1	83
YORKS & HUMBERSIDE	14	10	1	4	1	30
EAST MIDLANDS	19	7	3	1	1	31
WEST MIDLANDS	73	15	1	6	0	95
EAST ANGLIA	5	3	2	0	0	10
SE ENGLAND	79	25	14	4	0	122
SW ENGLAND	91	29	7	4	0	131
WALES	16	1	1	0	0	18
N IRELAND	16	3	3	1	0	23
ABROAD	27	3	3	1	0	34
TOTAL	500	183	106	116	8	913

Table 8.19 shows that people living in areas of closest proximity, namely the Highlands and Islands; Loch Lomond, Stirling, The Trossachs, Dundee, Angus and Fife; and Edinburgh, had primarily been visiting friends and relatives and were secondly on business, followed by on holiday.

Those respondents who travelled from the West of Scotland, Glasgow and Ayrshire, the Clyde Valley and South West Scotland, were more likely to be on business, followed by on holiday and least likely to be visiting friends and relatives. The majority of respondents from England were mainly on holiday when they last visited Grampian. Respondents from Wales, Northern Ireland or abroad had equally been to Grampian on holiday and visiting friends and relatives, with only two people on business.

These results suggest that perception of Grampian as a holiday destination increases with geographical distance as suggested by the work of Crompton (1979) and Hunt (1975). This supports the proposition that people living in close proximity may prefer to take day-trips to the destination rather than holidays. To consider the relationship between destination selection and geographical location further, intentions to visit Grampian were cross tabulated with home town.

8.5.4 Intentions of Future Visits to Grampian Referenced to Home Town

The hypothesis that likelihood of visiting decreased with increasing distance from a destination was tested. The results revealed that there was a strong relationship between distance from Grampian and likelihood of visiting within the next 2 years. This time-scale was used as an indication of plans for the immediate future to avoid more tentative, long-term possibilities.

H_0 = there is no association between the variables likelihood of visiting Grampian in the next 2 years and Home Town.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 531.284 \text{ where } v = 108$$

$$\chi^2_{5\%} \approx 133.26 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 145.16$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%} \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%}$ and the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is a very strong association between likelihood of a future visit and Home Town.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.31142$$

This indicates a very significant association between the variables, reinforcing the results of the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.20 below shows the effect of increasing distance on likelihood of visiting. The only exceptions are respondents from South East England and Yorkshire & Humberside, where despite the distance, a visit to Grampian within the next 2 years appears probable.

Table 8.20: Likelihood of Future Visit to Grampian cross tabulated with Home Town

WHY/HOME	V. Probable	Probable	Unsure	Unlikely	V. Unlikely	TOTAL
NO REPLY	1	0	1	1	0	3
GRAMPIAN	0	2	0	0	0	2
HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS	42	9	1	2	6	60
LOCH LOMOND & STIRLING	23	7	5	5	6	46
EDINBURGH	21	10	9	4	3	47
GLASGOW	37	22	11	17	9	96
AYRSHIRE & SW SCOTLAND	4	5	2	1	1	13
BORDERS & LOTHIAN	3	0	0	1	2	6
NORTH ENGLAND	7	3	5	6	9	30
NW ENGLAND	7	11	18	21	20	77
YORKS & HUMBERSIDE	5	9	5	5	4	28
EAST MIDLANDS	3	8	6	6	8	31
WEST MIDLANDS	5	17	17	24	30	93
EAST ANGLIA	2	2	1	2	3	10
SE ENGLAND	23	26	19	28	23	119
SW ENGLAND	7	14	31	35	39	126
WALES	1	2	2	6	6	17
N IRELAND	2	0	4	9	5	20
ABROAD	2	4	11	4	10	31
TOTAL	195	151	148	177	184	855

The results in Table 8.20 above contradict the results of the main purpose of the last visit taken to Grampian, but reiterate the negative effect of distance from a destination on likelihood of visiting. However, those living closer to the region may have other reasons to travel to Grampian in the next two years, not considered in this table, such as on business or visiting friends and relatives.

To study further the role of geographical distance in the individual's destination selection process, the location of main holiday taken was cross tabulated with home town. Although, as discussed in Chapter V, behaviour can not be used as a direct measurement of image perception, it is an indicator.

8.5.5 Location of Main holiday last year cross tabulated with Home Town

H_0 = there is no association between the variables location of main holiday taken and home town.

$$\chi^2_{\text{calc}} = 155.19959 \text{ where } v = 126$$

$$\therefore \chi^2_{5\%} \approx 152.94 \text{ and } \chi^2_{1\%} \approx 165.94$$

$\therefore \chi^2_{\text{calc}} > \chi^2_{5\%}$ but $\chi^2_{\text{calc}} < \chi^2_{1\%}$. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected at the 5% level and accepted at the 1% level.

There is an association at the 5% level.

$$\text{Cramers } V = 0.15583$$

This indicates there is a weak association between the variables, reinforcing the Chi-square statistic.

Table 8.21: Location of main holiday taken last year cross tabulated with Home Town

WHY/HOME	NO REPLY	GRAMPIAN	SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	WALES/NI	ABROAD	OTHER	TOTAL
NO REPLY	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
GRAMPIAN	5	0	1	2	0	11	0	19
H.LANDS & ISLANDS	18	0	6	12	0	28	2	66
L. LOMOND/STIRLING	13	1	4	4	1	27	0	50
EDINBURGH	10	0	2	4	0	31	0	47
GLASGOW	17	1	11	4	1	63	2	99
AYRSHIRE/SW S.LAND	4	0	4	0	0	7	0	15
BORDERS & LOTHIAN	1	0	0	3	0	2	0	6
NORTH ENGLAND	7	0	1	3	0	19	1	31
NW ENGLAND	17	0	2	14	3	47	0	83
YORKS/HUMBERSIDE	2	0	2	4	0	21	1	30
EAST MIDLANDS	5	0	3	9	0	14	0	31
WEST MIDLANDS	21	0	3	18	3	50	0	95
EAST ANGLIA	1	0	2	4	0	3	0	10
SE ENGLAND	26	1	13	27	2	53	0	122
SW ENGLAND	32	1	7	32	1	58	0	131
WALES	4	0	2	5	0	7	0	18
N IRELAND	6	1	0	1	0	15	0	23
ABROAD	6	0	1	0	0	27	0	34
TOTAL	197	5	64	146	11	484	6	913

The cross tabulation of main holiday taken with the home town of the respondent, as shown in Table 8.21 above, identifies holidays abroad are the most popular location for respondents from all political regions with the exception of the Borders, Lothian and Forth Valley, and East Anglia. Respondents from these areas favoured England as a main holiday destination. However, there were only 6 and 10 respondents in each category respectively, therefore these results can not form the basis of any conclusions.

These results show the growing tendency for UK residents to travel abroad for their main holidays. Between 1984 and 1996, the proportion of British adults taking a holiday of four or more nights abroad has increased from 24% to 32% and similarly those holidaying in Britain has fallen 8% in the same time period to 34% in 1996 (English Tourist Board, 1997). This highlights the increasing role of UK destinations as second holiday or short break choices. Even in this role, the results also indicate that Grampian is apparently lagging behind the rest of Scotland, and Scotland behind England.

Respondents from Glasgow are the only group who do not follow the trend of decreasing numbers of holidays taken abroad, England and then Scotland. This may be explained by the geographical location of Glasgow which grants good access to the rest of Scotland. Glaswegians also have the highest incidence of people travelling abroad, numbering 63, followed by South West England, with 58. This may reflect the high number of respondents contacted from each area, and the proximity to Glasgow airport. However, again, caution must be used when drawing conclusions from the data collected due to the number of respondents assigned to some of the categories.

The five visitors to Grampian were each from different political regions, affording no valuable information. However, the highest number of respondents to holiday in Scotland were from South East England, 13, followed by Glasgow, 11. This, in conjunction with the statistical analysis above, suggests that distance was influential but not integral to the process of destination selection.

The results shown in Table 8.21 above identify a potential market for Grampian tourism. If the image of Grampian is similar to or a sub-section of an image of Scotland, potentially individuals who have previously visited other areas of Scotland can be attracted to Grampian. The potential for this would be dependent upon the importance of image in the process of destination selection.

8.6 Destination Choice for Holidays Taken

To study the role of image within the process of destination selection, respondents were asked about holidays taken between Autumn 1992 and 1993. Factors perceived to have been important in the individual's choice of destination were analysed in relation to main

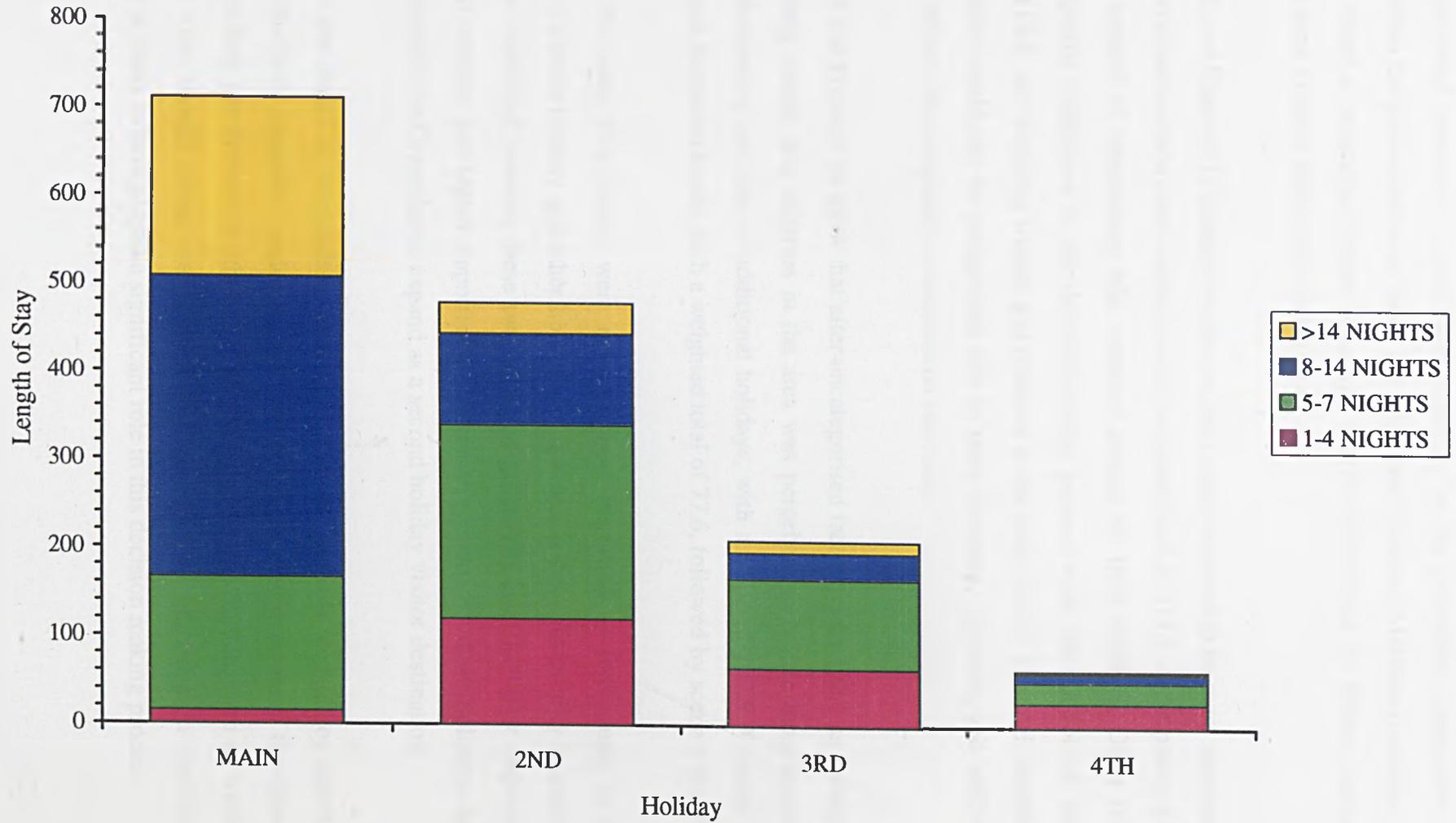
and other holidays. This classification was made to establish any variance in role of factors in this decision-making process between the two types of holiday.

The study of holidays taken in the last 12 months, revealed that 715 people had taken a main holiday and 777 had taken other holidays. The majority of respondents (484, 68%) went abroad for their main holiday, with only 146 (20%) on holiday in England, 69 (10%), in Scotland, and only 5 respondents visiting Grampian. The location of other holidays taken was split mainly between England (304) and abroad (302), with 39% of the additional holidays taken in each. However, only 19 respondents took a holiday in Grampian, with 9 visiting the region as a second holiday destination.

The length of stay varied between main and additional holidays, as expected. Shown in Figure 8.14, for main holidays, the highest number of respondents, 342 (48%), spent between 8 and 14 nights on their holiday. This was followed by those spending more than 14 nights, with 203 (29%), possibly higher than expected. A modest 151 people (21%) stayed for 5-7 nights and 15 people 1-4 nights. The largest category for second and third holidays was 5-7 nights. For fourth holidays there was an equal divide between 1-4 nights and 5-7 nights.

The high average number of holidays taken by individuals sampled indicates potential for increasing the market of visitors to Grampian. This may favour Grampian's development as a visitor destination as it appears to be perceived as a short-stay destination.

Figure 8.14: Duration of Holidays Taken Last Year



8.6.1 Factors Perceived Important in Destination Selection

Factors perceived important in destination selection by the individuals themselves were studied within the classifications of main and additional holidays. Multiple responses were analysed using a weighting system to assign relative importance to factors, assuming responses were given in decreasing importance.

Table 8.22 and Figure 8.15 identify weather as the factor perceived to be most important in destination selection for a main holiday, with a weighted total of 311.1, corresponding with the high number of respondents who travelled abroad for their holidays. Other factors which appeared significant in this decision-making process were costs involved, with a value of 118.6, and knowing friends and relatives in the area, 102.3. The high number of factors which could not be categorised due to their diversity, for main and additional holidays, reflects the complexity of destination selection.

Table 8.23 and Figure 8.16 show that after uncategorised factors, with 122.7 as a weighted value, having friends and relatives in the area was perceived to be the most important factor in destination selection of additional holidays, with a value of 109.5. Weather was the next most important factor, with a weighted total of 77.6, followed by scenery (52.1).

Although the same five factors were rated as most important by individuals in their selection of a main holiday and other holiday destinations, a different priority is attached. Differences identified between these two selection processes, such as lower importance attached to weather and higher importance attached to scenery for other holidays, again suggests potential for Grampian to expand as a second holiday visitor destination.

Image was not stated by respondents to be an important factor in destination selection. However, due to its intangible nature, respondents may have been unaware of the effect of image upon their perceptions of other factors relating to the destination, such as weather. Therefore, even though image was not specifically stated as important in destination selection it is likely to have played a significant role in this decision making process.

Table 8.22: Factors Important in Choice of Main Holiday Destination

	1 st Factor	2 nd Factor	3 rd Factor	4 th Factor	5 th Factor	6 th Factor	Weighted Total
Scenery	31	47	18	6	2	2	94.1
Hills	3	5	1	1	0	0	9.0
Quiet	28	13	12	5	2	1	54.5
Clean	3	2	3	1	1	0	8.5
Friendly	5	8	15	10	3	4	35.0
Weather	210	70	30	11	9	2	311.1
Few People	1	4	2	1	0	0	6.9
Coast	14	43	19	3	3	1	72.3
History	7	9	6	2	1	0	21.9
Parks	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.6
Town	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.9
Space	3	1	1	1	1	0	6.0
Sport	12	14	5	1	4	0	31.7
Facilities	3	5	4	2	0	1	12.6
Buildings	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.8
Culture	11	24	15	13	3	0	55.5
Access	14	8	6	8	2	3	34.3
Transport	4	0	2	0	2	2	7.8
Nightlife	13	20	18	13	2	0	55.7
Shops	0	1	3	3	0	0	5.4
Costs	38	36	33	20	8	6	118.6
Food	3	18	36	22	16	2	74.0
Relaxing	6	10	7	6	2	2	27.0
Lots to do	24	29	23	13	5	3	82.1
VFR	79	14	5	7	3	0	102.3
Distance	13	9	3	6	0	1	28.2
Accommodation	23	18	14	16	6	2	66.2
Walks	10	5	11	1	2	0	25.2
New Places	17	13	6	2	1	1	36.0
Experience	13	4	3	1	0	0	19.7
Family	14	4	3	4	1	1	23.9
Business	11	2	1	1	0	0	14.3
Children	8	4	4	2	4	1	19.1
Other	80	59	66	44	21	16	237.3

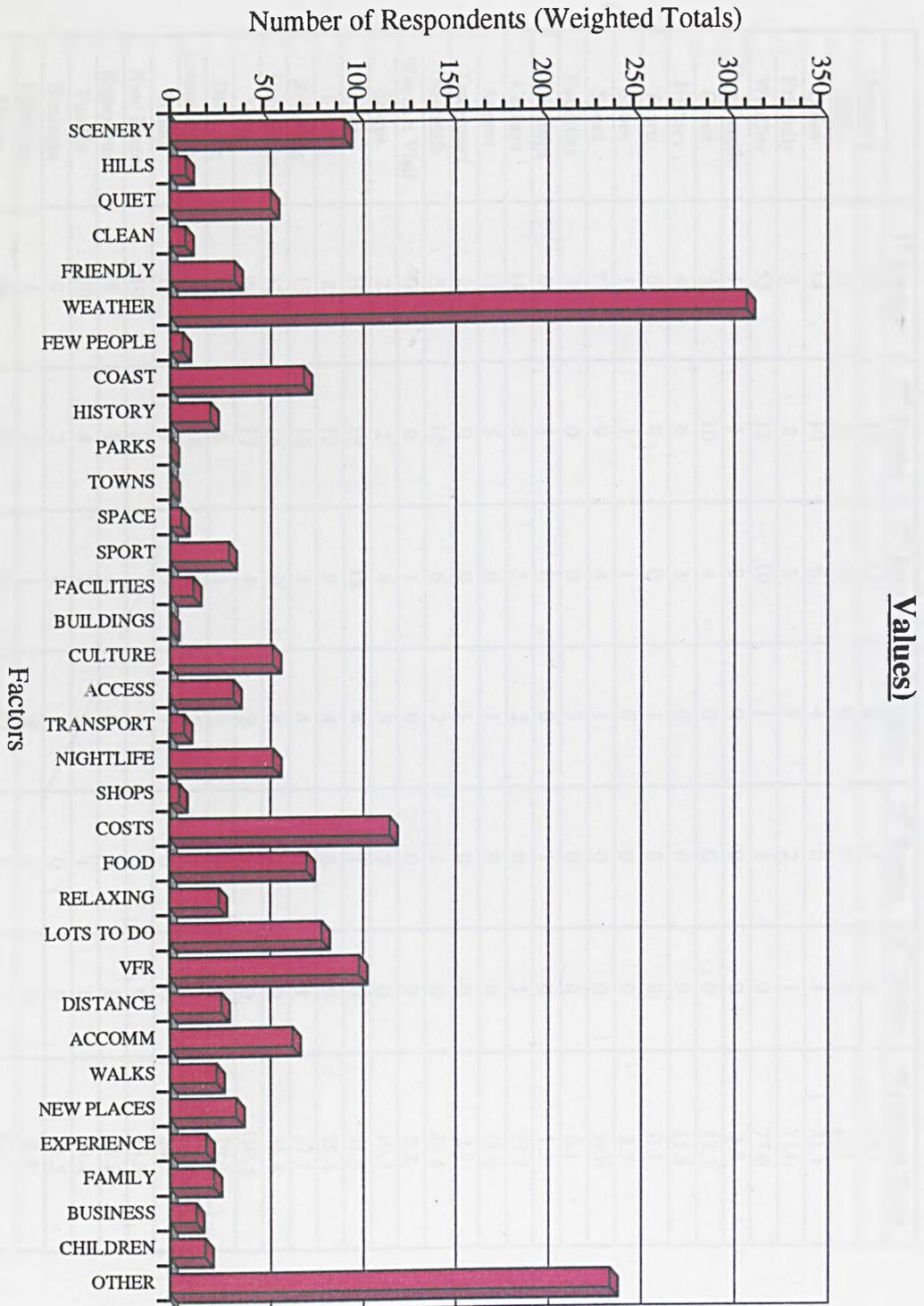


Figure 8.15: Factors Important in the Choice of Main Holiday Destination (Weighted

Table 8.23: Factors Important in Choice of Other Holiday Destination

	1 st Factor	2 nd Factor	3 rd Factor	4 th Factor	5 th Factor	6 th Factor	Weighted Total
Scenery	26	17	11	2	1	0	52.1
Hills	3	3	0	0	0	0	5.7
Quiet	14	10	6	4	0	1	31.1
Friendly	3	2	3	3	2	1	11.0
Weather	53	17	10	1	1	0	77.6
Few People	1	1	2	0	0	0	3.5
Coast	5	10	4	0	0	0	17.2
History	4	6	3	0	0	0	11.8
Town	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.7
Space	1	1	1	0	0	0	2.7
Sport	27	9	4	1	0	0	39.0
Facilities	3	0	0	3	0	0	5.1
Buildings	0	1	0	0	1	0	1.5
Culture	14	6	3	2	0	1	23.7
Access	11	5	6	1	0	0	21.0
Transport	2	0	0	1	0	0	2.7
Nightlife	5	10	6	2	2	0	21.4
Worth a Visit	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.8
Shops	2	2	4	3	2	0	10.3
Costs	19	19	15	4	1	0	51.5
Food	4	12	9	4	6	0	28.4
Relaxing	13	10	3	4	0	1	27.7
Lots to do	12	14	9	4	3	0	36.4
VFR	89	17	4	2	1	0	109.5
Distance	11	6	1	3	0	0	19.3
Accommodation	13	18	4	5	1	2	37.5
Walks	13	9	3	1	0	0	24.2
New Places	10	3	1	0	0	0	13.5
Experience	8	2	1	0	1	0	11.2
Family	20	8	2	0	1	0	29.4
Business	9	2	0	1	0	0	11.5
Children	4	2	1	0	0	0	6.6
Other	56	31	36	11	3	1	122.7

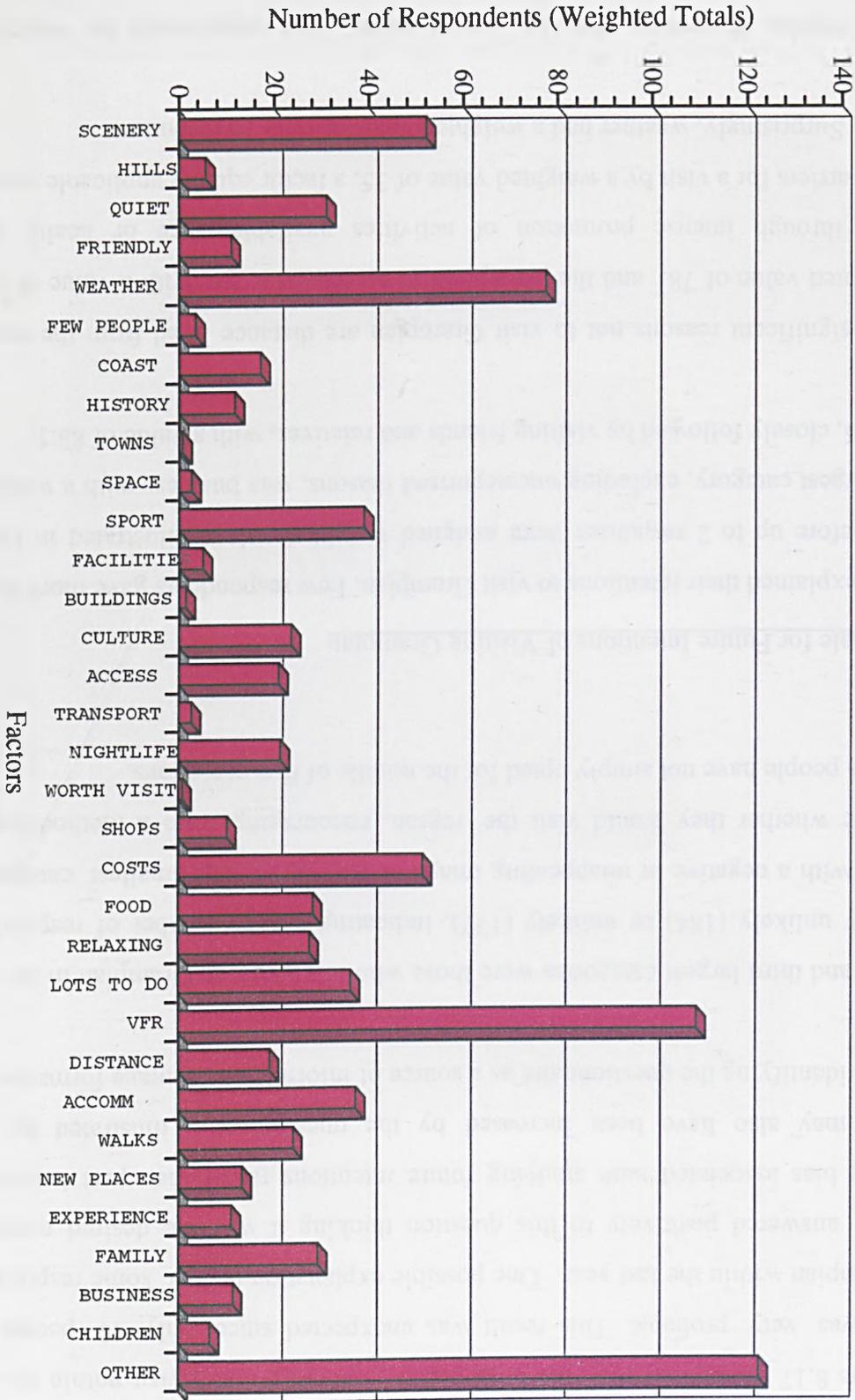


Figure 8.16: Factors Important in Other Holiday Destinations (Weighted Values)

8.6.2 The Likelihood of Visiting Grampian in the Next Two Years

To ascertain whether respondents contacted considered Grampian as a potential visitor destination, respondents were asked the probability of visiting the region within the next 2 years. Figure 8.17 shows that 195 individuals (23%) indicated that a visit within the next two years was very probable. This result was unexpected since only 19 people had visited Grampian within the last year. One possible explanation is that some respondents may have answered positively to this question thinking it was the desired response, highlighting bias associated with studying future intentions rather than past behaviour. Awareness may also have been increased by the questionnaire, illustrated by two respondents identifying the questionnaire as a source of information in image formation.

The second and third largest categories were those who felt a visit to Grampian in the next 2 years very unlikely (184) or unlikely (177), indicating a high number of respondents (over 50%) with a negative or unappealing image of the region. The smallest category is those unsure whether they would visit the region, encouraging from a methodological viewpoint as people have not simply opted for the middle of five categories.

8.6.3 Rationale for Future Intentions of Visiting Grampian

Individuals explained their intentions to visit Grampian. Few respondents gave more than 2 factors, therefore up to 2 responses were assigned weighted values, illustrated in Figure 8.18. The largest category, excluding uncategorised reasons, was business with a weighted value of 89.5, closely followed by visiting friends and relatives, with a value of 88.5.

Particularly significant reasons not to visit Grampian are distance lived from the region, with a weighted value of 78, and the perception of no reason to go, with a value of 62.5, addressable through intense promotion of activities available. Age or health were considered barriers for a visit by a weighted value of 35, a factor equally applicable to other destinations. Surprisingly, weather had a weighted value of only 16 responses.

From these results, it appears that the 'image-reality' gap experienced by visitors to Grampian does deter potential visitors from the region. This confirms the conclusion drawn that image does play a significant role in destination selection even though respondents did not identify it specifically as an important factor in this process.

Figure 8.17: The likelihood of a Visit to Grampian within the Next 2 Years



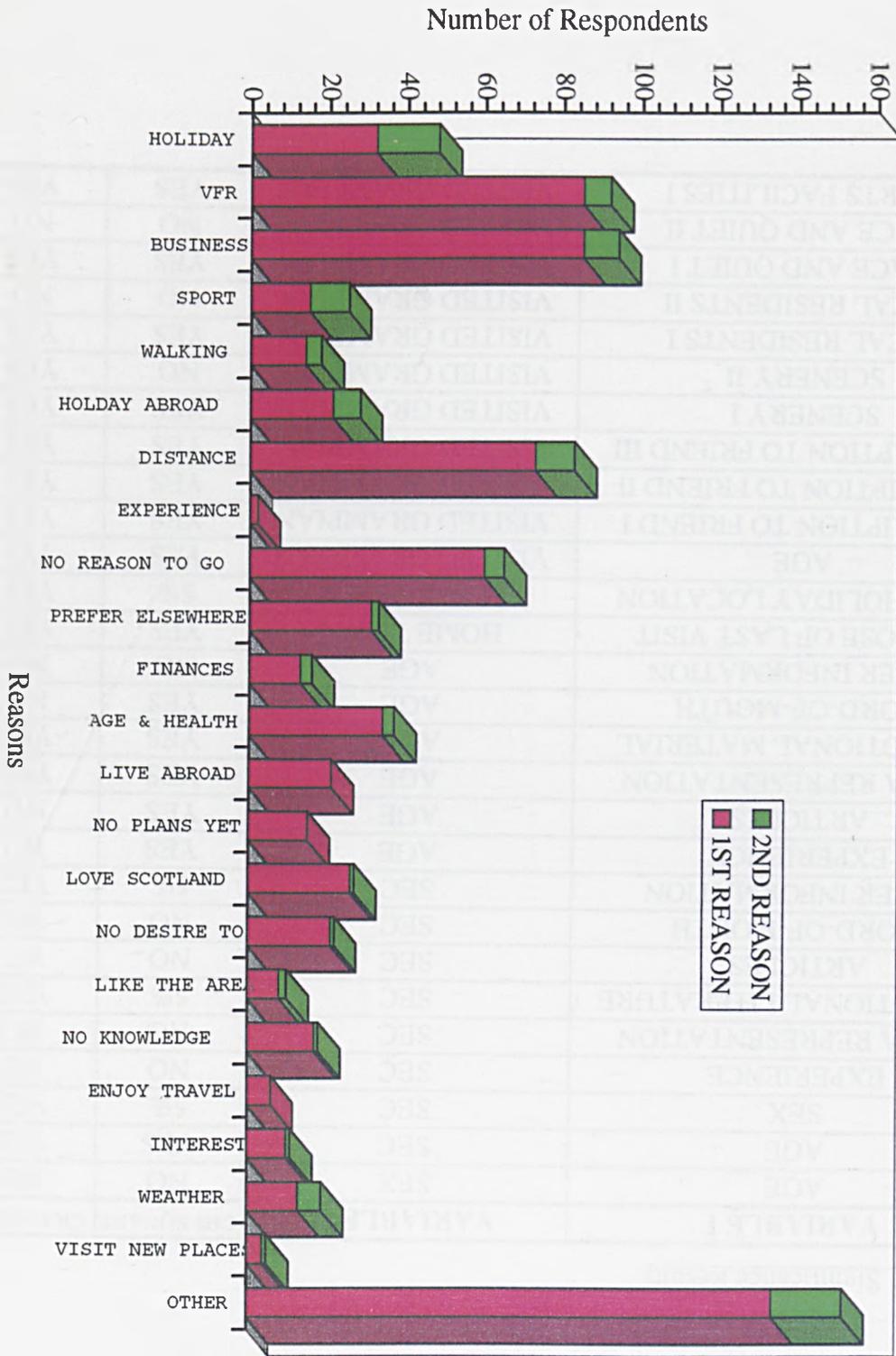


Figure 8.18: Reasons Whether or Not to Visit Grampian within the Next 2 Years

8.7 Potential Implications of the Results

Analysis of data collected from visitors and non-visitors to Grampian identified a number of important inter-relationships, the significance of which are summarised below in Table 8.24.

Table 8.24: Significance Results

VARIABLE I	VARIABLE II	CHI-SQUARE	CRAMERS V
AGE	SEX	NO	NO
AGE	SEC	YES	YES
SEX	SEC	5%	YES
EXPERIENCE	SEC	NO	NO
MEDIA REPRESENTATION	SEC	NO	NO
PROMOTIONAL LITERATURE	SEC	5%	YES
ARTICLES	SEC	NO	NO
WORD-OF-MOUTH	SEC	NO	NO
OTHER INFORMATION	SEC	5%	YES
EXPERIENCE	AGE	YES	NO
ARTICLES	AGE	YES	NO
MEDIA REPRESENTATION	AGE	YES	YES
PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL	AGE	YES	YES
WORD-OF-MOUTH	AGE	YES	NO
OTHER INFORMATION	AGE	NO	NO
PURPOSE OF LAST VISIT	HOME TOWN	YES	YES
MAIN HOLIDAY LOCATION	HOME TOWN	5%	YES
AGE	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES
DESCRIPTION TO FRIEND I	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES
DESCRIPTION TO FRIEND II	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES
DESCRIPTION TO FRIEND III	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES
SCENERY I	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES
SCENERY II	VISITED GRAMPIAN	NO	YES
LOCAL RESIDENTS I	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES
LOCAL RESIDENTS II	VISITED GRAMPIAN	NO	NO
PEACE AND QUIET I	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES
PEACE AND QUIET II	VISITED GRAMPIAN	NO	NO
SPORTS FACILITIES I	VISITED GRAMPIAN	YES	YES

VARIABLE I	VARIABLE II	CHI-SQUARE	CRAMERS V
SPORTS FACILITIES II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	5%	NO
HILLWALKING I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	YES
HILLWALKING II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
THEME TRAILS I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	YES
THEME TRAILS II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
HERITAGE & CASTLES I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
HERITAGE & CASTLES II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
MUSEUMS & GALLERIES I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
MUSEUMS & GALLERIES II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
CRAFTS & INDUSTRIES I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
CRAFTS & INDUSTRIES II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
SHOPPING FACILITIES I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
SHOPPING FACILITIES II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
VISITOR ATTRACTIONS I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
VISITOR ATTRACTIONS II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
GARDENS & PARKS I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
GARDENS & PARKS II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	YES
BEACHES I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	5%	YES
BEACHES II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	YES
COASTLINE I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
COASTLINE II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
WILDLIFE I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	YES
WILDLIFE II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	5%	YES
FOOD I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
FOOD II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
ARCHITECTURE I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
ARCHITECTURE II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	YES	YES
OTHER ATTRIBUTES I	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO
OTHER ATTRIBUTES II	VISITED GRAMPPIAN	NO	NO

KEY

SEC = Socio-economic Class

YES = the result was significant

NO = the result was not significant

5% = The null hypothesis was accepted at the 1% level but rejected at the 5% level. Other significant chi-square statistics rejected the null hypotheses at the 5% and 1% level.

There are a number of potential implications for image promotion from the results analysed above. Studying individuals' experience of the region, not included in the above table, is essential since it gives an overall impression of how Grampian is perceived. The results from this research and Tourist Board statistics both identified that the region is primarily a

short-stay destination with a high proportion of visits being on business. This reflects the perception of Grampian as worthy of only a few days' visit, primarily due to the lack of notable attractions and weather, when compared to other destinations both within the UK and abroad. Image promotion may serve to counteract such perceptions if indeed the region can offer the wealth of activities and the weather desired by potential visitors.

The results from this research have clearly identified differences between the images perceived of Grampian by potential and actual visitors to the region, reflecting the significant role played by experience in image formation. The most notable evidence was provided by individual analysis of respondents' perceptions of Grampian's attributes which showed a strong association with experience. This further substantiates the hypothesis that image is first created on a general level and then, as knowledge is accumulated, here through experience, images of a destination's attributes are developed. These results suggest that Grampian has an 'image-reality' gap since the image perceived by non-visitors appears not to reflect the reality experienced by actual visitors. This could be addressed by image promotion relating to specific attributes of the region.

The medium or media which should be used for effective image promotion is, however, unclear. Analysis of the results revealed that the perceived importance of promotional literature, the main promotional tool currently used by the Tourist Boards, was found to be relatively low. Promoters may do well to consider alternative methods of image promotion. However, studying the inter-relationships between organic (Gunn, 1988) or internal (Gitelson & Crompton, 1983) factors, which can not be influenced by promotional activities, and induced (Gunn, 1988) or external (Gitelson & Crompton, 1983) factors which can potentially be influenced by image promotion, may identify sections of the population who could be targeted by image promoters.

When considering sources of information used in image formation, age, and less importantly socio-economic class, were identified as influential factors. Older respondents perceived promotional literature to be more important than the younger people surveyed, suggesting promotional literature may be used most effectively to target older age groups. Such inter-relationships between demographics and sources of information have not been adequately considered by the models of image formation to date.

Another factor assigned insufficient significance in image formation models is the proximity lived from a destination. The home town of the respondent appears most influential on the reason for visiting Grampian and the location of holidays taken. Trends identified here suggest not only is the distance from the region a factor in the individual's reason for visiting or not visiting Grampian, but also the longitude, the relative location East or West, in which the person lives.

Data analysis revealed, as expected, that where an individual lives is also likely to influence whether or not they visit, with those in Scotland and on the Eastern side of mainland Britain more likely to visit. Experience of Grampian, or at least experience of another area of Scotland is also likely to have had an influence upon the decision to visit the region and with the exception of experience, no predominant source of information is likely to have been used in forming the image of the region. Links with the region, either business or friends and relatives, are also likely to have been influential in choosing Grampian as a destination. These trends allow a conceivable representation of how visitors to Grampian make their decision to visit, to be constructed. This can then be used as a basis for the development of appropriate image promotion to attract more visitors.

The results of this empirical study have emphasised the importance of image within the process of destination selection and the significance of experience in image formation. Since image emerges as significant, the lack of research conducted by tourism promoters and their associated lack of understanding on this issue questions the relevance of the promoters' activities. Indeed, the perceived importance of promotional literature was relatively low, suggesting that promoters may do well to consider alternative methods of image manipulation. These findings form a basis for the refinement of image formation models reviewed in Chapter V.

Whilst potential visitors did not explicitly recognise the role played by image perception in destination selection, this was appreciated by industry members. However, the policy network framework that currently exists between promoters of Grampian does not appear conducive to image policy development. There is no real synergy of co-operation between components of the tourism industry, therefore members are aiming towards different goals. Would policy development bring cohesion and co-ordination to the industry? The

questionable necessity of policy development for effective image promotion is considered further in Chapter IX.

Chapter IX: Towards a More Significant Role for Image in Tourism

9.1 Introduction

This final chapter utilises information accumulated throughout the thesis, from the review of literature and empirical research, to determine the role of image in the promotion of a region as a visitor destination. Whilst data was gathered and analysed for Grampian, a case study region with its own characteristics, the role of image in destination selection was studied generically. The aims of the research are evaluated to promote further understanding of image formation and the decision-making process of destination selection, expanding the body of knowledge within this field. Central to this research has been the study of potential visitors' perceived role of image in destination selection.

9.2 Differences in the image perceived of a destination by potential and actual visitors

Although, as Kotler (1988) suggests, experience is only one potential factor in the process of image formation, comparison of data from potential and actual visitors to Grampian identified experience as the most significant factor in image formation. This complements the incorporation of an individual's past experiences into all image formation models reviewed (Crompton, 1979; Gitelson & Crompton, 1983; Murphy, 1985; Gunn, 1988; Stabler, 1988 and Bojanic, 1991), and additionally identifies that it has greater importance than other factors. The results also identified experience as having the strongest interdependence of any variables with individuals' perceptions of Grampian's attributes, highlighting the depth that experience can add to a perceived image.

Differences in the image perceived of Grampian by potential and actual visitors were established in this research. Whilst it was not surprising that there was found to be a relationship between the images perceived of Grampian and experience of the region, the nature of this relationship was more noteworthy. When individual aspects of the destination were considered, greater details were given by those with experience, as expected, showing more depth to the image perceived. However, when overall images were examined, discrepancies were identified which related more to different images perceived rather than different depths of image.

For those with no experience of Grampian, the region was considered by many respondents as either not worth visiting or that there was no reason for them to do so. Conversely, those who had visited described the region as worth a visit and that there was plenty to do there. A common misconception amongst those with no experience of Grampian was that the presence of the oil industry spoilt the coastline of the region. Those who had visited did not mention the oil industry, indicating that these images are exaggerated.

The research in Grampian indicates that promotional literature plays a minimal role in the formation of an individual's image of a destination, with greater emphasis being placed upon other sources of information as factors contributing to the differences in image perception between potential and actual visitors to Grampian. This low priority attached to promotional literature in image formation is consistent with conclusions made by some researchers (such as Gunn, 1988, Gartner, 1993), but contradicts those made by others (such as Wicks & Scuett, 1993 and MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997). Therefore, it is important to consider the image promoted of a destination through other sources of information.

The coverage of Grampian by the media appears to concentrate upon the oil industry, mainly due to its significance in the local and national economy, rather than its tourism, which generates a significantly smaller amount of revenue. An example of this is the local radio station, Northsound One, promoting itself as the radio station broadcasting from the Oil Capital of Europe. Tourism is considered by the media to be more important in other areas and this will be reflected by the coverage and consequent image promotion.

Another factor which has led to the differences in images perceived is the lack of consensus in image promotion by the tourism industry. Because Grampian does not have a 'magnet' attraction to act as a clear focus for promotional activities and because of the lack of an associated policy, different images are promoted by different industry members with the effect of leading to unclear image perception by potential visitors.

Since destination promoters have little control over many of the factors important in image formation (Gunn, 1988), if relevant organisations choose to continue to use traditional tools, such as promotional literature, it is important to identify the audience. A relationship was found between socio-economic class and the importance placed upon promotional

literature as a source of information in image formation. Increasing importance tended to be placed upon promotional literature with decreasing socio-economic class, which can be explained by higher socio-economic classes having a greater number of information sources available to them. Another trend identified was the consistent higher level of importance attached by older respondents to all sources of information, possibly explained by individuals actively seeking and appreciating knowledge more with age.

Comparison of potential and actual visitors to Grampian also identified an association between age and experience of the region where likelihood of having visited increased with increasing age. This relationship can be explained by a combination of the perceived attractiveness of the area being greater for older people and increasing age means increasing time to have potentially taken holidays and potentially more destinations visited. This may also relate to McIntyre (1997)'s assertion that the level of risk associated with destination selection is inversely related to the age of the individual.

The positive relationship between socio-economic class and age suggests that the older visitor is highly desirable for a destination due to the level of disposable income associated with higher socio-economic classes which could potentially be converted into visitor expenditure. Therefore, the relationship found between age and importance placed upon promotional literature as a source of information is a reassuring result for destination promoters using traditional promotion tools, although its influence upon image perception compared to other factors remains limited.

9.3 The Image Formation Process

Image formation is a complex process incorporating a number of factors. Existing models of image formation do not satisfactorily discuss the significance of these factors. Generalisations are difficult since the relative importance of these factors is not only dependent upon the individual due to their characteristics, experiences and interpretations, but, as Stabler (1988) and Gunn (1988) point out, also the stage in destination selection.

This research considers direct experience to play such a significant role in image formation when people have visited the destination, that it should be centrally located within the model shown below in Figure 9.1. This model is an adaptation of Stabler's (1988), the original of which was reviewed in Chapter V. Two main additions have been made here to

the original model, distance lived from a destination and exposure to stimuli, both factors considered by this research to be of great importance in the process of image formation.

The distance an individual lives from a potential destination has been identified by this and other research (Hunt, 1975, Crompton, 1974 and Telisman-Kosuta, 1989) as an important factor in image formation. Results from this research clearly indicated that clarity of image decreases with increasing geographical distance from the destination and perhaps more significantly by longitude. Whilst the results were not overwhelming, there is evidence that individuals living in regions of the UK characterised by similar terrain and climate to Grampian appear to have greater knowledge of the area and an increased likelihood of a future visit to the region. If this trend is truly representative of the UK population, it could be suggested that individuals seek similar landscapes to where they live rather than simply considering increasing geographical distance as an increasingly negative factor in destination selection. However, more research would be required before conclusions could be drawn.

One implication of this relationship is that target marketing may be most effective on a regional basis rather than purely a distance scale. For example, advertising in regional editions of magazines, newspapers or television can benefit from recognition of the distance East-West as well as North-South. Image promotion in areas where there is a lower level of knowledge about a destination may want to concentrate on image creation. For this market, the most effective image promotion is likely to be increasing awareness through overall image promotion rather than specific attribute promotion. However, in areas where there is already awareness, image promotion would be better geared more towards sustaining or manipulating the image perceived. This could take the form of specific attribute promotion. However, primarily due to the lack of finance available to tourism promoters, geographical target marketing is currently limited within the United Kingdom.

Relationships between geographical distance lived from a destination, clarity of image and the effect on likelihood of future visits highlights the integral nature of image within destination selection. In the same way that longitude appears to influence the clarity of image perceived, geographical distance lived from Grampian appeared to be an influential factor in intentions *not* to visit the region in the future.

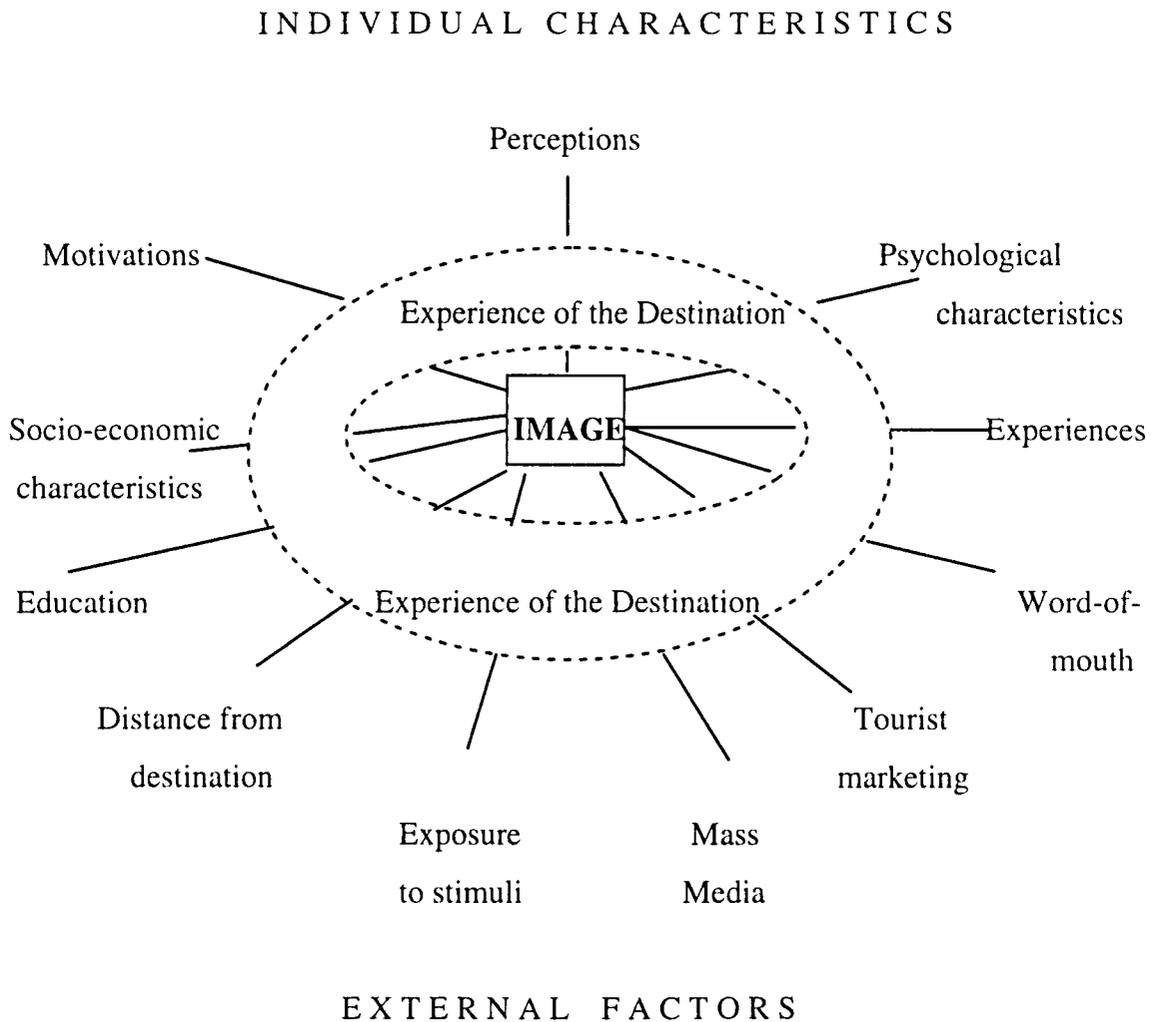
Exposure to stimuli, with reference to how often an individual is exposed to stimuli and what form that stimulus takes, was also considered an important factor in image formation. Assigning a separate category to exposure to stimuli was thought to give it greater emphasis. The separate categorisation of exposure to stimuli in the model below, Figure 9.1, recognises the importance of this variable in the process of image formation. Individuals will be exposed to different stimuli in varying degrees, affecting the influence on image perception. One potential problem associated with measuring exposure to stimuli is that the individual may not recognise this has occurred. Similarly, when analysing sources of information important in image formation, it was recognised that individuals were stating perceived importances. This could lead to misleading results if individuals were asked to rank the importance of sources of information.

Timing of exposure to stimuli in destination selection will influence its affect on image perception, arguably the earlier, the greater potential influence (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993). Different stimuli are also more appropriate at different stages of the decision-making process, dependent on the nature of the information sought. Generally, more specific information will be desired as progress is made through destination selection. Exposure to new information early in the decision-making process will serve to increase the individual's pool of knowledge with minimised bias because the individual is likely to be more open-minded before a specific destination has been selected. As Gunn (1988) has indicated, further information will usually be sought to reinforce a destination decision already made. The extent to which the timing of stimuli affected destination selection for visitors to Grampian was not identified in this research, but further work which focused upon this aspect of decision-making would help in clarifying the dynamics of the process.

The combination of stimuli experienced is also important. Several stimuli, offering complimentary information may influence the individual more than a single stimulus. One source of information could be used to confirm or enhance another, reducing the potential effect of over-familiarity with one source of information. No combination of sources of information was found to be particularly influential in image formation for respondents in this research, however, not all possible sources were considered. Whilst several combinations are likely to influence image formation, there are likely to be key combinations which are the most effective. More research would have to be conducted to

identify these key combinations. The focus of previous research upon single information sources means that, “much remains to be learned about how frequently various sources and combinations of sources are used” (Fodness and Murray, 1997, p. 520).

Figure 9.1: Factors influential in image formation



(Adapted from Stabler, 1988)

Based on Stabler’s original model (1988), Figure 9.1 redefines hearsay as word-of-mouth communication and media as mass media, modifications made to clarify the definition of variables, rather than changing classification meaning. The category of experiences incorporates all experiences of an individual except those directly relating to the destination.

Tourism marketing is assigned a separate classification within the model of image formation, shown in Figure 9.1. However, the lack of credibility attached to promotional literature shown by the importance placed on other sources of information by potential and actual visitors in this research suggests that there are more effective method(s) for image promotion.

With the recent technological developments associated with computers, such as the Internet, there is and increasingly will be scope to either substitute or complement existing modes of communication. Since image promotion is not merely a communication of facts but a style in which information is conveyed, an appropriate style and medium for image promotion is needed to increase the potential for effective image promotion. The potential visitor sets increasingly higher standards for advertisers, as they become familiar with promotional techniques. Therefore the challenge for destination image promoters is to continually find new methods of promotion to be used in conjunction with existing techniques to benefit from using a combination of stimuli.

The Internet is one of an increasing array of information sources which the traditional brochure has to compete with. With 60 million users in 146 countries connected to the Internet in 1996 and with that figure increasing by 10% per month (Hamill, 1997), the number of potential visitors that can access information through this medium is expanding rapidly. As the sources of information available change, if the traditional brochure is to be a viable method of communication, it will need to become more effective through improvements made to distribution, such as target marketing.

Problems associated with image measurement render it difficult to assign a value to related promotional activities. Changes in visitor numbers or expenditure may indicate the effectiveness of image promotion, but are not absolute measures due to the influence of other factors. Image promotion can serve as an additional stimulus to an individual who has been exposed to other sources of information, when exposure to a single stimulus may not have influenced image perception.

Although this suggests that it is difficult for destination promoters to identify the best way to attract visitors, models such as in Figure 9.1 could be used as a basis for a ranking system for the importance of each of the influential factors potentially involved in an

individual's image formation. By subdividing each category, it may be possible to identify the most effective medium for image promotion. However, one significant limitation in asking individuals to rank the importance of influential factors would be that they may not be aware of the influence these factors have had upon the image formation process and therefore incorrectly rank each factor. In addition individuals may find it difficult to differentiate between the importance of every factor, and inter-relationships between the factors could not be considered. However, a ranking system could be used to at least identify the most significant factors.

In agreement with Gartner (1993), the results of this research suggest that experience is the most important organic factor in image formation, with motivation, exposure to stimuli and geographical distance lived from a destination also heavily influential. Whilst experience and motivation are hard to influence, exposure to stimuli and the impact of distance lived from a destination can be addressed. The issue of exposure to stimuli can be addressed by image promoters through increased exposure for potential visitors, for example through television or magazine advertisements. However, this is impractical since peripheral destinations have small financial budgets. The impact of distance lived from a destination can be addressed through target marketing.

The results also suggest that formal information searches play a much smaller role in image formation than proposed by the models critically reviewed, due to the lack of importance placed upon these sources of information. This implies that destination promoters can have little influence over the image formation process and therefore destination selection of potential visitors. Therefore, it may be more appropriate for promoters to concentrate on trying to influence the activities of individuals once the decision to visit has been made rather than to attract the individuals initially with their formal promotional tools.

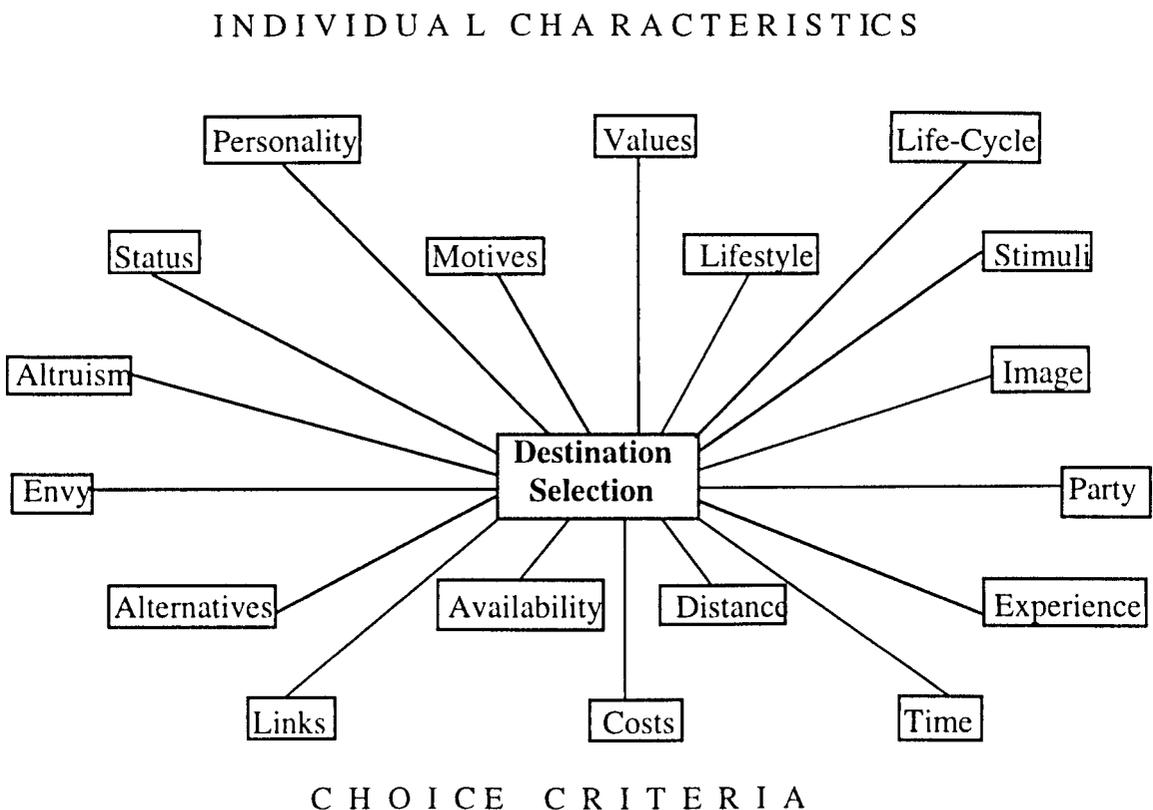
The main inter-relationships studied by this research between factors involved in image formation focused upon the formal sources of information that individuals had used to form their image of Grampian. The results indicated that age, socio-economic class and experience of the region all influenced the importance placed upon these sources of information. This data can be used by destination promoters to target potential visitors. If image is indeed the most significant factor in destination selection, it is clear that

destination promoters have little influence over this decision-making process by direct promotional activities.

9.4 Destination Selection

Destination selection is a complex process, differing between individuals, incorporating a number of inter-related factors. Using two sources of information, data generated through this research and the critical review of existing models of decision-making, the most important factors involved in destination selection have been identified and are shown in Figure 9.2 below. Factors involved in the potential visitor's destination selection process are considered here within categories of individual characteristics and choice criteria.

Figure 9.2: Factors Involved in Destination Selection



The importance of each factor in destination selection varies between individuals and over time. However, trends can be identified. In this research the most important factors in destination selection for all holidays taken within the last year (main and additional) by individuals contacted in this research are highlighted below in Table 9.1. Statistics given

are actual numbers of respondents with weighted values in brackets, assigned to incorporate order of responses given.

Table 9.1: Main Factors (Actual Numbers & Weighted Values) in Destination Selection

Factor	Main Holiday	Additional Holidays
Weather	332 (311.1)	82 (77.6)
Costs Involved	141 (118.6)	58 (51.5)
VFR	108 (102.3)	113 (109.5)
Scenery	106 (94.1)	57 (52.1)
Plenty to do	97 (82.1)	42 (36.4)
Accommodation available	79 (66.2)	43 (37.5)
Peace and quiet	61 (54.5)	35 (31.1)
Party	50 (43.0)	38 (36.0)
Sports Facilities	36 (31.7)	41 (39.0)

As can be seen from Table 9.1, the importance of the factors described in destination selection follow similar patterns, with the exception of visiting friends and relatives. This factor dominates the decision-making process for additional holidays taken and is notably more important for holidays that are not the main ones. It is notable that image was not described as an important factor in destination selection, suggesting that the respondents did not perceive it as important. However, a number of the factors described, such as the number of things to do at the destination and the peace and quiet which can be enjoyed there, can be said to be influenced by image perception. Therefore, image is a significant factor in destination selection, although it is not explicitly acknowledged as such by potential visitors.

To relate the results shown in Table 9.1 to Figure 9.2, the factors stated could be recategorised as values and image; costs; links; values and image; lifestyle and image; availability; lifestyle; party; lifestyle and image, respectively. This is a relatively arbitrary categorisation, however, as factors involved in destination selection are inter-related rather than mutually exclusive, with each constituent part influenced by other related variables, and in particular by image.

A number of the variables involved have been given adequate critique by other tourism literature, and therefore needless repetition is avoided here. However, since the significance of image in destination selection was not identified by participants of the visitor survey in this research, it is appropriate to consider the inter-relationships image has with the other

variables involved to identify its role. These inter-relationships are reviewed and a conceptual model proposed (shown later in Figure 9.3) in response to limitations revealed in existing models and data generated by this research.

9.4.1 Individual Characteristics

(i) Personality

Although development of an individual's personality is too complex for this research to adequately consider, there are important relationships between personality, image formation and destination selection. Personality influences the way an individual reacts to stimuli and, therefore, influences the potential effectiveness of promotional activities. In addition, if an individual is self-confident, that is to say that they have a strong self-image, they will place less importance on promotional material when choosing a destination than individuals who want to accumulate a lot of information before making a decision.

The pressure from society to take a break from everyday life and experience other places links personality to values and motives. However, the desire to go on holiday may also relate to the level of stress experienced in everyday life and the individual's ability to cope with it, relating to the individual's lifestyle.

(ii) Lifestyle

An individual's lifestyle, the way in which they live and spend their time and money, reflects their interests and opinions and is influenced primarily by factors such as personality, social class and occupation.

An individual's lifestyle influences their allocentricity (Plog, 1974), that is to say their level of confidence in making decisions and their desire to experience something new. In this research, 54 respondents described the desire to visit somewhere new as an important factor in destination selection. Conversely, 33 people stated experience of a destination was an important factor in their decision to return. This reflects the curiosity of some individuals wanting to explore new places, and conversely the security of an already tried destination as craved by others. This finding is significant for peripheral destinations such as Grampian due to the high number of UK residents, from whom the respondents were sampled, who have not yet visited Grampian. For these individuals, the extent to which the region is perceived to offer the facilities considered complementary to their lifestyle may

influence their decision to visit. The number of respondents stating that there was no reason for them to visit Grampian does question the perception of the region's ability to do so.

(iii) Motives

The relative importance of an individual's motives determine the priority attached to satisfying each. This research surmises that an individual strives to attain satisfiers and prevent dissatisfiers (Herzberg, 1966), thereby enjoying what they like and avoiding what they don't like.

Analysis of the factors individuals perceived important in selection of their last destination visited gave a good indication of their motivations. As Table 9.1 shows, a key motivation for respondents was to enjoy good weather on holiday. Other factors perceived important were influenced more by personal circumstances, such as disposable income, which determines the importance of costs involved.

The potential effectiveness of image promotion will be affected by an individual's motives in destination selection. If the main motives are specific to a destination, for example to visit a certain attraction, image promotion of another destination is likely to be less effective than if motives are more generic, such as to enjoy peace and quiet in beautiful surroundings. Motives vary between individuals and throughout stages in life-cycle.

(iv) Stage in life-cycle

There are several stages that adults generally transgress throughout their lives as discussed by many tourism researchers (see for example Lawson, 1988 and Hill, McDonald & Uysal, 1990). Life-cycle stages are inter-related to a number of different factors, such as disposable income and party composition, and are therefore an important factor in destination selection. It is likely that individuals will wish to visit different types of destination as they move through the life-cycle stages, highlighting the importance of target marketing.

Life-cycle stages are closely related to age. Results from this research show the most popular age range for visitors to Grampian was 36-50, with 126 respondents, closely followed by 118 individuals between the ages of 18-35 and 99 in the 51-65 age category.

This suggests Grampian attracts individuals with a relatively high level of disposable income, and indicates that target marketing is an appropriate option.

(v) Values

An individual's values result from culture experienced in formative years. Values are inter-related with a large number of other factors in destination selection, such as education, motivations, personality and socio-economic class. Values possessed by an individual are likely to influence the process of destination selection from the beginning, with the value attached to taking a holiday.

The value attached to the image perceived of a destination and the value given to the desires of other party members will influence the importance placed upon these factors in the decision-making process. Similarly, the value assigned to different sources of information, in particular promotional material, will influence the potential effectiveness of image promotion.

Because values originate from culture they are, in the main, unyielding. Therefore, if promotional material is not presently considered an important source of information for image promotion and destination selection, sudden adoption of it as such seems unlikely, suggesting that destination promoters need to consider using other, more valued, media as promotional tools.

(vi) Party Composition

If an individual is planning not to travel alone, the other party members are likely to influence the destination selected. Table 9.1 shows that party composition was considered an important factor in destination selection by respondents to the visitor survey. The age of the other party members, especially children or old people, necessitate consideration, linking with their stage in life-cycle. Interests of the group and activities they wish to participate in may vary, necessitating a compromise. Evidence of this was shown in this research, with 30 respondents (3%) stating inclusion of children in party composition was an important factor in their destination selection. Party composition is likely to affect the image perceived of a destination. For example, parties including children are more likely to have a favourable image of a destination which promotes itself as children-friendly than one which appears adult-orientated.

The relationship held with other party members, including how well they know each other and how important other people's wishes are to them, perhaps reflecting the personality of the individual, will influence their decision-making process. The influence of other people's feelings on destination selection is also linked to the factors altruism, envy and status attached to visiting a destination.

(vii) Status attached to destination

The status of a destination is very closely linked to the image perceived. Based on the assumption that socio-economic classes perceive destinations similarly in terms of status, (Feifer, 1985) image promotion can influence the perceived status of a destination through target marketing. The influence of status attached to a destination in its selection may also be linked to motives and altruism.

(viii) Altruism

An altruistic individual, acting for the good of others, is influenced by what other people expect or want them to decide. Other people may be peers, such as colleagues or friends, with whom the individual discusses their holiday, or other holiday party members. The results of this research revealed several individuals selected a destination because a party member had wanted to (included in 'other' reasons). Therefore, the image perceived of a destination by others can also influence the decision-making process of an individual.

(ix) Envy

A tourist destination may be chosen because it stimulates jealousy or envy, particularly if it is expensive or availability is low. Alternatively, a destination may stimulate respect for visiting an area more adventurous than others would be willing to risk, such as a remote location with no modern facilities and hostile locals.

Inter-related with most of the individual characteristics shown in Figure 9.2, envy also has a strong inter-relationship with image perception, in a similar vein to altruism. Image promotion has great potential to stimulate envy through the portrayal of a highly desirable destination. However, such promotion is a double-edged sword because the very reason a destination can stimulate envy is because it is not accessible to all, and yet destinations aim to attract numbers of visitors to generate associated revenue.

Discussion of a holiday with friends, relatives and colleagues before and after the actual visit is part of the holiday experience, exchanging information accumulated from a variety of information sources. Assuming a position of respect or an object of envy may be a position desired by an aggressive individual. The best indicator of deliberate envy stimulation may be previous destinations chosen.

(x) Experience

Experience of all previous destinations is an important factor in destination selection. The importance of experience within this process can be closely linked to the relationship between experience and image perception. In fact, first hand knowledge of an area is arguably the most important source of information in the creation of a destination's image. In this research, 120 respondents described their experience of the case study region as very important in the formation of their image, 29% of all respondents who described a source of information as so important. Experience modifies the image perceived of a destination and therefore influences future destination selection.

If the individual enjoyed their previous visit and they tend towards psychocentricity (Plog, 1974), desiring security, it is likely they will return. Conversely, if the visit was not enjoyable or the individual tends more towards allocentricity, they will look for an alternative destination in the future.

Experience of other destinations also aids the decision-making process. A destination previously visited may be considered similar to another destination by virtue of its characteristics, attributes or image, and therefore experience of the destination will be assumed similar. This was illustrated in this research by one third of respondents who stated other sources of information in image formation of Grampian as experience or image perceived of other areas in Scotland. Despite its potential importance, particularly for low-profile destinations, this aspect of experience does not appear to have been adequately considered by existing models of destination selection which have tended to focus upon direct experience of the destination, particularly its effect upon image perception after the visit.

Alternatively, a potential destination may be contrasted against one previously visited. This is particularly pertinent if the individual was not satisfied with some, or all, aspects of the destination previously visited, the result of an image-reality gap. Image promotion therefore has the potential to influence the experience of a destination by the creation or reduction of such a gap. However, experience is also linked to all individual characteristics shown in Figure 9.2 since it is a subjective view of reality, and the tourism product is heterogeneous. Therefore, image promotion may not eliminate an image-reality gap for all visitors. The effectiveness of image promotion will also be affected by exposure to stimuli.

(xi) Exposure to Stimuli

The type of stimulus an individual is exposed to, the credibility attached to the stimulus, the message portrayed, the way in which that message is received and retained, and the timing within the decision-making process will affect the influence on destination selection (as discussed in Section 8.3).

Exposure to stimuli is closely linked to lifestyle. An individual's lifestyle will influence the type of stimuli the individual is exposed to and with what frequency, such as repeated viewing of television adverts or occasional reading of the travel pages of national newspapers. However, the closest inter-relationship for exposure to stimuli is with image because of its potential effect upon the image perceived of a destination.

(xii) Image

Image can be the most important factor in destination selection because it is inter-related with all other factors within the process. Influenced by a combination of the individual's characteristics and their choice criteria, not only the nature of the image but also the importance attached to this concept varies between individuals and over time.

The image of a destination has two components, individual traits or qualities and a total impression (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Within this categorisation some components of image were found by this research to be stronger than others. This could be related to the level of an individual's interest associated with particular destination attributes.

Although individuals contacted during this research did not directly propose image as an important factor in destination selection, this research has argued throughout that image

plays a more important role in this process than perceived by individuals. Many of the attributes described by respondents as important in destination selection, such as weather and scenery (with weighted values of 311.1 and 94.1 respectively for main holiday selection), are influenced by the individual's perception of them. As an illustration, the image perceived of a destination's weather is no guarantee that that is what will be experienced due to the unpredictable nature of this phenomenon. In this way, although image has not been explicitly noted by individuals as important, image influences many factors that were stated.

Image is integral throughout the whole decision-making process. As information is accumulated, the image perceived is refined. It is therefore valuable to consider all internal characteristics of individuals, or as many as possible, when determining the structure of image promotion, namely what message should be conveyed, to whom and using what media.

Destination selection will be affected by the individual's image of their ideal destination and other destinations under consideration. This 'model' image is influenced by the other individual characteristics critiqued above. Potential destinations are compared to the ideal within the context of any limitations imposed by choice criteria, discussed below, at that time.

(xiii) Alternatives known and considered

Complete knowledge of all destinations is a prerequisite for purely objective decision-making. However, realistically, individuals have an imperfect knowledge of potential tourist destinations. All relevant sources of information for potential destinations are not freely accessible to everyone. Of those that are, people do not retain all information conveyed. Therefore, an individual will consider only those destinations about which they have acquired some information prior to deciding to take a holiday, relating to Goodall's (1988) concept of an opportunity set.

In association with the concept of perfect knowledge, it is unlikely an individual could accurately compare alternative destinations simultaneously. Inaccurate recollection or confusion between two similar areas may occur, resulting in destination selection from an imprecise comparative process rather than accurate comparison. If a destination does not

possess a distinct image, as appears to be the case for Grampian, it may be confused with other areas, such as other regions in Scotland and therefore not selected. Branding may differentiate destinations, overcoming the issue of separation, and therefore enhance the possibility of selection.

All the individual characteristics reviewed above are inter-related, both amongst themselves and with choice criteria. Specific to a potential visitor's destination selection at a given time, choice criteria are less easily influenced by image promotion.

9.4.2 Choice Criteria

(a) Relative Cost

The financial circumstances in which an individual decides to take a holiday, particularly their level of disposable income, may influence destinations considered. In addition to the absolute cost of taking a holiday, the relative cost of alternative destinations are considered in destination selection. The importance of costs involved to participants of the visitor survey (as shown in Table 9.1) indicates the significance of this factor in destination selection. However, costs did not appear to be a deterrent for future intentions to visit Grampian, suggesting that other factors have a more negative effect upon visiting peripheral tourism areas, potentially relating to image.

Amongst other inter-related factors, the cost of visiting a destination is linked to the level of knowledge possessed with which alternative destinations are compared. The value attached to visiting a destination and motives for doing so will also influence the importance attached to related costs. Costs can be reduced by another factor in destination selection considered important by many respondents in this research, staying with friends or relatives.

(b) Links with the Destination

This research identified two main links that potential visitors can have with a destination, friends or relatives living in the area and business connections. An individual can increase their pool of knowledge and enhance their image perception through people living in or near a destination. Therefore, the image perceived by residents of an area as a visitor destination may influence destination selection.

The high number of respondents, 108 for main and 113 for additional holidays, as indicated in Table 9.1 earlier in this chapter, who stated friends or relatives in the area was an important factor in destination selection indicates that this is one of the main reasons for destination selection, especially for additional holidays. Assuming it is not possible to influence the location of friends and relatives, it may be more effective to emphasise activities in a destination rather than trying to attract people with no links to a destination. However, attracting new visitors remains an important promotional objective.

Travelling to a destination for business purposes can form important links with a destination. In this research, 15 people stated that a previous visit for business purposes was an important factor in main holiday destination selection and 12 for additional holidays. Additionally, enjoyable business visits can lead to further business meetings or conferences in the area, attracting further visitors.

(c) Distance from this destination compared to alternatives

The length of time an individual would be willing to travel to a destination varies dependent on such variables as length and purpose of visit, party composition and distance to alternative destinations. In this research, 32 respondents (a weighted value of 28.2) stated distance had been an important factor in main holiday destination selection. Fewer individuals, 21 (weighted value of 19.3), showed this was an important factor in additional holiday destination selection.

It is pertinent to consider these figures in conjunction with the number who stated access to the destination was an important factor. These two variables are inextricably linked since distance could be considered less of a restriction if access is good and conversely a short distance may be problematic with a poor level of access. In this research, 41 respondents considered accessibility to have been an important factor in the main holiday destination selection and 23 for additional holidays. Therefore, access was perceived more important in destination selection than actual distance, potentially advantageous for Grampian due to its geographical location (shown in Chapter III). Although respondents were travelling by train when contacted, this was not considered to have biased the results since many respondents on business at the time would use another mode of transport when taking a holiday.

It may more useful for individuals to consider distance to a potential destination in comparison to alternative destinations rather than in absolute terms. An individual may live in a remote area, such as the Shetland Islands, necessitating considerable distance to any destination outside the islands, indicating a relationship of declining importance with increasing distance.

The time/cost variable discussed in Chapter V may more accurately reflect the effect distance has on the importance of distance in destination selection. Many people enjoy travelling, and therefore distance need not be perceived as a purely negative factor. Promotion of good accessibility, with potential for an enjoyable journey to and within a destination, may diminish negative associations of distance. However, party composition and time available can limit the effectiveness of counteractive promotion.

(d) Time Available

Time available for the actual visit influences destination selection in terms of distance. Indeed, in this research, a higher proportion of individuals indicated that distance was important in additional holiday destination selection, characteristically of shorter duration, compared to main holidays (weighted values of 2.3% and 1.7% respectively). Whilst destination promoters can not influence the amount of time individuals have available for holidays, they can promote the accessibility of destinations, potentially rendering them attractive for shorter as well as longer holidays.

The amount of time an individual has available to plan their holiday is also an important factor in destination selection. A greater amount of time would allow a larger information search to take place, potentially utilising a greater number of sources of information, whereas a shorter planning period may restrict information accumulation and availability may become a more important factor than image perceived and attributes possessed. Particularly for those with little time available to plan a holiday, a closely related factor is associated availability.

(e) Availability

Availability of different aspects of the tourism product, such as accommodation and transport, at a time when the individual and the other party members are available affects destination selection. Flexibility of the individual, relating to personality, reflected by

willingness to stay in alternative accommodation or travel with a different transport company, and commitment to a specific destination will affect destination selection. Similarly, if the individual is flexible in dates, they may choose to visit at a different time.

The importance of availability on destination selection is also related to the degree of integration which the individual has with the area. If no accommodation is needed, as may be the scenario for those visiting friends and relatives, or visitors have their own transport, availability is not an important factor in destination selection. The results of this research indicated that availability had a minimal influence on destination selection, identified from the low number of respondents who stated that this had been an important factor in past decision-making.

It is clearly evident from the above critique of factors involved in a potential visitor's decision-making process that the study of destination selection involves a complex number of inter-relationships between relevant factors, many of which are influenced by image perception. Inter-relationships between factors involved in destination selection can be illustrated through use of an appropriate model.

9.5 A Conceptual Model of the Potential Visitor's Destination Selection

The critical review of existing models of the potential visitor's decision-making process of destination selection, adopted from the field of consumer behaviour, revealed a number of limitations, which reduced their validity. A lack of definition was given to terms used. The strength of image was inadequately considered. Many factors involved were assigned a specific position in decision-making, ignoring their continual relevance throughout the whole process. The models focus upon a fraction of the decision-making process and the inter-relationships considered within these models is restricted. However, it is acknowledged that a model becomes difficult to interpret or use if all the inter-relationships are considered.

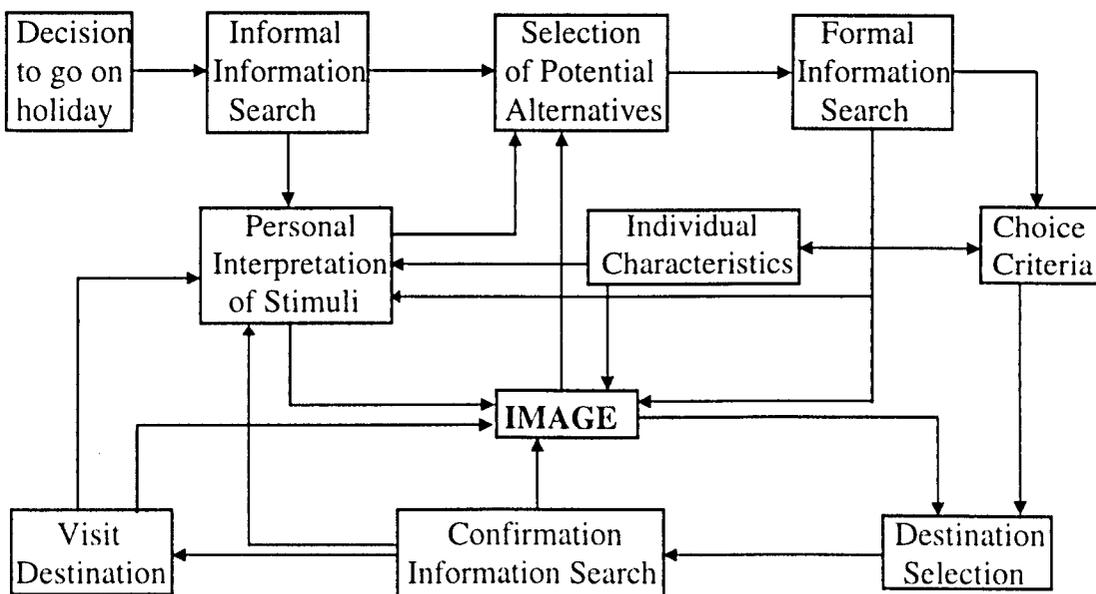
In light of these limitations, a model was designed to address these issues. The model illustrates inter-relationships between factors involved in destination selection through a simplification of decision-making to a level that can be conceptualised and studied. One of the most difficult decisions in model design is the level of detail incorporated. Too much detail creates a complex model, impractical due to the necessitated high level of

understanding to employ the model or the amount of information needed for all variables. Conversely, too little detail may over-simplify the subject studied, rendering it useless.

The model designed below, although simple in diagrammatic form, incorporates all factors reviewed earlier in this chapter, illustrated in figure 9.2. It is proposed that individuals rank attributes according to associated importance, comparable to a lexicographic model, and then determine a minimum standard for the most important attributes, similar to a conjunctive model (as discussed in Chapter V). The destination selected is likely to offer at least the minimum standard for the most important attributes, and exceed the standard set for attributes ranked of highest importance to the greatest extent.

The most important aspect of this model, as shown in Figure 9.3 below, is the central position assigned to image, emphasising its significance throughout the process of destination selection. Another important aspect of this model is that information searches are continual, varying in type of information sought with progression through the process, seeking general, specific and then conformational information. The informal search utilises information already stored in the individual's memory to compile a list of potential destinations. The formal search involves deliberate attainment of new information, such as requesting promotional literature and reading relevant books. The conformation search occurs once a destination has been selected, to reassure the individual of their decision.

Figure 9.3: Conceptual Model of Potential Visitor's Destination Selection



The significance of image within Figure 9.3 highlights once again the importance of defining the concept of image. Without this, the value of the model is limited. As discussed in Chapter II, this research believes image to be constituted by pictorial, verbal and spatial elements. A combination of these elements allows an individual to perceive a destination without experiencing the reality. However, experience of the reality, as shown by the findings from this research, is likely to modify the image perceived of the destination. The concept of image used in this model is based on the belief that image is an individual's subjective perception of a destination's attributes in conjunction with their overall impression.

The integral nature of image within this model highlights the potential for image promotion. The potential effect that image promotion could have on each factor categorised as individual characteristics or choice criteria has been discussed. However, inclusion within Figure 9.3 of every factor and its associated inter-relationships would render the model impractical. The factors which may be most greatly influenced by image promotion are arguably image, experience, stimuli, stage in life-cycle, status and envy. The relative importance of these factors in destination selection suggests that image promotion has the potential to influence this process, subject to its effectiveness.

9.6 Recognised Importance of Image Promotion

Those involved in Grampian's tourism promotion appear to have increasingly recognised the importance of image in the last few years, suggesting that the climate of ideas may be right for effective policy development. However, this has not been reflected by their actions to date, with no real change in brochure production or policy development.

Effective image promotion, as an instrument for increasing visitor numbers, necessitates the precondition of cohesion amongst promoters. However, there is conflict between those responsible for tourism promotion and development in the region. It is unlikely that this will improve in the near future with the friction that the recent reorganisation has generated. There is more likely to be spiralling disharmony as the number of tourist boards is reduced and the tourist board and enterprise agencies are assigned new roles.

To identify highlights and limitations of the region, more information needs to be accumulated about visitors and non-visitors to Grampian rather than the Area Tourist

Board arbitrarily selecting attributes for promotion. Improved and increased data collection in the region may provide a necessary base for measuring the effectiveness of image promotion. The future marketing of the region will structurally be different to the past, with one Area Tourist Board responsible for this role. However, due to the history of the region's collective marketing, this is unlikely to have as great an impact on Grampian's tourism as in other areas of Scotland.

There currently appears to be no strategy for image promotion between organisations promoting tourism in Grampian. Interviews with tourism promoters revealed even within organisations themselves that there is no corporate plan and some organisations had not changed their promotional strategy for a number of years, continuing with the same style of promotional literature without consideration of a changing market. The lack of significance currently attached to image promotion activities in the region is at odds with the findings of the visitor survey which shows that image is implicitly very important in destination selection. The lack of priority attached to image promotion may be due to problems associated with measuring the effectiveness of such activities and is reflected by the absence of related policies within the industry. This problem of measuring effectiveness applies not only to image promotion for all destinations, but also for all tourism-related policies due to the number of factors involved in image formation and destination selection.

9.7 Image-Related Policy Development

Image promotional policy has low priority within Grampian's tourism industry. The large number and variety of enterprises involved renders the process of policy-making problematic. A low level of importance may be attached to image promotion by policy-makers due to a perceived insufficiency of benefits, linked to problems associated with evaluation of related policies. The diversity of activities and priorities affects policy development and minimal regulation would make uniform policy implementation difficult to enforce. In view of recent changes in the structure of Grampian's tourist boards and district councils, the future of image policy is more uncertain with greater internal disharmony amongst government organisations.

If a related policy was to be developed, an issue network is likely to be the most productive method for widespread implementation. The structure of the network will influence the

success of image promotion policy implementation. The participants involved in the network, the priority attached to image promotion and the influence that the participants have over members of their organisations and other industry members will influence policy success. However, whilst there is evidence to suggest that the political and problem streams are in place for an image promotional policy, the catalyst of a policy entrepreneur is not. The lack of key players in the tourism industry suggests that no such entrepreneur is likely to come forward. Therefore, if such a catalyst is necessary for successful policy development as Parsons (1995) suggests, tourism image policy development may not occur, at least not at a regional level.

If an issue network was developed for image promotion, the development of any policies would be influenced by the associated politics of image. The political power of each interest group involved in the issue network, determined by resources available to them, affects emphasis given to their specific interest, such as the district they represent. Instead of uniting the industry within an issue network, policy development could therefore serve to fragment it further.

The impact of tourism policy implementation on image promoters of a destination is likely to vary according to budget allocation for promotional activities. For larger organisations, such as tourist boards and enterprise companies, the promotion of a new image would involve production of new promotional literature, whilst this is perceived by destination promoters to be the most effective tool for image promotion, with different pictorial and written copy, and new marketing campaigns. Due to lower capital investment in promotional activities, smaller enterprises, such as attraction associations, hotel chains, and individuals, may be able to adopt any new policy at a lower cost.

The evaluation of image-related policy implementation remains problematic. It may not be sufficient to consider a change in visitor numbers or increased revenue as an effective measure of policy implementation. Identifying individuals whose image was influenced by image promotion employed as a result of a new policy, who subsequently visited the destination, would be the most valuable indicators of successful policy implementation. However, contacting such individuals would be arduous.

One point to consider is the ability of an appropriate policy to create or alter image perception of a destination through associated promotional activities. Having identified the number of factors involved in image formation, it is clear that promotional activities will have a limited affect on this process, as proposed by the models critiqued, even if the lack of co-ordination can be overcome.

The lack of co-ordination within Scottish tourism promotion was identified and the issue addressed by a Scottish Enterprise Initiative (Daily Mail, 1995). A group, similar to an issue network was established, consisting of representatives from Scottish Trade International, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Tourist Board, British Council and the private sector. The Initiative was set up in response to findings of research undertaken to ascertain the image perceived of Scotland by employees of Japanese companies with investments in Scotland.

The results of Scottish Enterprise's research showed employees had no clear image of Scotland. Consequently, a decision was made to promote a new image of Scotland abroad. It remains to be established, however, how representative the sample contacted was of other individuals living abroad.

Despite its shortcomings, the Initiative proposed that the image promoted of Scotland abroad, in conjunction with the traditional image, should portray a dynamic, modern country. Emphasis is to be placed on quality, values, innovation, education, people, environment as well as the tradition of Scotland to overcome inconsistencies in current image perception. Findings from a recent study by the British Tourist Authority on Europeans' perceptions of Scotland also led to the conclusion that Scotland's brand image should include both traditional elements, based on the concepts of stone and fire, and modern aspects, culminating in "Scotland The Brand" (Casely, 1998, p. 187).

Similarly, those responsible for the promotion of Grampian as a visitor destination stated that emphasis needed to be placed on the history of the area whilst promoting the things to see and do in the region, both traditional and modern. However, individuals who have not visited Grampian do not appear to perceive the modern aspects of such an image, with many of the respondents stating that there is a lack of things to do in the region. Therefore,

the region may benefit from researching the image that individuals perceive of the region and what would attract them to it.

Branding has the potential to improve co-ordination of image promotion throughout Scotland. However, there has already been, “widespread uncertainty among the business community that it will be possible to create a single positive brand image” due to diversity of the product (Daily Mail, 1995, p.25). This feeling of uncertainty may be reflected in a lack of commitment to promotion of a new image by some tourism industry members. The large number of organisations and individuals involved may lead to inconsistencies in implementation of a new image policy, unless the potential benefits from universal image promotion can be perceived.

On a regional level, those involved in Grampian’s promotion may find the announcement of the branding of Scotland as an appropriate incentive to choose whether to promote an image consistent with the national image or rather an individual regional image. To make this decision, whether the image perceived of Grampian can be separated from that of Scotland needs to be considered. Empirical data analysis revealed both promoters and potential visitors to Grampian considered the images inseparable. This indicates it may be beneficial to promote a specific image of Grampian, differentiating it from the rest of Scotland, or conversely promote factual information pertaining to available activities, leaving image promotion to national organisations.

If Scotland, and none of the regions, are branded, the role of the regional tourist boards could be reduced to the promotion of activities and events rather than trying to attract visitors to their areas. With the recent cuts in tourism budgets made by many district councils, this may be the way forward. If production of the literature associated with activities and events continued to be sponsored by those involved, the tourism budget could be used to fund the Tourist Information Centres and stop the trend of closures.

Alternatively, promotion of activities and events could take place through visitor attractions, saving the overhead costs of running Tourist Information Centres (Stokes, 1998). However, the benefits a central location brings to a Tourist Information Centre may be lost with location at an attraction and therefore the number of visitors using the service reduced.

Assuming that the remit for regional tourist boards remains the same, the low priority attached to specific image promotion and the number of players within a region's tourism industry potentially renders image promotional policy ineffective. This questions whether a region is an effective unit of area for promotion.

9.8 A Region as a Unit of Area for Promotion

The case study area studied during this research was a regional destination. Arguably, a region such as Grampian is too diverse, both geographically and economically, to promote in its entirety. Indeed, this research discovered that image promoters generally felt that although the region was marketed as one destination, there were perceivable differences at district level. With the recent reduction in tourist boards throughout Scotland, a number of destinations are now promoted at a regional level, accentuating the significance of this research. It was proposed (in Chapter II) that as the destination selection process continues, the destination size for the visitor diminishes. This, in conjunction with the views of industry members, suggests that a region is too large an area for image promotion and therefore questions the unit area of promotion now used throughout Scotland.

Conversely, the findings in Chapter VIII identify an inability by potential visitors to separate the image of Grampian from that of the rest of Scotland. This again questions whether promoting a region as a visitor destination is the correct unit area, but this time whether it is in fact too small. To overcome the issue of separation, in the same way that the British Tourist Authority has branded Britain and sub-branded Scotland, England and Wales, regions within the individual countries could be further sub-branded.

It could be suggested that the use of a region as a unit area for promotion may be more useful for a low profile destination than a more traditional visitor destination. As more is known about an area, the more localised an individual's interest is likely to become. The images perceived by individuals are not constrained by administrative boundaries, therefore it is perhaps wrong to promote images simply because of them.

9.9 Promotion of a Low Profile Destination

Grampian could be described as a low profile, peripherally located region with potential to attract a greater number of visitors. There are several issues which relate specifically to image and the promotion of peripheral areas.

Fewer stimuli are likely to be experienced by individuals for lower rather than higher profile destinations. There are also likely to be less sources of information available. This can be a two-edged sword. On one hand, individuals are more likely to remember the fewer sources of information used to create an image of a low profile destination than a high profile destination's multi-sourced image, suggesting that image promotion and related policies may be more effective for low profile destinations. On the other hand, the lack of stimuli and information on peripheral destinations may lead to unclear image perception and a lack of knowledge. This knowledge may be as basic as geographical location and accessibility, as well as what is on offer in the area. Evidence of this was found when studying potential and actual visitors to Grampian, many of whom could not locate the region.

It is possible that there are higher expectations from destination promoters in peripheral areas because there are less alternative sources of information available to the individual for image formation, and therefore less potential for conflicting image promotion. However, the benefits derived from an individual being exposed to different stimuli can not be enjoyed to the same extent when there are fewer sources available.

The effectiveness of destination image promotion for low profile destinations also depends upon the visitor market for that destination. The impact of promotional activities of destinations whose visitors are mainly repeat visitors on trips that are deemed of low importance, such as additional holidays, is likely to be minimal (McWilliams & Crompton, 1997) if the visitor market remains the same. For example, Grampian as a visitor destination is characterised by a large number of repeat visitors and people taking additional holidays, suggesting that the effectiveness of image promotion activities may be limited. However, whilst it is important to continue to attract repeat visitors to low profile destinations, the visitor market needs to be expanded and therefore the profile needs to be raised of these destinations to attract more visitors. It is unlikely that the destination

promoters alone will be able to achieve this, however, if promotional activities were combined with other stimuli, such as media coverage, this may be achievable.

9.10 Implications of the Research

Due to its subjective nature, a meta theory of image is not possible. Such a theory would be highly complex, due to the number and nature of variables that have to be taken into account, and open to controversy. However models, as proposed in this Chapter, can serve as conceptual frameworks within which image can be studied. This research proposes that due to the significance of experience in image formation of Grampian as a visitor destination, image can be the most significant factor in destination selection, with the image perceived of a destination resulting in ultimate selection or rejection of that destination.

By identifying the significance of experience in image formation, the importance of image promotion has been highlighted since image promotion creates an image in the absence of experience and can reduce any potential image-reality gap. However, a lack of significance is attached to image by destination promoters in their actions. Whilst they acknowledge the importance of image in destination selection, established by the visitor survey, this is not matched by their actions or inactions. This has led to disparity between the demand and supply perspectives on Grampian's contemporary image (s). This is partly due to problems associated with image measurement and effectiveness evaluation. This, and the absence of a policy entrepreneur, limits the potential for any related policy development.

This research has identified the importance of contacting visitors and non-visitors to a destination and a methodology was employed which successfully achieved this. Why an individual decides not to visit a destination is as important to destination promoters as why an individual decides to visit. The empirical methodology and analysis of results within a theoretical framework conducted by this research can therefore form the basis for future research on image measurement and evaluation of image promotion effectiveness.

Replication of the methodology employed to contact visitors and non-visitors to a destination would however necessitate adaptation. With Rail companies conducting more of their own research on trains, business sectors seem increasingly reluctant to allow researchers access to passengers. However, the questionnaire design could be replicated by

researchers studying other destinations to collect quantitative and qualitative information. The benefits of engaging a methodology which intercepts a captive audience, such as a high response rate and rapid collection of data, can also be incorporated into future work. To date, the researcher is unaware of any literature on the issue of a captive audience, although benefits enjoyed from such a group of potential respondents are clear.

Interviews conducted with relevant members of the tourism industry are a tool of data collection which can be, and often is, employed by other researchers. The semi-structured nature of the interviews using a funnelled approach to questioning can be adapted to study many subject areas. Brochure analysis could be employed where brochures from a number of years can be studied. Future analysis of image-related policies could use this research as a foundation for study of developments subsequent to the time of this study, through analysis of documentation and information from interviews. As well as methodologies being transferable to other studies, this research has highlighted a number of areas for future work.

The main components of the research could be extended to study promotion of other destinations. Comparison of images perceived of several destinations would allow the concept of substitutability to be explored. Conversely, the study could be extended to consider the case study region over time. This would give an indication of the success of marketing strategies and reflect whether or not any structural changes to the region have altered the image perceived by potential visitors to the area. This would be valuable due to the lack of methods currently available for critical appraisal of image promotion. Psychology studied with respect to destination selection could also be considered outside the field of tourism, relating to other areas of consumer behaviour.

The issue of distance lived from a destination has been analysed and the hypothesis that the clarity of image decreases with increasing geographical distance from the destination tested during this research. This hypothesis could be applied to other destinations to test whether or not distance and longitude of potential visitors' home towns affects the clarity of perceived destination image.

The research could be expanded to include potential visitors who were not represented by the train passengers contacted. The lower end of the socio-economic classes of the United

Kingdom have not been accurately represented in the results of this research. Although it could be argued that these people would be less likely to visit a destination, this could be proved or disproved with a larger sample size of this category of respondents. Furthermore, the research could be expanded to include overseas visitors, encompassing the whole potential visitor market to a destination and identify any differences between the domestic and overseas image (s) of that destination.

Image promotion currently employed in Grampian can be compared to future promotional activities which will take place under a relatively new national government and local government structure. Grampian can also be compared to other destinations with similar or divergent organisational structures, or destinations of a different size.

Limitations associated with using a region as a unit area for promotion question the unit areas used in the promotion of Scotland. The significance of image promotion is influenced by the size and profile of a visitor destination. Since tourism has great potential within the United Kingdom and image is integral to destination selection, it is important to promote a unit of area which maximises the effectiveness of image promotion. As analysis of the case study region has shown, a region is not necessarily the most appropriate unit area for promotion. In the absence of effective image promotion, potential visitors will use alternative sources of information for image formation and destination selection, reducing the impact of promotional activities. Individuals will select a destination on perceived image, whether or not that is also the image portrayed by promoters. Image plays a significant role in tourism. The industry needs to use this to their advantage, not be ruled by it.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire Design - Pilot Survey 1

PRIZE DRAW: FREE ENTRY WITH RETURN OF FORM BY WED. 16th DECEMBER

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AFTER YOU HAVE READ THE ACCOMPANYING LITERATURE

VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Research Student at the Robert Gordon University and am conducting a study into tourism in Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen. I would be very grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete this form, even if you have decided against visiting the region. All the information that you give will be in strict confidence. I am working closely with the tourist board.

1 Have you visited the Grampian region before?

Yes No

2 If you have visited the region before, please specify why you might return:

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Friendliness of locals
- 2) Peace and quiet
- 3) Beautiful countryside
- 4) Historical aspects of the region
- 5) Sports facilities
- 6) Other (please specify).....

3 What prompted you to request the promotional literature?

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Talking to friends/relatives/colleagues
- 2) Media representation (eg TV/radio programmes, films)
- 3) Advertisements
- 4) Articles in books/newspapers/magazines
- 5) Other (Please specify).....

4 Have you requested 1992/93 promotional literature from any other area in Britain?

Yes No

If YES, please specify area(s).....

5 How would you perceive the following with respect to Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen?

(Please tick relevant rating)

	v. poor	poor	average	good	v. good
1) Scenery					
2) Friendliness of locals					
3) Peace and quiet					
4) Weather					
5) Golf					
6) Skiing					
7) Sporting facilities					
8) Hillwalking possibilities					
9) Theme trails					
10) Heritage/castles					
11) Museums/galleries					
12) Local crafts/industries					
13) Shops					

	v. poor	poor	average	good	v. good
14) Royal Connection					
15) Visitor attractions					
16) Distilleries					
17) Gardens/parks					
18) Beaches					
19) Coastline					
20) Wildlife(nature reserves,etc.)					
21) Food					
22) Architecture					
23) Other (please specify).....					

6 Could you describe the area covered by the Grampian region:

a) Before reading the literature?

Yes No

b) After reading the literature?

Yes No

7 Which specific areas of the region are you most interested in?

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Aberdeen City
- 2) Banff & Buchan
- 3) Gordon District
- 4) Kincardine & Deeside
- 5) Moray District

8 Do you intend combining your visit to the region with visiting other areas in Scotland?

Yes No Don't know

If YES, please specify where?.....

9 Have you decided to visit the Grampian region?

Yes No Undecided yet

10 Please scale how important the following factors have been or still are in your decision whether or not to visit Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen:

(Please tick relevant rating)

	irrelevant	not important	important	very important	essential
1) Personal circumstances(eg money considerations, dates available, constitution of the group,etc.)					
2) Talking to friends, relatives or colleagues					
3) Promotional Literature					
4) Media representation					

	irrelevant	not important	important	very important	essential
3) Advertisements					
6) Articles in books, magazines or newspapers					
7) Distance from home					
8) Friends/relatives in the area					
9) Golf					
10) Other sports					
11) Mountains/hills					
12) Heritage/castles					
13) Royal Connection					
14) Distilleries					
15) Visitor Attractions					
16) Weather					
17) Other (please specify).....					

11 **Would you be willing to complete a similar questionnaire on your return home?**

Yes No

12 **What would be the approximate dates of your visit?**.....

13 **Which member of the household requested the literature?**

You Your spouse Your partner

Your flatmate Other

If OTHER, *please specify*.....

14 **In which age range do you fall?**

under 18 18-35 36-50

51-65 over 65

15 **Which sex are you?**

Male Female

16 **Please list the exact occupations of the adults in your household:**

(if retired please state former occupation, eg Retired Teacher)

Your occupation:.....

Others in your household: 1.....

2.....

3.....

Please complete the following in order to enter the prize draw:

17 **Name:**.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Thank you for helping me with my survey. Please return this form in the stamped addressed envelope provided Wednesday 16th December. The prize draw will take place on Friday 18th December.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire Design - Pilot Survey 2

PRIZE DRAW: FREE ENTRY WITH RETURN OF FORM BY FRIDAY 19TH MARCH

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AFTER YOU HAVE READ THE ACCOMPANYING LITERATURE

VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Research Student at the Robert Gordon University, and am conducting a study into tourism in Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen. I would be very grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete this form, even if you have decided against visiting the region. All the information that you give will be in strict confidence. I am working closely with the tourist board.

1 Have you visited the Grampian region before?

Yes No

2 If you have visited the region before, please specify why you might return:

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Friendliness of locals
- 2) Peace and quiet
- 3) Beautiful countryside
- 4) Historical aspects of the region
- 5) Sports facilities
- 6) Visit family &/or friends
- 7) Other *(please specify)*.....

3 What prompted you to request the promotional literature?

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Talking to friends/relatives/colleagues
- 2) Media representation (eg TV/radio programmes, films)
- 3) Advertisements
- 4) Articles in books/newspapers/magazines
- 5) Have visited before
- 6) Other *(Please specify)*.....

4 Have you requested 1992/93 promotional literature from any other area in Britain?

Yes No

If YES, *please specify area(s)*.....

5 How would you perceive the following with respect to Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen?

(Please complete the following sentences with the word or phrase you feel is most appropriate)

- 1) The scenery in the region is
- 2) The locals are
- 3) The level of peace and quiet is
- 4) The weather is
- 5) The golf is
- 6) The skiing is
- 7) The sporting facilities are
- 8) The hillwalking possibilities are
- 9) The theme trails are
- 10) The heritage &/or castles are
- 11) The museums &/or galleries are
- 12) The local crafts &/or industries are
- 13) The shops are

- 14) The royal connection is
- 15) The visitor attractions are
- 16) The distilleries are
- 17) The gardens &/or parks are
- 18) The beaches are
- 19) The coastline is
- 20) The wildlife (nature reserves, etc.) is
- 21) The food is
- 22) The architecture is
- 23) Other (*please specify*) is

6 Could you describe the area covered by Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen:

a) Before reading the literature?

Yes No

b) After reading the literature?

Yes No

7 Which specific areas of the region are you most interested in?

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Aberdeen City
- 2) Banff & Buchan
- 3) Gordon District
- 4) Kincardine & Deeside
- 5) Moray District

8 Do you intend combining your visit to the region with visiting other areas in Scotland?

Yes No Don't know

If YES, *please specify where?*.....

9 Have you decided to visit Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen?

Yes No Undecided yet

10 Please indicate how important the following factors have been in your decision whether or not to visit Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen:

(Please complete the following sentences with the word or phrase you feel is most appropriate)

- 1) Personal circumstances (eg money considerations, dates available, constitution of the group, etc.) were
- 2) Talking to friends, relatives or colleagues was
- 3) Promotional Literature was
- 4) Media representation (TV/radio/films) was
- 5) Advertisements were
- 6) Articles in books, magazines or newspapers were
- 7) Distance from home was
- 8) Friends &/or relatives in the area were
- 9) Golf was
- 10) Other sports were
- 11) Mountains &/or hills were

- 12) Heritage &/or castles were
- 13) Royal Connection was
- 14) Distilleries were
- 15) Visitor Attractions were
- 16) Weather was
- 17) Your image of the region was
- 18) Your friends' &/or relatives' image of the region was
- 19) Other (*please specify*).....

11 **Would you be willing to complete a similar questionnaire on your return home?**

Yes No

12 **What would be the approximate dates of your visit?**

.....

13 **Which member of the household requested the literature?**

You Your spouse Your partner

Your flatmate Other

If OTHER, *please specify*.....

14 **In which age range do you fall?**

under 18 18-35 36-50

51-65 over 65

15 **Which sex are you?**

Male Female

16 **Please list the exact occupations of the adults in your household:**

(if retired please state former occupation, eg Retired Teacher)

Your occupation:.....

Others in your household: 1.....

2.....

3.....

17 **Do you have any further comments regarding Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen?**

.....

Please complete the following in order to enter the prize draw:

18 **Name:**

Address:

.....

.....

Thank you for helping me with my survey. Please return this form in the stamped addressed envelope provided by Friday 19th March. The prize draw will take place on Friday 26th March.

Appendix 3: Questionnaire Design - Pilot Survey 3

PRIZE DRAW: FREE ENTRY WITH RETURN OF FORM BY FRIDAY 19TH MARCH

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AFTER YOU HAVE READ THE ACCOMPANYING LITERATURE

VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Research Student at the Robert Gordon University, and am conducting a study into tourism in Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen. I would be very grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete this form, even if you have decided against visiting the region. All the information that you give will be in strict confidence. I am working closely with the tourist board.

1 Have you visited the Grampian region before?

Yes No

2 If you have visited the region before, please specify why you might return:

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Friendliness of locals
- 2) Peace and quiet
- 3) Beautiful countryside
- 4) Historical aspects of the region
- 5) Sports facilities
- 6) Visit family &/or friends
- 7) Other (please specify).....

3 What prompted you to request the promotional literature?

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Talking to friends/relatives/colleagues
- 2) Media representation (eg TV/radio programmes,films)
- 3) Advertisements
- 4) Articles in books/newspapers/magazines
- 5) Have visited before
- 6) Other (Please specify).....

4 Have you requested 1992/93 promotional literature from any other area in Britain?

Yes No

If YES, please specify area(s).....

5 How would you perceive the following with respect to Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen?

(Please circle the word or phrase which seems most appropriate to you)

- 1) The scenery in the region isbeautiful / boring / varying / other (please specify).....
- 2) The locals arefriendly / reserved / hostile / other (please specify).....
- 3) The region is.....peaceful & quiet / noisy / varying / other (please specify).....
- 4) The weather iswet & windy / changeable / cold / other (please specify).....
- 5) The golf isplentiful / high standard / expensive / other (please specify).....
- 6) The skiing isplentiful / high standard / expensive / other (please specify).....
- 7) The sporting facilities areplentiful / high standard / expensive / other (please specify).....
- 8) The hillwalking possibilities arechallenging / plentiful / accessible / other (please specify).....
- 9) The theme trails arewell signposted / interesting / boring / other (please specify).....
- 10) The heritage &/or castles areplentiful / in good condition / well signposted / other (please specify).....
- 11) The museums &/or galleries areplentiful / high standard / expensive / other (please specify).....
- 12) The local crafts &/or industries areinteresting / difficult to find / few / other (please specify).....
- 13) The shops are a poor range / high standard / expensive / other (please specify).....

14. The royal connection istoo commercialised / well signposted / isolated / other *(please specify)*.....
15. The visitor attractions areplentiful / high standard / expensive / other *(please specify)*.....
16. The distilleries arehigh standard / well signposted / interesting / other *(please specify)*.....
17. The gardens &/or parks arebeautiful / high standard / plentiful / other *(please specify)*.....
18. The beaches areclean / unspoilt / undeveloped / other *(please specify)*.....
19. The coastline isscenic / rugged / interesting / other *(please specify)*.....
20. The wildlife(nature reserves,etc.) is ..plentiful / inadequate / accesible / other *(please specify)*.....
21. The food ishigh standard / traditional /wide ranging / other *(please specify)*.....
22. The architecture isinteresting / wide ranging / high standard / other *(please specify)*.....
23. Other *(please specify)* is

6 Could you describe the area covered by Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen:

a) Before reading the literature?

Yes No

b) After reading the literature?

Yes No

7 Which specific areas of the region are you most interested in?

(You may tick more than one)

- 1) Aberdeen City
- 2) Banff & Buchan
- 3) Gordon District
- 4) Kincardine & Deeside
- 5) Moray District

8 Do you intend combining your visit to the region with visiting other areas in Scotland?

Yes No Don't know

If YES, *please specify where?*.....

9 Have you decided to visit Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen?

Yes No Undecided yet

10 Please indicate how important the following factors have been in your decision whether or not to visit Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen:

(Please complete the following sentences with the word or phrase you feel is most appropriate)

- 1) Personal circumstances(eg money considerations, dates available, constitution of the group,etc.) were
- 2) Talking to friends, relatives or colleagues was
- 3) Promotional Literature was
- 4) Media representation (TV/radio/films) was
- 5) Advertisements were
- 6) Articles in books, magazines or newspapers were
- 7) Distance from home was.....
- 8) Friends &/or relatives in the area were
- 9) Golf was
- 10) Other sports were
- 11) Mountains &/or hills were

- 12) Heritage &/or castles were
- 13) Royal Connection was
- 14) Distilleries were
- 15) Visitor Attractions were
- 16) Weather was
- 17) Your image of the region was
- 18) Your friends' &/or relatives' image of the region was
- 19) Other (*please specify*).....

11 **Would you be willing to complete a similar questionnaire on your return home?**

Yes No

12 **What would be the approximate dates of your visit?**

.....

13 **Which member of the household requested the literature?**

You Your spouse Your partner

Your flatmate Other

If OTHER, *please specify*.....

14 **In which age range do you fall?**

under 18 18-35 36-50

51-65 over 65

15 **Which sex are you?**

Male Female

16 **Please list the exact occupations of the adults in your household:**

(if retired please state former occupation, eg Retired Teacher)

Your occupation:.....

Others in your household: 1.....

2.....

3.....

17 **Do you have any further comments regarding Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen?**

.....

Please complete the following in order to enter the prize draw:

18 **Name:**

Address:

.....

.....

Thank you for helping me with my survey. Please return this form in the stamped addressed envelope provided by Friday 19th March. The prize draw will take place on Friday 26th March.

Question 13

a) Are you likely to visit the Grampian region within the next 2 years?
 Very probably Probably Unsure Unlikely Very unlikely

Please give a reason for your answer to Question 13(a):

Question 14

a) Last year, where did you go for your main summer holiday?.....

 b) How long did it last?.....

 c) Please note any other holidays taken last year
 Destination: Length of stay:
 1)
 2)
 3)

Question 15

a) For your main holiday taken last year, what was important to you in your choice of holiday destination?
 1)
 2)
 3)
 4)
 5)
 6)
 b) For your other holidays taken last year, what was important to you in your choice of holiday destination?
 1)
 2)
 3)
 4)
 5)
 6)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION. PLEASE HAND THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO ME OR LEAVE IT ON YOUR SEAT IF YOU SHOULD LEAVE THE TRAIN BEFORE I RETURN.

**DEAR TRAVELLER,
 I AM A PHD RESEARCH STUDENT AT THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY IN ABERDEEN, AND AM CONDUCTING A STUDY INTO TOURISM IN THE GRAMPIAN REGION. I WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD SPARE A FEW MINUTES TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. ALL THE INFORMATION GIVEN WILL BE KEPT IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.**

GILL FINLAY.

Question 1

a) Where is your home town?.....
 b) At which station did you join this train?.....
 c) At which station will you leave this train?.....
 d) Which town is your final destination?.....

Question 2

What is the main purpose of your train journey today?
 On Holiday Visiting friends On Business
 or relatives

Question 3

You are... Male Female

Question 4

In which age range do you fall?
 Under 18 18-35 36-50 51-65 Over 65

Question 5

Please list the exact occupations of the adults in your household (if retired please state former occupation, eg Retired Teacher):
 You.....
 Other adults 1).....
 2).....
 3).....

Question 6

Do you know where the Grampian region is?
 Yes → If YES, can you name any towns or cities in Grampian?

 No

Question 7

Have you ever visited the Grampian region?
 Yes If YES, when?.....
 where?.....
 why?.....

 No → Please go to Question 10

(NB Please look at this map only AFTER completing question 7)



Question 8

a) What was the MAIN purpose of your last visit to Grampian?

On holiday Visiting friends or relatives On business

b) How long did this visit last? (approximate number of nights)
..... nights

Question 9

a) What most impressed you about the Grampian region?
.....
.....
.....

b) Which aspects of the Grampian region were you disappointed with?
.....
.....
.....

Question 10

How would you describe the Grampian region to a friend?
.....
.....
.....

Question 11

Even if you have not visited Grampian, how would you perceive the following with respect to the region? (please complete the following with the word or phrase you feel is most appropriate)

1)The scenery is:.....

2)The locals are:.....

3)The level of peace & quiet is:.....

4)The sports facilities are:.....

5)The hillwalking is:.....

6)The theme trails are:.....

7)The heritage &/castles are:.....

8)The museums &/galleries are:.....

9)The local crafts &/industries are:.....

10)The shops are:.....

11)The visitor attractions are:.....

12)The gardens &/parks are.....

13)The beaches are:.....

14)The coastline is:.....

15)The wildlife is:.....

16)The food is:.....

17)The architecture is:.....

18)Other(please specify).....

Question 12

Please rate the impact the following sources of information had on your view of the region:
(Please tick the appropriate box)

	very unimportant	unimportant	neither important nor unimportant	important	very important
a) Previous experience of the region					
b) Media representation (TV/radio programmes, films)					
c) Promotional literature (eg tourist board material)					
d) Articles in books, newspapers or magazines					
e) Talking to friends, relatives or colleagues					
f) Other (please specify)...					

Appendix 5: Questionnaire Design - Survey 2

DEAR TRAVELLER,

I AM A PhD RESEARCH STUDENT AT THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY IN ABERDEEN, AND AM CONDUCTING A STUDY INTO TOURISM IN THE GRAMPIAN REGION. I WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD SPARE A FEW MINUTES TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. ALL THE INFORMATION GIVEN WILL BE KEPT IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

GILL PINLAY.

Question 1

- Where is your home town?
- At which station did you join this train?
- At which station will you leave this train?
- Which town is your final destination?

Question 2

What is the main purpose of your train journey today

- On Holiday Visiting friends or relatives On Business

Question 3

You are... Male Female

Question 4

In which age range do you fall?

- Under 18 18-35 36-50 51-65 Over 65

Question 5

Please list the exact occupations of the adults in your household (if retired please state former occupation, eg Retired Teacher):

- You.....
Other adults 1).....
2).....
3).....

Question 6

Do you know where the Grampian region is?

- Yes → If YES, can you name any towns or cities in Grampian?
.....
.....
.....
No

Question 7

Have you ever visited the Grampian region?

- Yes → If YES, when?.....
where?.....
why?.....
.....

- No → Please go to Question 10

NB Please look at the map overleaf: **AFTER** completing the questionnaire

Question 11
Please rate the impact the following sources of information had on your view of the region.
(Please tick the appropriate box)

	very unimportant	unimportant	neither important nor unimportant	important	very important
a) Previous experience of the region					
b) Media representation (TV radio programmes, films)					
c) Promotional literature (and tourist board material)					
d) Articles in books, newspapers or magazines					
e) Talking to friends, relatives or colleagues					
f) Other (please specify)					

Question 14
a) Last year, where did you go for your main summer holiday?.....
.....
.....
b) How long did it last?.....
.....
c) Please note any other holidays taken last year
Destination: Length of stay:
1)
2)
3)

Question 15
a) For your main holiday taken last year, what was important to you in your choice of holiday destination?
1)
2)
3)
4)
5)
6)

Question 11
Even if you have not visited Gwynedd, how would you rate the following with respect to the region of Gwynedd. Please respond following with the word or phrase you feel is most appropriate.

- 1) The scenery is
- 2) The locals are
- 3) The level of peace & quiet is
- 4) The sports facilities are
- 5) The hillwalking is
- 6) The theme trails are
- 7) The heritage &/castles are
- 8) The museums &/galleries are
- 9) The local crafts &/industries are
- 10) The shops are
- 11) The visitor attractions are
- 12) The gardens &/parks are
- 13) The beaches are
- 14) The coastline is
- 15) The wildlife is
- 16) The food is
- 17) The architecture is
- 18) Other (please specify)

Question 12
a) Are you likely to visit the Gwynedd region within the next 5 years?
Very probably Probably Unsure Unlikely Not at all

b) Please give a reason for your answer to question 12a.

Appendix 6: Rationale for Questionnaire Design

OPENING INTRODUCTION:

A personalised introduction was written with emphasis placed on the brevity of the questionnaire and assurance of confidentiality was given.

QUESTION 1:

This question was placed first because it was easy to answer and non-threatening to the respondent (Babbie, 1992).

(i) The home town of the respondent was asked in order to discover the distance that the respondent lived from the Grampian region. This would allow comparisons of respondents living different distances from the region and test the hypothesis that image decreases with increasing geographical distance from a destination.

(ii) The stations at which respondents joined and left the train and the town of final destination were established for several reasons. Firstly, in a number of cases the home town given was illegible, ambiguous since a number of towns possess the same name, such as Newport, or confirmed by these further questions. Secondly, the length of time the respondent had to complete the questionnaire is indicated by these questions, established by the distance between stations. Thirdly, the need for another train or another form of transport is shown by the disparity between leaving station and town of final destination, of particular interest to the British Rail business sectors whose trains were surveyed.

QUESTION 2:

The main purpose of the journey taken by respondents on the day surveyed was established to discover the cross-section of people that travel by train.

QUESTIONS 3,4 & 5:

These questions established the demographics of the respondents surveyed. It has been suggested by a number of authors (including Oppenheim, 1992 and Parasuraman, 1991) that questions designed to collect this classification data should be placed at or near the end of the questionnaire. However, it was felt that the format of these questions was designed not to embarrass respondents or be sensitive, therefore it was unlikely that this positioning of such questions would lead to respondents refusing to complete the

questionnaire. The rationale for placing demographic questions near the beginning of the questionnaire was to ask easy to answer questions first, encouraging respondents to continue to complete the questionnaire (Parasuraman, 1991).

For speed of coding and fast completion for the respondent, questions three and four were of a fixed-alternative design. It is unnecessary to ask respondents for specific information when responses were to be categorised before analysed. On a personal subject such as age, the response rate may be reduced if exact age is requested since respondents may not wish to divulge such information (Oppenheim, 1992).

The first age category was those under 18. Passengers who appeared to the researcher as under 16 were not approached since it was considered that these people were less likely than older people to make the decision on where to go for a holiday. It was thought likely that these individuals would be going on holiday with their parent(s), and although they may influence the choice of destination, ultimately the parents would have the final decision. Therefore most of the respondents who indicated that they fell into this age category were between the ages of 16 and 18. The central three categories covered the working population age range in approximately equal ranges. The final age category consisted of individuals over 65 years of age.

Question 5 sought to categorise respondents into socio-economic classes. Previous research (Finlay & O'Reilly, 1991) indicated that more accurate classifications could be derived from asking the respondents to list the exact occupations of the adults in the household rather than asking only for the occupation of the respondent. This aimed to reduce the number of responses that could not be categorised accurately, such as housewife, unemployed or retired. Respondents who were retired or unemployed were asked to state their former occupations. Some responses were not accurate enough to be certain of correct categorisation. It is possible that people do not know or remember enough about the jobs of other members of their household to adequately describe their occupations. This question was open-ended since there would be too many occupations to list and if classes were given it was thought that the respondents would be more likely to code their occupations incorrectly, either due to lack of knowledge about jobs held by other occupants in their household or misconceptions of their status. The occupations of the respondents were

determined instead of their salaries since it was felt that people would be more willing to divulge information on their occupations than their earnings.

The demographics of the sample surveyed were determined for two reasons. Firstly, this was done to allow comparisons to be made between different groups within the sample population. Secondly, these statistics were compared to the rest of the population to ensure that the respondents contacted symbolised a representative sample. Unfortunately it was not possible to compare the demographics of the respondents sampled with other British Rail passengers due to the rescindment of any information transference which could be seen as commercially viable in association with the forthcoming privatisation of British Rail. This information could not be found from any other source.

QUESTION 6:

The ability or inability to correctly locate the Grampian region was determined for two main reasons. Firstly, to discover whether people knew the area covered by the region and the cities and towns contained within it. Secondly, whether respondents who lived further away from the destination had less knowledge of the area covered by the region.

To ensure that the respondent had not simply replied in the affirmative that they could locate Grampian, respondents were further asked to cite any towns or cities within the region. This gave an indication of those respondents who either could not locate Grampian or else held an incorrect conception of the area the region covered.

QUESTION 7:

Past experience of the Grampian region was identified in Question 7. Those respondents who indicated that they had visited Grampian were further asked to indicate when where and why they had visited the region. This specified where the respondents visited within the region. Making this sub-section of the questionnaire open-ended meant that the respondent could identify either districts or towns and cities visited which could then be categorised into districts during the coding process. The reason for the visit was established to distinguish between respondents who had visited on business, those visiting friends and relatives, those on holiday and those visiting for other purposes.

A map depicting the location of Grampian was given on the second page to enable respondents who could not locate the region to answer the remaining questions. The questionnaire was designed in this way to avoid the map prompting respondents in their answers to question 6. However, it could be argued that people could not be sure whether or not they had visited the region if they did not know where it was. The use of a visual stimulus in the form of a map also helped to segment the text in the questionnaire. It was considered that individuals may find a questionnaire designed in this manner more interesting, and therefore would be more likely to complete it fully, than if the questionnaire had consisted of pure text.

QUESTION 8:

Questions 8 and 9 were contingency questions (Babbie, 1992). That is to say that whether or not the respondent is required to answer these questions is contingent upon their response to question 7. For those respondents who had visited Grampian before, this question asked what the main purpose of their last visit to the region was, and how long they stayed for. The information sought was more specific than question 7, asking for only one reason to be stipulated. However, question 8 was seen by a number of respondents to repeat question 7.

QUESTION 9:

For those respondents who had previous experience of the region, the most impressive and most disappointing aspects of the region were identified. Open-ended questions were used to collect the data on these two areas. The questions were designed using this format to reduce the bias of introducing possible alternatives and to allow the respondents the freedom of responding in their own words, detailing as many aspects of the region as desired.

QUESTION 10:

All respondents were asked how they would describe Grampian to a friend. The question was worded in this manner so that even those respondents who believed that they had no knowledge of the region could give a response. Again an open-ended design of question was used to avoid suggestions given by the researcher influencing answers given.

A number of respondents used the geographical location of Grampian as their description of the region to a friend in question 10. The map highlighting the North East of Scotland drawn on this page of the questionnaire may have amplified the number of responses in this category.

QUESTION 11:

Respondents were asked to comment on a number of the region's attributes to determine the components of their image of Grampian. Open-ended questions were used to reduce bias introduced by question design. Where respondents gave no reply, the reason may have been a lack of knowledge on this subject or it may have seemed an arduous task to complete all sections of this question. A number of respondents filled out only the first two parts of question 11. This may have been because the remaining 16 parts of the question were on page 3 of the form. It could be suggested that this page may have seemed too much work to the respondent since they were asked more free elicitation questions than on the other pages. Some of the respondents who had not visited Grampian, and a smaller number of those who had, felt that there were too many subsections to this question.

QUESTION 12:

Sources of information pertaining to the respondents view of the region were identified in question 12. This question was designed on a scaled format to gauge the degree of importance to the respondent of each source of information. To create variety for the respondent, the categories were scaled negative to positive, from left to right. It is possible that respondents did not read question 12 properly. If the question was scanned as opposed to read thoroughly, it could have been assumed that the categories would be scaled positive to negative, left to right. When analysing the data, the level of importance assigned by the respondent to non-categorised sources of information was inputted rather than defining the sources.

QUESTION 13:

The likelihood of the respondent visiting Grampian within the next two years was identified in this question. The time scale of two years was used as an estimate of the immediate future. When asked to give a reason for their answer to this question, several respondents stated that the questionnaire had aroused their interest in the region. Therefore one could suggest that the survey may have increased the number of potential visitors

considering Grampian in their opportunity set (Goodall, 1988) of destinations to visit in the future.

QUESTIONS 14 & 15:

Details of respondents' holidays taken in the previous year were identified here. This information was sought to establish the factors which are important for different holidays taken by respondents. It was felt that factors considered during the decision-making process would vary between different types of holiday, such as main and secondary holidays. These factors could then be compared to what the Grampian region has to offer and therefore would the region be a suitable destination for respondents.

Respondents were asked to give details of their holidays taken in 1992. If respondents had been asked about their holidays taken in 1993, although the details of the holiday may be easier for the respondents to remember, holidays still to be taken in that year would have been excluded from the survey.

The content of the remaining questions on the questionnaires completed by the Intercity Cross Country passengers were determined by the British Rail business sector.

Appendix 7: Industry Interviews Conducted

Interviews were conducted with the following members of the tourism industry in Grampian:

- **Kincardine & Deeside Tourist Board** - Chief Executive, P. Higson. Interview conducted on 12th January 1994 (duration: approximately 30 minutes).
- **Grampian Highlands & Aberdeen Tourism Marketing Company** - Tourism Manager, Y. Cook. Interview conducted on 13th January 1994 (duration: approximately 60 minutes).
- **Moray Tourist Board** - Chief Executive, A. Burgess. Interview conducted on 17th January 1994 (duration: approximately 35 minutes).
- **Hospitality Training, Grampian Hotel and Catering Training Association** - General Manager, D. Reoch. Interview conducted on 26th January 1994 (duration: approximately 40 minutes).
- **Grampian Enterprise Limited** - Head of Tourism, D. Swarbick. Interview conducted on 8th February 1994 (duration: approximately 35 minutes).
- **Aberdeen Hoteliers Association** - Chairman (G. Place) Interview conducted on 1st March 1994 (duration: approximately 25 minutes).

Appendix 8: Industry Interview Schedule

1) Please describe briefly what you as an organisation do

The concept of Image

2) What do you understand by the term image?

3) What image do you try to project?

4) Is it an organisational image or an image of the region?

5) What does this image consist of? (i.e. constituent parts)

6) What is it associated with? (E.g. traditional kilts, etc.)

7) What images would you prefer were not portrayed, both personally and on an organisational basis? (E.g. kilts, bagpipes)

8) How do you use your promotional literature to convey your image?

9) Do you use logos?

10) For what purpose is this image portrayed? (E.g. to attract more visitors)

How is the image chosen?

11) Where did the image originate? (E.g. historic significance)

12) Do you believe that image can influence people to a significant extent? Why?

13) Who chooses this image? (What is their position in the co.)

- 14) Do consultants have any role to play in the selection of the image to be portrayed?
- 15) How is your promotional literature designed? (E.g. is the factual information designed and the image in pictures and words later placed around it or is the factual information advertised in a particular image format?)
- 16) How much money is spent on the promotion of an image? Can it be separated from other marketing expenditure?
- 17) Do you feel that your image promotion is effective? Do you have any proof of this? (E.g. research)
- 18) How would you measure the effectiveness of your image promotion? (E.g. increased visitor numbers, increased visitor spend, attracting a particular type of visitor - how could this be measured?)

Tourism Promotion throughout the region

- 19) Has your organisation at any time deliberately changed the image that it portrays of the region? If so, why and how? Did this have the desired consequences? How do you measure this?
- 20) Do you think that a universal image is portrayed throughout the region? Do you see any conflict in images promoted by different organisations?
- 21) Do you co-ordinate the promotion of one image with other promotional organisations? (E.g. tourist boards & enterprise companies)
- 22) Do you think a regional / national / district image being portrayed? Is there conflict between these different levels?
- 19) What is your view with respect to how the region is / should be promoted? What is the role of the region therein?

20) What insight do you have with respect to what the visitors / investors currently think of the image of the region?

Appendix 9: Rationale for Interview Design

OPENING INTRODUCTION

A brief introduction was given to the interviewee describing the research being undertaken and the use of the interview. The study area had already been described when the potential respondents were first contacted. However, this reiteration of the research had a number of benefits. Firstly, it served as a reminder to the respondent of the subject being researched, avoiding any potential embarrassment or confusion on behalf of the interviewee. Secondly, it gave an informal start to the interview, potentially relaxing the interviewer and interviewee.

QUESTION 1:

The respondent was asked to describe briefly what their organisation did. This served two purposes. Firstly, this question acted as a continuation of the informal introduction, allowing the respondent to talk about a subject that they know a lot about and are therefore likely to feel comfortable with. Secondly, the role of the organisation already established by the research could be verified.

THE CONCEPT OF IMAGE

QUESTION 2:

The respondent's understanding of the concept of image was identified in Question 2. The subjective nature of this concept means that each person may perceive it differently. This perception may then influence how an image of a destination is promoted.

QUESTION 3:

The image that the organisation wishes to project of Grampian was considered in Question 3. The overall image and its constituent parts were identified. The results of this question could then be compared to the image perceived of the region by the potential and actual visitors. Differences may be the result of selective distortions of the image portrayed and received.

QUESTION 4:

Any images that the respondent would not like to portray of the region were established in this question. This identified attributes which the interviewee felt was negative image promotion, and therefore to be avoided.

QUESTION 5:

The reason for the particular image promotion employed by the organisation was identified in Question 5. The rationale behind the question was to establish whether it was an increase in the number of visitors or revenue to the area or a particular type of visitor, indicating market segmentation, that the organisation wanted to attract.

QUESTION 6:

Asking the respondent whether or not they feel that image is an influential factor on the potential visitor's decision-making process ascertained the role that the image plays in their promotional activities. An explanation of this answer was asked, to ensure that there was reasoning behind the answer given and to obtain more detailed information

QUESTION 7:

The role of promotional literature in the conveyance of an image of Grampian was established in Question 7. It identified how the image was portrayed within the material. This could then be compared to the importance placed by the potential and actual visitors to the region on promotional literature as a source of information.

QUESTION 8:

The use of logos in the promotion of an image of Grampian was established in Question 8. Logos could be used as a tool for image promotion and the identification of their existence by promoters may suggest cohesion between organisations if a universal logo is used. Logos can act as stimuli to potential visitors and may play a part in their retention of an image.

IMAGE PROMOTION

QUESTION 9:

The origin of the image portrayed by the organisation was discussed in Question 9. Any historical significance was also identified. This information was cross-referenced with information collected on the local history of the area (see Chapter VI).

QUESTION 10:

The person or people responsible for the selection of the image portrayed was established and their corresponding position in the organisation noted in Question 10. This identifies some of the potential power groups which may influence the responses given by the representative for the organisation. This relates to the structuralist methodology (see earlier in this Chapter) where employers and workers at higher levels can influence people's ideas, notions and thoughts.

QUESTION 11:

The role of consultants in the choice of the image portrayed was information sought in Question 11. Consultants, such as TMS in Edinburgh, have conducted research on tourism in Grampian. The potential incorporation of these results into the image promotion by the organisations studied was identified.

QUESTION 12:

The design of the promotional literature was discussed in Question 12. This probed the importance placed upon the portrayal of an image of Grampian within the material. The use of pictorial and textual image portrayal was discussed.

QUESTION 13:

In Question 13, the amount of money spent on image promotion was considered within the context of marketing expenditure of organisations. Whether it was possible to separate the two was discussed. It was thought that if such a division were possible, the importance placed on image promotion by the organisation would be identified by the budgetary allocation assigned to it.

QUESTIONS 14 & 15:

The effectiveness of the organisations image promotion was discussed in Question 14. The respondent was asked whether or not they had any evidence of the effectiveness of their image promotion. The responses given to Question 15 indicated whether or not the industry felt that it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of image promotion. The respondents were given the opportunity in Question 15 to suggest any effectiveness measurements. This was asked to generate new ideas or to highlight that the industry is unaware of the need to measure promotional effectiveness.

TOURISM PROMOTION THROUGHOUT THE REGION

QUESTION 16:

Any change in the image portrayed of Grampian over time was identified in this question. If there had been change, the rationale for and the method of change was also established. Relating to previous questions, the respondent was asked whether or not the effectiveness of this change had been measured.

QUESTIONS 17 & 18:

The degree of cohesion among image promoters of the region was discussed in Question 17. It was important to establish whether a universal image of Grampian was portrayed or if conflict existed between promotional organisations. Any lack of universality may lead to confusion for the potential visitor receiving the information. Any deliberate co-ordination of promotional activities with other organisations were identified in Question 18.

QUESTION 19:

The issue of separation (see Chapter IV) was discussed in Question 19. Whether the respondent felt that a regional, national or district image was being portrayed was established. This issue has marketing implications, such as a national image may suggest that a national level of promotion would be more beneficial to Grampian than at a regional level due to more co-ordinated promotion with other areas of Scotland. This may present some of the organisations currently promoting the image of Grampian as less essential to the process. Therefore, the answer given may be biased by the respondent to protect their organisations role in the process.

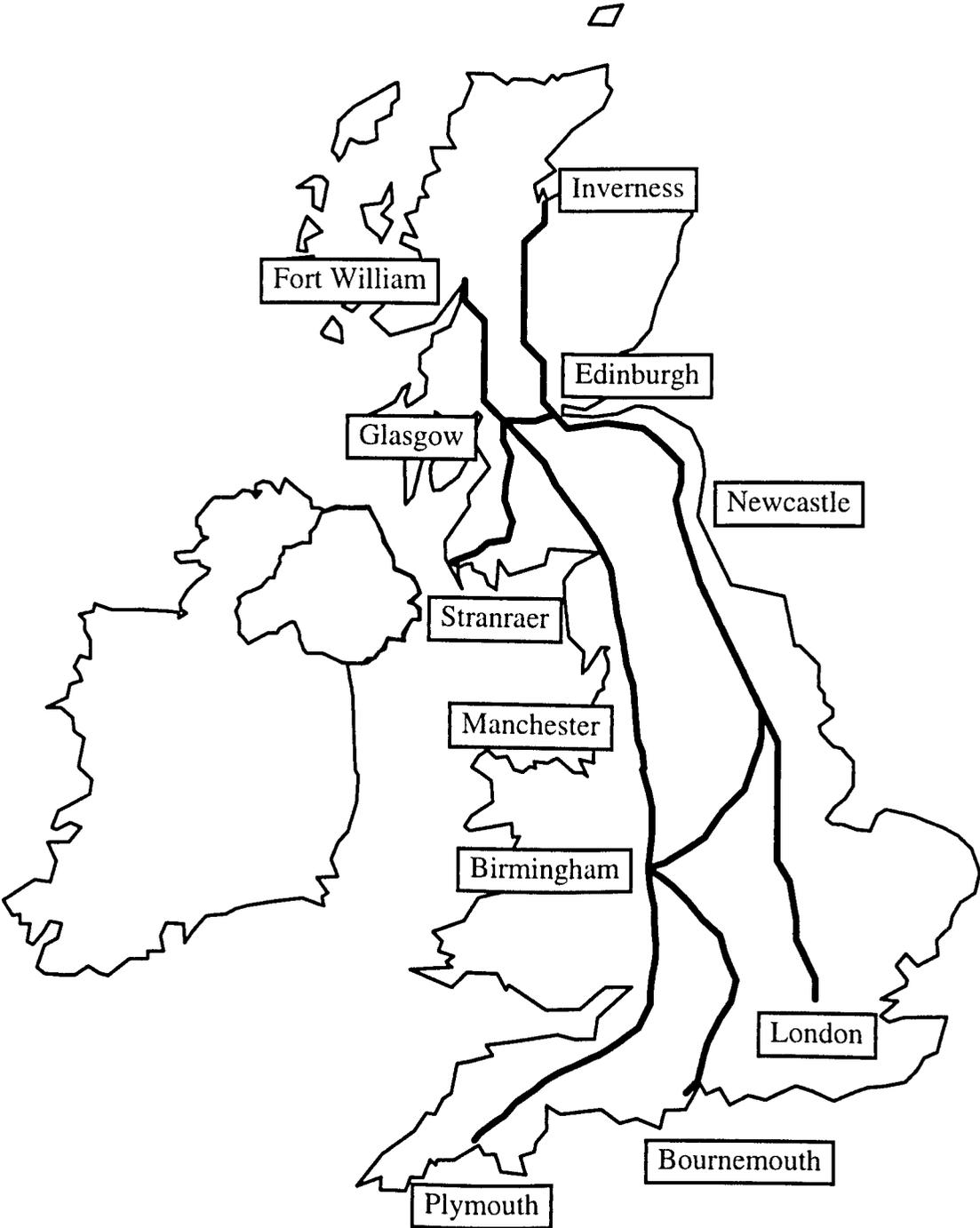
QUESTION 20:

A personal opinion of how the respondent thinks the region should be promoted was discussed in Question 20. This question gave the interviewee the opportunity to discuss the role of the region in the promotion of its image and any improvements they consider could be made to the image promotion currently employed.

QUESTION 21:

How potential and actual visitors perceive Grampian was discussed in Question 21. The image that the potential and actual investors to the region have of Grampian was also considered. This question was asked to ascertain whether or not the promoters felt that the people they were designing their marketing for perceived an image synonymous with what was being promoted.

Appendix 10: Routes for Data Collection



Appendix 11: Summary Of Train Journeys

21/10/93: Inverness - London

Only two people refused to take a questionnaire and two further people then did not complete the form. Those who were asleep or eating in the dining car were excluded from the questionnaire distribution for courtesy reasons. One gentleman, who had previously been precluded on the latter of these criteria, asked for a questionnaire. The train was timetabled to run straight through from Inverness to London, however a change of trains at Edinburgh was necessitated. This meant that it was not possible to distribute questionnaires to close to Edinburgh since there would not have been enough time for respondents to complete the forms before they had to disembark from the first train. It was considered that a number of the questionnaires would be lost in the transfer of trains if not collected at this juncture. The unscheduled change in trains agitated passengers, but this did not seem to act as a deterrent for completion of the questionnaires, with 134 forms returned. Due to the length of the journey, there were four different senior conductors, each of whom had to be approached to authorise my research on the train. The first conductor on the train made an announcement over the tannoy, informing people of the researcher's presence on the train. This was a very useful introduction.

25/10/93: London - Inverness

Overcrowding on this train impeded the distribution of questionnaires. Passengers were standing between carriages and also down the central aisles of the carriages. This caused physical impracticalities for the questionnaire distribution. No questionnaires were distributed until the train departed from Peterborough. Until this time, the senior conductor was endeavouring to seat passengers whose seats had been double-booked. Therefore it was not possible to obtain permission from him to carry out the research before the train reached Peterborough.

The train was later diverted via Fife due to major traffic problems. People travelling to destinations which were to be bypassed by the diversion were told to alight at Haymarket. However this announcement was not made until the train reached Haymarket. This meant that some respondents alighted from the train without completing their questionnaires and other potential respondents did not join the train.

Two passengers were asked the questions verbally since they were blind. To minimise any differences that may result from this approach, no supplementary information was given than that on the questionnaire. 93 questionnaires were completed and 11 not returned. This does not reflect the number of passengers that travelled on the train from London to Inverness that day. The distribution of questionnaires was limited to those carriages where there was enough space to do so.

09/11/93: Glasgow Queen Street - Edinburgh Waverley

The brevity of the journey meant that there was barely enough time to distribute the questionnaires and collect them again. 63 forms were completed and 4 not returned. It is possible that these were left on the train due to the speed with which the questionnaires had to be collected.

One passenger remarked that the method used was innovative to gain a captive audience, but people needed more room to write. A suggestion was made by another passenger that an announcement should be made over the tannoy to save an explanation of the research to each person approached.

09/11/93: Edinburgh Waverley - Glasgow Queen Street

An announcement was made by the conductor over the tannoy, briefly explaining the presence of a researcher. As a result, passengers required less of an explanation when approached. 70 questionnaires were completed and 2 not returned. Three people declined to fill in a form.

10/11/93: Glasgow Queen Street - Fort William

The train from Glasgow, destined for Oban, had only a few passengers. Erroneously, questionnaires were not distributed on this train since it was thought that more people would join at later stations. A change of trains was necessitated at Crianlarich to take the Fort William train. There were only 8 passengers. Everyone completed a questionnaire, including the conductor and the hostess, giving 10 completed questionnaires.

The Corrou Youth Hostel manager admitted that he did not know where the Grampian region is when he said that he had been listening to the weather forecast for the past 21 years and thought that the Grampian weather applied to him.

10/11/93: Fort William - Glasgow Queen Street

10 questionnaires were completed, including one completed by the conductor. 4 out of the 10 were British Rail employees.

11/11/93: Glasgow Central - Stranraer

The two carriage train was overcrowded for the distance between Glasgow and Paisley. Questionnaires were not distributed during this period of time since these people were commuters and would not have time on such a short journey to complete a form. 22 questionnaires were distributed and collected during the rest of the journey.

11/11/93: Stranraer - Glasgow Central

On the train from Stranraer to Ayr, 27 forms were distributed and 26 returned. A change of trains was necessitated at Ayr. This electric train did not have compartments which were easy to move between, therefore questionnaires were not distributed on this part of the journey.

22/11/93: Glasgow Central - Manchester Piccadilly

More people may have been travelling on the train than usual since snow had fallen heavily on the previous day, possibly altering travel arrangements to a mode of transport perceived as less hazardous in the adverse weather conditions. The train was travelling from Glasgow Central to Birmingham New Street. Questionnaires were distributed after Carstairs to allow people time to settle in their seats. Intercity Cross Country specified that a badge supplied by them had to be worn which indicated market research was being conducted. This appeared to make the passengers more hesitant to accept questionnaires since it appeared that the research was being conducted on behalf of British Rail. People were probably also less willing to complete a questionnaire because of the apparent size of the form. Since this British Rail business sector had requested that additional questions be included, the length of the questionnaire was increased. The limited time available to add these questions to the original format meant that it could have been improved.

Four people were asleep and so were not given a questionnaire. 3 people refused to take a form and several couples said that one questionnaire was enough between the two of them. There were no passengers travelling in the first class carriages. One passenger worked for a

market research company and thought that there was a code of conduct which stops market researchers from completing other people's questionnaires. However he completed a form.

There were not many people who joined the train after Glasgow. A few people did join at Carlisle, but disembarked shortly afterwards at Penrith, giving insufficient time to complete the questionnaire. 68 forms were distributed and 65 collected. Respondents were given up to 2 hours to complete the questionnaires. However, it appeared that they were completed almost immediately. It could be suggested that this was curiosity as to the content of the questionnaire, boredom or the desire to get it out of the way.

23/11/93: Manchester Piccadilly - Plymouth

The train left Manchester 20 minutes late due to a problem with the heating, which was not resolved. Questionnaires were not distributed until the train left Stafford. This was because the conductor had not come round until Stoke. This meant that a lot of passengers who left the train at Birmingham were not intercepted since forms had only been distributed in 3 carriages before the train arrived in the New Street station. 3 people refused to accept a questionnaire and another passenger had an insufficient knowledge of the English language to complete the form.

23/11/93: Plymouth - Manchester Piccadilly

The same train was employed for the return journey. The heating was still not fixed. 81 forms were distributed and 75 returned. First Class was full. All the passengers in the first class carriages appeared to be business people equipped with their own pens. One woman in a group of four refused to accept a questionnaire and looked embarrassed when all her colleagues accepted a form. The most helpful passenger was a man who looked the most hostile. Appearances can be deceptive. There were a large number of blank expressions when Grampian was mentioned.

24/11/93: Manchester Piccadilly - Bournemouth

Questionnaires were distributed after the train left Leamington Spa. Before this station there was only a short distance between stops, giving respondents insufficient time to complete the questionnaire. 87 questionnaires were distributed and 83 returned. 4 people refused to accept a form. However, it appeared that the passengers were more hostile to the research than had been experienced on the previous train journeys.

A large number of passengers disembarked at Reading. In the carriages where the questionnaires were distributed later, some respondents did not have time to complete a questionnaire before this station.

24/11/93: Bournemouth - Manchester Piccadilly

Since the experience of the train from Manchester to Bournemouth had identified Reading as the station where most of the passengers would join the train, a dilemma was faced. Would it be most advantageous to wait until Reading to distribute the questionnaires and hope there was enough time for respondents to complete the forms. Questionnaire distribution began after the train had left Winchester. This meant that some people had joined the train at Reading by the time that questionnaires had been distributed in the carriage they had entered. Although not every passenger was intercepted with this approach, it gave a cross-section of the people travelling on the train. 85 questionnaires were completed.