

TOURISM : TOURISTS' IMAGE OF PENANG

By

TAN CHUAN SEE

Matric No. 39180

Graduation Exercise
In fulfilment of the
Requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor Of Arts

Department of Anthropology and Sociology
University of Malaya
Kuala Lumpur

1983/84

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Raymond Lee for his kind supervision, invaluable guidance and constructive criticism throughout the writing of this grad-ex.

My appreciation is further expressed to Encik Amran, the Liaison Officer and other staff of the Penang Development Corporation (PDC) as well as staff of Tourist Development Corporation, Kuala Lumpur who provided me with valuable insight in my understanding of this subject.

I'm also grateful to the librarians of the University of Malaya for their kind assistance and cooperation. Furthermore my heartfelt thanks go to the respondents in this study who gave me their time and experience without measure to deepen my understanding of their lives.

I wish to express my sincere thanks also to everyone especially my friends who in one way or the other contributed to this study. To Thomas, my special thanks for his patience, love, tolerance and ever ready encouragement throughout the writing of this grad-ex.

Finally to my family, I owe my greatest debt of gratitude for the support, encouragement, love and confidence entrusted upon me which have been the most precious ingredients to the completion of this Graduation Exercise.

SYNOPSIS

This study aims to provide a vivid picture of tourism in Penang. Underlying the whole study is the emphasis on the importance of the views of the tourists themselves as a valuable indicative feedback to the understanding of this industry. The whole study is divided into 6 Chapters.

Chapter I will discuss the aim and objective of the study, methodology and difficulties encountered during the fieldwork.

Chapter II presents a picture of the development of tourism in Malaysia and Penang as well as the functions of the bodies responsible for promoting this industry.

A descriptive analysis of the results of the study will be presented in the following three chapters.

Chapter III deals with the demographic characteristics of the 50 respondents in this study.

Chapter IV touches on the trip characteristics, the type of trip undertaken, where these tourists obtain information prior to the visit, why they chose Penang, the length of stay and the kinds of food favoured while in Penang.

Chapter V analyses the tourist's attitude towards Penang. Tourists normally have certain stereotypes or images about their destination. Hence this chapter aims to see how these images are justified on arrival.

Finally the conclusion analyses the major findings and implications of the study. It concludes by putting forward a few suggestions and recommendations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
SYNOPSIS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Aim and Objective of Study	5
1.2 Scope and Limitations	6
1.3 Methodology	7
1.4 Problems Encountered	9
CHAPTER II : DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN MALAYSIA	
2.1 The Pre-1970 Period	12
2.2 The Post-1970 Period	12
2.3 Functions of the TDC	15
2.4 Tourist Industry in Penang	24
2.5 Activities of the Penang Development Corporation	27
CHAPTER III : DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	
3.1 Country of Origin	31
3.2 Age	33
3.3 Marital Status	35
3.4 Occupation	35

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER IV : TRIP CHARACTERISTICS	
4.1 Type of Trip	38
4.2 Source of Information	41
4.3 Reasons to Visit	45
4.4 Motives for Choosing Penang as a Destination	46
4.5 Length of Stay	50
4.6 Food in Penang	51
CHAPTER V : ATTITUDE TOWARDS PENANG	
5.1 Image Before Arrival	56
5.2 Image After Arrival	58
CHAPTER VI : CONCLUSION	
6.1 Major Findings	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY	75
APPENDIX I	76

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Visitor Arrivals to Malaysia	2
2	Direct Foreign Visitor Arrivals to Penang	3
3	Direct Foreign Visitor Arrivals to Penang (By mode of travel)	25
4	Number of Hotel Rooms	26
5	Average Hotel Occupancy Rate in City/Beach Hotels	26
6	Country or Origin of Respondents	32
7	Age of Respondents	33
8	Sex of Respondents	34
9	Marital Status of Respondents	35
10	Occupation of Respondents	36
11	Type of Trip Undertaken (Percentage)	40
12	Sources of Information Regarding Penang	44
13	Reasons to Visit (Percentage of Respondents)	45
14	Motive or Reason to Penang (Percentage)	47
15	Length of Stay (Days) in Percentage	51
16	Images Before Arrival (Percentage)	57
17a	Images After Arrival - Place (Percentage)	60
17b	Images After Arrival - of the Place (Percentage by country)	61
18	Image After Arrival - of people and culture	62

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Man has come a long way since providing for his basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and other matters of physical survival.

Today with increased leisure time and income, the lifestyle of many people throughout the world has been affected. Travelling has become a major leisure time activity. Names like Waikiki, Hawaii, Acapulco and Bali appear regularly in the mass media evoking images of sun, pleasure and escape. In a world dominated by bureaucracies and machines, work pressure, pollution and rapid urbanisation, we are offered these destinations as retreats to a world where the sun always shines and we can relax completely. Most pleasure travel occurs within the context of the tourists' own society, yet international tourism is becoming a large and growing phenomenon. (La Hamme, 1979). Some economic projections predicted that tourism would become the world's largest business before the end of the 20th century. (Sutton, 1967)

Tourism, especially international tourism has a truly prominent place in the overall economies of many South East Asian countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia. Tourist arrivals in these regions were reported to have increased 18-fold between 1960 and 1976. Tourism provides capital investment and thus employment, and is seen as a vehicle of modernisation in these developing countries.

In Malaysia, tourism also provides an important alternative in meeting the government's aim in the diversification of its economic base. Efforts to promote this industry started only in the early 1970's.

Tourism in Malaysia today ranks seventh after rubber, petroleum, crude tin, sawn logs, palm oil and timber in terms of foreign exchange earnings. (1978, TDC report). In 1981, Malaysia gained \$800 million in foreign exchange from tourism as compared to \$757 million in 1980.

The growth of tourism in Malaysia can be gauged from the growth of tourist arrivals. Within a period of only 4 years from 1970, the number of visitor arrivals jumped from 600,000 to well over the one million mark. (1974, TDC report)

Visitor arrivals to Malaysia are as follows. (The figures exclude Singaporeans coming in by road).

Table 1

Visitor Arrivals to Malaysia

Year	Total number of Tourists	Year	Total number of Tourists
1972	725,883	1976	1224,815
1973	869,559	1977	1288,995
1974	1080,200	1978	1399,058
1975	1183,014		

In Penang, a similar upward growth in tourism is shown.

Table 2

Direct Foreign Visitor Arrivals to Penang

Year	Total number of Tourists	Year	Total number of Tourists
1972	62,801	1976	109,491
1973	92,367	1977	150,025
1974	100,773	1978	160,027
1975	105,578		

Source: Research and Training Division, Tourist Development Corporation (July, 1983).

The major body responsible for coordinating the activities of the tourist industry in the public and private sectors, and for development of the tourist industry in Malaysia, on the domestic level and overseas, is the Tourist Development Corporation (TDC), which was established on August 19, 1972.

The TDC carries out the overall promotion of Malaysia. However, individual states, through their various agencies also further intensifies their position as tourist destinations by way of specific state promotion. The promotion and development of this industry in Penang is undertaken by its Penang Development Corporation (PDC).

The main function of the TDC is to attract more tourists to Malaysia. It undertakes tasks which include marketing and promotions through seminars, conventions and overseas exhibitions, research and training, international relations and enforcement work.

To achieve these objectives, the TDC works closely with the private sectors thus coordinating the tourism activities conducted by both the governmental and non-governmental agencies.

The private sectors play a major role in the setting up of hotels, rest houses, providing transportation facilities, and other tourist attractions and amenities.

The significance of tourism is largely viewed as economic. Tourism generates foreign exchange earnings, creating employment hence raising the standard of living of our country. To serve the needs of these tourists, many other support related service industries such as tour and travel, transport, recreation and accomodation are created.

Successful tourism can only be achieved through careful market research to access potential, well designed and truthful publicity about the attractions of a country, development of national tourist services and infrastructure on a planned basis.

Tourists, being the core of this industry, should therefore be an important indicative feedback for potential tourism development. It is the tourist himself who creates chains of hotels throughout the world, yet the same tourist is the first to complain if the standards

of comfort to which he is accustomed at home are not met, or if the native diet is alien to his digestion, or if the images he obtained through the promotional media about his destination is not justified. The consequences of continued growth must be analysed and if found unfavourable, then attitudes must change.

1.1 Aim and Objective of Study

It is with this assumption for a need for new analytical approach emphasising the importance of the tourists themselves for the planning of future development, that I embarked on this study.

I wish to assess how Penang particularly fared in its tourist development efforts. Why are there so many foreign tourists in Penang compared to other states in Malaysia? What are their reasons for coming? We hear of people coming to Penang for the beaches, but to a foreigner, one sunny beach no doubt resembles another. Yet, why do they still come? What is their image of Penang before arrival, are they justified on arrival? How has Penang been promoted? Are the tourists fully aware of the attractions in Penang? Is Penang aware of the importance of welcoming tourists, or has it already taken tourism for granted and consequently little has been done to further improve the industry?

This study therefore aims to gain an insight into the factors that attract foreign tourists to Penang. It focusses on identifying the 'pull factors' or attractive features of the island as a tourist resort.

This study also aims to identify common characteristics of tourists to Penang - their spending and eating habits, accomodation and transportation, etc.

This study is also undertaken in view of the fact that very few studies on the views of tourists have been done in Malaysia. Scholarly (rather than impressionistic or trade) literature on it remains comparatively scarce. Those that are present are mostly in the form of statistical data, often distorted by favourable attitudes towards tourists activities. Views from the other side - the tourist should also be valued.

1.2 Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study is focussed on responses to questions about reasons to visit Penang, the state's tourist attractions which are popular among these tourists, principal sources of information about Penang, impressions of the tourists on the people and culture of Penang and the images before and after their arrival to this destination.

Interviews by way of questionnaires conducted personally by the researcher was carried out non-randomly on 50 foreign tourists of various nationalities. Because of the limited nature of the sample, the accompanying bias and distortion in the results of this study are unavoidable. The data however are provided by these 50 respondents who have actually visited Penang, thus it can be considered indicative of first hand psychological reactions of foreign visitors to Penang,

and perhaps could be used positively later for understanding the tourist phenomena.

In addition, to obtain information regarding the provision of and planning strategies in the tourism sector in Penang and Malaysia, officers in the Penang Development Corporation and Tourist Development Corporation were respectively interviewed.

1.3 Methodology

My fieldwork covered a period of about 4 months from mid-February to July 1983, during which I frequented the beach areas of Batu Feringgi, Penang around the vicinity of Penang's 3 major hotels namely Rasa Sayang, Holiday Inn and Golden Sands.

A total of 50 respondents, comprising male and female foreign tourists of various nationalities, between the ages of 20 to 75 were interviewed. The selection was non-random; selected respondents being those who agreed to be interviewed. However, I tried as far as possible to obtain an equal number for every age group and nationality in order to make my study more representative; that will generate to the fullest extent as many properties of every category as possible. However, the result showed an uneven distribution of nationalities and age groups interviewed. This is because of the difficulty of distinguishing between different ethnic groups and ages just by judging from their appearances alone.

A more scientific method for obtaining a more accurate and representative sample of the different nationalities and age groups would be to seek aid from the hotel managers. However, I rejected this probability because my aim of study was not on tourists staying in these beach hotels only but also to provide for tourists generally inclusive of non beach hotel tourists like the shoe string travellers staying in 'cheaper' places in Georgetown or those staying in youth hostels, etc. The probability of their being one of my respondents is provided for using my basis of selection.

My respondents were mostly residents of the hotels nearby as mentioned earlier, though a minority were those staying in hotels in Georgetown, the YMCA and others.

All interviews were carried out on the beach areas and not in the hotels or elsewhere. My aim for choosing this locality was on the assumption that these tourists are either those staying in the nearby hotels or elsewhere thus it would be more convenient for them to spare me ample time to talk and go through my 3-page questionnaire as (again presumingly) their main aim there was to relax on the beaches.

Because the aim of this study was to get views, personal preferences and attitudes from the 50 foreigners about the factors attracting them to Penang particularly, the questionnaire was used as the main tool for data collection. Both structured and unstructured questions were formulated for this purpose. Structured questions help the researcher to obtain systematic data on information that does not

require elaboration, like age, occupation, means of transportation, etc.

However, majority of the questions were in the unstructured form. This is so because unstructured questions (open-ended) encompass a more open interaction where the respondent is free to express his views thus giving a more elaborate picture. It is a good method to elicit extra voluntary information from him. The assumption behind this method is that any bit of information provided is vital to the understanding of the study.

Good rapport is considered essential between any researcher and his respondent since there is always a possibility that the latter might hold back certain important information for several reasons like fear of the researcher, shy nature of the respondent who needs time to 'open or warm up' or lack of trust about the identity or aim of researcher. Thus I followed up with another form of data collection which is informal or casual conversation. I encouraged a free flow of conversation throughout to further question the respondent on various relevant points she or he wittingly/unwittingly volunteers, and to check the consistency of the report by posing the same questions at different times during the interview.

1.4 Problems Encountered

1. Some respondents were initially cautious and hostile and unwilling to cooperate but after reassuring them that their names are

not required and stressing the aim of my study, they eventually relaxed and talked willingly. Some however, were very sensitive towards questions like age, and place of origin and others were rather impatient to end the interview as they would like to be free from any kind of 'work pressure', considering their main aim to Penang is to relax wholly. In extreme cases, where the degree of cooperation is low or when I feel that they felt 'forced' into answering, I choose to end the interview (politely) immediately. Polite but unwilling interviews may give misleading answers to discourage the researcher from pursuing his goals.

2. There is no doubt that there are respondents who tend to answer in a manner such as to impress researchers. This might be that these tourists are very conscious of the fact that they are tourists, thus must live up to a certain image.

An interesting point that I noticed also to elicit this manner is the fact that I am a university student. My status has in a way created a social distance between me and my respondents. It is clear that these few respondents were quite ignorant and surprised that Malaysia has a local university. Thus any person studying up to this level must be someone 'smart'. This fact has in some way prompted them to want to impress me by giving favourable answers. One example is, when asked about which countries around the world they have visited, they will name practically all countries round the world. However, they were quite tongue-tied when asked to elaborate further on this. There is also a tendency for these tourists to quote exorbitant prices and state 'high class' style of life which contradicts certain points made. The vital

point here is actually to get them to express, and not to impress.

3. A good rapport was felt necessary to obtain side information and cooperation from the respondents. However, many of these tourists asked a favour in return that is providing them with information regarding directions, how to take the public transport, information regarding the people, history and culture of Penang or for recommendations of local food or good and cheap eating places. This has resulted in my spending a lot of time chatting with them; thus limiting the number of interviewees to only 2 or 3 per day.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

The development of tourism in Malaysia can be divided into 2 distinctive periods. That is, the pre-1970 period, and the post-1970 period.

2.1 The Pre-1970 Period

Tourism as an organised industry has its beginning in Malaysia in 1959 when a Tourism Division was created within the then Ministry of Commerce and Industry. From 1961 to 1972, this department has been responsible for the marketing and promotion of tourism in the country.

One of the most remarkable achievements of the Department was the successful bidding in 1969, for the Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA) Conference to be held in Malaysia in 1972, which proved very beneficial to the tourism industry in later years.

The pre-1970 period was therefore a period of extensive research and identification of tourism generating markets and a period where the groundwork for the massive influx of tourism was prepared.

2.2 The Post-1970 Period

This was a period when the benefits of tourism both in terms of economic contribution as well as physical development as a leisure

industry in Malaysia was realized and given full attention. Two major events took place in Malaysia during the beginning of 1970 which act as 'turning points' of the tourism industry in Malaysia.

One was the successful hosting of the PATA Conference and the other, the establishment of the Tourist Development Corporation (TDC).

(i) PATA Conference (1972)

In 1972, Malaysia was given the honour and privilege to host the PATA Conference and workshop for the first time. The conference was held in Kuala Lumpur whilst the workshop, in Penang. This conference had a very strong impact on the tourist industry in Malaysia. It was the first time that more than a thousand international travel trade executives and travel writers came into a face-to-face contact with Malaysia.

(ii) Tourist Development Corporation (TDC)

The aim of the conference was to bring the full flavour of Malaysia to the PATA delegates. They were exposed to numerous facets of the Malaysian tourist industry through seminars, exhibitions, cultural dances and music, and tours to various tourist states like Malacca, Pangkor Island, Penang, etc. Malaysian delicacies were served and all Malaysian participants were dressed in full national attires. (See Appendix). In short, every effort was taken to present a truly Malaysian experience to impress these overseas delegates as an initial step to boost tourism.

Even before the conference was held, a tremendous amount of publicity was created to impress Malaysians on the importance of the PATA conference and the need to ensure that visitors to the country have an interesting and enjoyable experience. Massive support was received from the people to ensure a successful conference. These efforts include a general sprucing up of public buildings, nation-wide beautification programmes and anti-litter campaigns. Major government buildings were floodlit and roads adorned with plants. In short, PATA was successful in Malaysia because of the intensive effort by the private and public sectors in order to make sure that Malaysia's image is not tarnished.

"It is largely due to a successful PATA Conference that Malaysia today is poised to top the million mark in tourist arrivals".¹

(ii) Tourist Development Corporation (TDC)

The TDC, which was established on August 19, 1972, is responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the tourist industry in the public and private sectors and for promoting tourism both on the domestic level and overseas. TDC serves as a channel of communication between the Federal government and international and domestic tourist organizations in matters relating in tourism.

¹Ravi Krishnan - public Relations Officer of TDC in his address on Malaysian Tourism to participants in San Francisco PATA Chapter Meeting in Penang, 1975.

It is empowered to assist or engage in the development of tourist enterprises within Malaysia or outside Malaysia where international cooperation can stimulate the development of Malaysia as a holiday resort or travel destination.

Due to its vast responsibilities, the Corporation is thus divided into various divisions to carry out its functions smoothly.

2.3 Functions of the TDC

(i) Marketing Division

The marketing objectives of the division are to promote Malaysia in the international tourism market and to increase travel among Malaysians within the country by creating an awareness of the facilities and attractions available to them.

TDC's 8 overseas offices in Singapore, Tokyo, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Sydney, London, Frankfurt and San Francisco lend support to the promotional activities undertaken in the respective areas.

The production of brochures, posters and other sales aids as promotional campaigns is also undertaken.

In its efforts to promote Malaysia in the international market, TDC participates in international and regional exhibitions related to travel and tourism.

Seminars and dialogue sessions with the private sector in the travel trade are organized by the TDC offices overseas.

The world travel market is obviously too large to be adequately covered by only one organization. With this, the TDC collaborates with MAS (Malaysian Airline System) and other international airlines in playing host to leading travel writers and journalists, travel agents, tour wholesalers and filming crews, to assist them to publicise Malaysia more effectively.

Another form of this collaboration is in joint advertising to further promote Malaysia overseas. Through such campaigns, Malaysia was seen for the first time over television in Hong Kong and Australia.

Publications and Sales Aids

Until recently TDC has been producing more than 20 different brochures for distribution through various channels including TDC's overseas offices, Malaysia's diplomatic mission abroad and travel organizations.

From 1978, a new set of brochures based on this regional concept is introduced as it is felt that these will be more useful in helping to sell the various destinations within the regions as a package.²

²To facilitate touring Malaysia in a systematic manner, Tourism in Malaysia is divided into 4 holiday regions:

They appear in brochures as:

- Vacationland Malaysia - General Guide
- Vacationland Malaysia - Kuala Lumpur/Malacca Guide
- Vacationland Malaysia - Penang/Langkawi Guide
- Vacationland Malaysia - East Coast Guide, and
- Vacationland Malaysia - Sabah/Sarawak Guide.

This shows that the TDC is constantly reviewing its promotional efforts in line with expansion of the sector.

Exhibitions and Fairs

An important promotional activity undertaken by TDC is the participation in international exhibitions and fairs. Such participation enables TDC to give visual impact to its promotional campaigns and to disseminate information direct to its potential as well as to travel trade personnels in the markets where these trade and exhibitions are held.

Special Promotion

One of the most important campaigns of overseas offices is the holding of promotional evenings, seminars and workshop sessions for travel trade personnel in their respective markets. These special promotions not only help to introduce Malaysia's tourist attractions and the facilities and amenities available to consumers and the travel trade, but also to assist them to package saleable tours to Malaysia. At the seminar and workshop sessions, problems confronted by travel agents and tour wholesalers are discussed and solutions found to enable to sell Malaysia.

Overseas Sales Missions

Sales missions have been found to be an effective way to promote Malaysia and so far three sales missions have been sent abroad under the leadership of TDC in which MAS and the private sector took

part. The first mission was sent to Japan in 1975, the second to Europe in 1976, third to Australia and New Zealand (1977), fourth to US and Canada (1978). As a follow up, several missions on a smaller scale have also been sent to Japan in 1978, Europe 1979 and Australia 1980.

These missions prove very useful in impressing the travel trade, especially tour wholesalers, tour operators and travel agents in the countries visited, of the varied tourist attractions, amenities, facilities and infrastructure development of Malaysia. These sales missions, which included private sector participants provided the opportunity for them to establish direct contacts as well as to conclude business dealings with their counterparts.

Hospitality Programme

Hospitality programme whereby foreign travel writers and journalists, travel agents, tour wholesalers and film crews are invited and hosted in Malaysia, has proved to be useful in supporting TDC's promotional efforts. Depending on the importance of the persons/groups, TDC extends full hospitality (air tickets, full board and lodging and ground transportation) or part hospitality (lodging/tours).

Slide Presentation and Film Publicity

In an attempt to promote Malaysia as an attractive and desirable tourist destination, these promotional campaigns has capitalised on Malaysia's natural endowments namely its beaches, its natural flora and

vegetation. Slide presentation is relatively a new tool employed by TDC for its promotional campaigns.

Five slide presentations are currently available. They are "A Thousand Shades of Green", "Prelude to Malaysia", "Journey to the land of Fabled Beauty", "Pilgrimage to the East Coast", and "Be moved by the Spirit of Malaysia".

The coloured films include "The Butterfly Man", "Malaysia - our Unspoilt Land", and "Magical Malaysia".

(ii) Development and Project Management Division

The division is responsible for planning and coordinating the development of the tourism industry and for the operations maintenance and promotion of the various projects under the supervision of TDC. These include the Bukit Nanas Handicraft Centre completed in 1974 and Cable Car System, Duty-Free shops which first started in 1975 in Penang and Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Country Club. It supervises other projects such as the Club Mediterranee project at Cherating, Pahang, the Rantau Abang Village Resort and the Tanjong Jara Beach Motel, both in Trengganu.

At the planning stage, activities of the TDC would involve activities such as the formulation of development strategies, identification of suitable areas for development, determination of specific projects and facilities to be developed in these identified areas and determination of methods of implementation. Liaison with state govern-

ments and federal agencies are normally undertaken on matters pertaining to land, infrastructure, transport, etc.

After all these have been specified, it is again the responsibility this division to oversee and monitor the progress of these projects under construction. In short, the division is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the various projects under its care. All matters pertaining to the operations, maintenance and promotion of these projects come directly under the responsibility of the division.

Coordination between the TDC and the state governments is maintained through the machinery of the Regional Coordinating Committees which meet regularly to discuss matters related to tourism.

Seven Regional Coordinating Committees have been formed.

They are as follows:-

1. Kedah, Perlis and Penang Region;
2. Perak Region;
3. Central Region;
4. Johore Region;
5. Pahang Region;
6. Kelantan-Trengganu Region;
7. Sabah Region.

(iii) Enforcement and Facilitation Division

The rapid development of the tourist industry has created the need to ensure that all tourist facilities and services in this country are of good and acceptable standards. The Tourist Development Corporation (Certificate and Control of Guides) Regulations, 1976 which were introduced to Peninsular Malaysia on 15th March 1976, empower TDC to organise tourist guides' courses, to register qualified tourist guides and to control their activities. The Regulations have been implemented in Sabah and Sarawak since 1st December, 1978.

The Division works closely with the Road Transport Licensing Board in processing applications for tourist vehicle licenses such as tour coaches, limousine taxis and self-drive car licenses.

The Division conducts seminars for the personnel of tourist agencies and enterprises to enable them to understand various policies and regulations connected with the development of the tourist industry.

Regional offices have been established in Pulau Pinang, Johor Bahru, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Trengganu, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu to enable TDC to supervise closely the activities of the various tourist enterprises and services.

(iv) International Relations and Conventions Division

This division has two main functions:-

1. To work in and to maintain close cooperation, with the regional and international tourist organizations, in

particular, as well as other national tourism authorities of foreign countries for the development and promotion of tourism industry through active participation in the research and marketing activities of these organizations.

2. To develop and promote Malaysia as a convention business centre in this part of the world.

As a national tourist organization, TDC is represented in the various regional and international tourist organizations, namely, Pacific Area Travel Organization (PATA) since 1967, World Tourism Organization (WTO) since 1961, ASEAN Committee on Trade and Tourism and South East Asian Promotion Centre for Trade, Investment and Tourism. The division maintains close liaison with other tourism bodies, including foreign national tourist organizations.

In its efforts to establish and promote Malaysia as a convention centre, the division solicits for more regional and international conventions to be held in Malaysia.

In the case when Malaysia is chosen the host for such conventions, the normal services provided by the TDC would include:

- i. Providing information on convention facilities and services;
- ii. Advice and assist in the organization of convention;
- iii. Plan and coordinate site inspection visit for convention organisers;

iv. Make available promotional materials on Malaysia especially for overseas attendance promotion plan and coordinate pre, mid and post conference tour itineraries and social programmes. For example, during the 4th Commonwealth Magistrates Conference held in Malaysia, the TDC organised various tours for the delegates and their wives to Kota Bahru, Taman Negara, Malacca and others. A temporary information booth was also set up at the conference venue to assist these delegates on general touristic information.

(v) Research and Training Division

This division is responsible for collecting, processing and analysing data on visitors and tourist arrivals.

TDC regularly compiles foreign visitors arrivals by nationality for purpose of measuring the trend of visitor flows to Malaysia, visitor profile and their travelling and holiday habits. TDC also conducts regular sample surveys on hotels pertaining to their levels of occupancy, visitor compositions and their length of stay.

The division conducts training courses for various personnel engaged in the tourist industry for example tourist guides, travel agents and taxi drivers. This is carried out with the coordination of other training institutions such as ITM, and National Productivity Centre in planning, coordinating and organising training activities for those involved in the tourism trade.

(vi) Finance, Administration and General Services Division

This division is responsible for all matters relating to the management of personnel, administration and finance of TDC.

2.4 Tourist Industry in Penang

Penang's oldest hotel dates back to 1885. However, tourism as an organised industry really began around 1970 when the industry was given an important place in the new economic strategy because of its potential role in the economic transformation of the state.

In 1969, Penang was described as "an over-grown fishing village" with an over-dependence on agriculture, a rapidly growing labour force, a high unemployment rate and a general economic stagnation. Penang's economic fortunes bobbed up and down over the years since Malaysia gained independence in 1957. A thriving entrepot by the early 1960's, the island's economy nosedived when a political confrontation with Indonesia erupted. Penang lost its free port status in 1969.

A new state government in 1969 pledged to get Penang out of its economic doldrums. The Penang Development Corporation was therefore formed in 1972 to act as a state development agency. Tourism, along with various other mechanisms was tapped as part of the cure. With this, serious plans and efforts were therefore underway to promote Penang as a tourist resort especially on an international level. In 1972, Penang hosted a PATA workshop which launched the island into the sea of

international tourism. The brilliant success of that workshop can be measured by the strides of development shown by Penang's tourism sector in the following years.

The number of direct foreign visitor arrivals in 1970 and 1971 were 39,547 and 49,278 respectively. The total increased to 62,801 in 1972 and 92,367 in 1973. The 1972 figure is an increase of 27.4% over the previous year whilst 1973 showed an increase of 47.06% over the percentage of 1972.

Table 3

Direct Foreign Visitor Arrivals to Penang
(By mode of travel)

Year	Air	Sea	Total	% change
1970	29,131	10,326	39,547	-
1971	36,877	12,401	49,278	+24.9
1972	44,709	18,092	62,801	+27.4
1973	75,284	17,083	92,367	+47.06

Source: Research and Training Division, Tourist Development Corporation, July 1983.

A survey undertaken by the TDC in 1973 indicated that about 27,000 international tourists came to Penang by all modes of travel, stayed for an average of 4 days and spending an average of M\$52 per day.

Today, tourism is the leading growth sector in the state. In fact Penang is the foremost tourist destination centre in the country.

Table 4

Number of Hotel Rooms

Year	City	% change	Beach	% change
1970	1,123	-	132	-
1971	1,236	10.1	159	20.4
1972	1,339	8.3	260	16.4
1973	1,339	-	516	98.5

Table 5

Average Hotel Occupancy Rate in City/Beach Hotels

Year	%
1970	41.2
1971	55.5
1972	63.0
1973	66.7

The above-mentioned figures illustrate the fact that 1972 and 1973 were significant years in the development of the tourist industry in Penang.

To date, the Corporation has increased its efforts to promote Penang not only as an international tourist centre but also as an ideal holiday centre at the regional and local basis. In 1980, direct foreign visitors totalled 200,927. This is an increase of 20.8% over the previous year with 166,331 arrivals.

2.5 Activities of the Penang Development Corporation

The Corporation's promotional activities towards the progress and development of tourism include the publication and distribution of promotional materials, maintaining a photographic library, campaigns to publicise Penang locally and abroad, participation in seminars/conferences/fairs/exhibitions, hospitality programmes to travel trade personnels, representation in various tourism-orientated committees, advertising and others.

(i) publication and Distribution of Promotional Literature and Materials.

This is considered the most important of the activities of the Corporation to attract tourists to Penang. The development of the tourist industry necessitates adequate promotion both locally and abroad.

One of the most well-received publications of the PDC is its quarterly newsletter, the "Penang Travel News". The circulation rate is 20,000.

Other publications which are distributed include Penang Travel Manual, Penang Map, Statistic Sheets and a booklet, "This Place Called Penang", all bearing information about tourism.

These sales aids were successfully distributed through hotels, restaurants and tourist agencies all over the world, with the help of our Malaysian Airline System (MAS).

Besides this calenders bearing pictures of places of interest in Penang or the people and culture were also printed and distributed locally and abroad, with the circulation rate being 8,000 copies in 1981.

(ii) Photographic Library

The Corporation prepares colour presentations as well as black and white photos for loans or distribution to travel writers and publishers to support their write-ups on Penang. For example, with these transparencies one could get a view of the interesting places in Penang that was shown in the trade fair during the Penang Pesta held annually from 1st to 31st December.

(iii) Promotional Campaigns

The Corporation is involved in various campaigns to promote Penang locally and abroad.

Various international programmes were organised and held at certain intervals of the year. Since 1972, the PDC has assisted in the organization of the Penang International Dragon Boat Festival which was

held annually in the month of June. 75 local and 7 foreign teams from the USA, Hong Kong, Macao, West Germany, Australia, Singapore and Japan participated in the 1981 event. Likewise, the Corporation arranged for Penang's participation in the Singapore and the Hong Kong International Dragon Boat races.

The most recent internationally participated event which started in 1982 is the Cathay Pacific Penang Marathon organised jointly by the Cathay Pacific Airlines with PDC. Total participants from overseas and local are 650 people.

(iv) Participation in Fairs/Exhibitions/Seminars/Conferences

In efforts to promote Penang as a holiday centre various activities were carried out. These include fairs, exhibitions and seminars to be held overseas or in Penang. In efforts to sell Penang to the Australians, from 22nd February to 1st March 1975, the PDC assisted by the TDC held a Penang Week in Adelaide. Exposure was given to Penang in particular and Malaysia in general through this fair which features the goods, arts, culture and tourism in Penang. A total of 120 persons comprising dancers, musicians, trishawmen, cooks and hawkers specialising in Penang food made up the official delegates. Subsequently, an Adelaide Week was held in Penang later the same year from 2nd - 8th December.

The Corporation participated in the Medan Fair in Indonesia in 1981. Promotional materials and films shown during the fair served to promote Penang to the organisers.

Assistance is also provided by the Corporation to organisers to hold conferences, or seminars in Penang.

In 1979, the International Dermatology Conference and the Australian Lawyers Conference were held here.

(v) Hospitality Programme

Assistance is also rendered to people in the travel trade especially travel writers, journalists, filming crews, travel agencies and airline representatives. These hospitality programme include briefinf sessions, travel workshops and familiarisation or educational tours round Penang. They are partially or fully paid by the PDC throughout the programme with the hope that these delegates will give good write-ups on Penang when they return to their countries. Particularly notable was the Corporation's effort in providing hospitality to the Thames Television Crew from England in 1981. They were in Penang to produce a documentary "Wish you were here" which features Penang as a tourist centre. This film was later screened to the United Kingdoms to a viewing audience of 15 million.

(vi) Others

To ensure the smooth running of the industry, the Corporation also entertains complaints and enquiries from tourists to be channelled to the respective departments concerned.

CHAPTER III

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The results of my study will be presented in 3 sections, that is:-

- demographic characteristics of the respondents,
- trip characteristics, and
- attitudes towards Penang - images before and after arrival.

Since the major aims of this study is to investigate the views and attitudes of the respondents, the demographic characteristics such as place of residence, age, sex, marital status and occupation are considered important.

3.1 Country of Origin

My respondents came from 9 different countries namely England, forming the majority of 28%, Holland 8%, Germany 16%, Scandinavian countries³ 16%, Singapore 2%, Taiwan 6%, Japan 4%, South America 2% and Australia 18%. (See Table 6)

Since Malaysia's TDC overseas offices are found in all these markets⁴ (except South America), we can therefore assume that these

³ Because of the small percentage of respondents from Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark, I have grouped them under Scandinavian countries for purpose of convenience.

⁴ Refer Chapter II, page 15.

Table 6

Country of Origin of Respondents

Country	Total % of Tourists
England	28
Holland	8
Germany	16
Scandinavian Countries	16
Taiwan	6
Japan	4
Singapore	2
Australia	18
South America	2
Total percentage	100

offices have played their role in one way or another in luring tourists to Penang.

Grouping the first 4 countries together, we find that more than half of the total number of respondents (68%) came from Europe compared to only 12% from Asian countries (Singapore, Taiwan and Japan). A possible explanation for this could be that these westerners wanted to get away from familiar surroundings and hence venture to the East to experience a totally different and new culture and way of life of other countries. It is the desire of many tourists to have an overseas

holiday. The same reason of 'familiarity' or 'within the same region' could apply for the small percentage of Asians visiting Penang. In the case of Singapore (2%), it is most probably due to the fact of close geographical proximity.

3.2 Age

The respondents were categorised into 6 different age groups.

Table 7

Age of Respondents

Age Group	Percentage of Tourists (%)
10 - 20	2
21 - 30	28
31 - 40	22
41 - 50	18
51 - 60	8
61 - 99	22
Total	100

The biggest portion of the respondents were in the age group of 21-30 years old, followed by 31-40 and 61-99 (both 22% each). This shows that the younger generation tend to travel somewhat more than its elders. They are more adventurous and possess a greater geographical

mobility. How do we then explain for the large number of tourists amongst the 61-99 age group? Perhaps they could be accounted for by saying that they consist of mostly retired widow/widowers possessing less family responsibilities hence more disposable time and income (saved through the years).

Sex

An almost equal number of respondents were represented in both male/female categories with slightly more males (27) than females (23). Females represented the majority of travellers from Australia, whilst males from Taiwan, Scandinavian countries, Germany and England.

Table 8

Sex of Respondents

Country	Male (%)	Female (%)
Singapore	2	0
England	16	12
Australia	4	14
Holland	2	6
Germany	10	6
South America	2	0
Japan	2	2
Taiwan	6	0
Scandinavian Countries	10	6
Total percentage	54	46

3.3 Marital Status

64% of the respondents were married, 24% single and the remaining are divorced or widowed (6% each).

The high percentage of married respondents was partly reflected by the high percentage of respondents who were over the age of 21 years as presented earlier.

Table 9

Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Percentage (%)
Single	24
Married	64
Divorced	6
Widowed	6
Total	100

3.4 Occupation

Among the respondents, the major occupation categories were white collar/management (24%), housewives form 16% of the total percentage whilst professionals and traders rate the third largest group with 12% each. Table 10 presents the percentage of each occupation in each category.

Table 10

Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Percentage (%)
Professionals	12
White Collar/Management	24
Blue Collar	10
Armed Forces	4
Insurance	6
Trader	12
Housewife	16
Retired	10
Students	4
Total Percentage	100

This study shows that people in managerial and professional jobs are more internationally mobile, so are people whose jobs gives them long paid holidays. Occupational considerations are important in the course of travelling because some groups such as retired people have more flexibility compared to those seasonally employed (example, blue collar). Other occupational group may have to wait a long time before obtaining a vacation of sufficient length and at the desired time. Hence the small number amongst armed forces, insurance and students who fall under this group. Though occupational considerations are important,

the key factor is however, income. Note the majority from the high income group. Retired people most probably has funds saved through the years. To plan a publicity and advertising campaign, knowledge of the characteristics of the tourists is necessary. It is important to know for instance which age groups, or occupations generate the largest number of travellers. (Wong, 1971: 1)

In summary, the majority of respondents could be described as married males, over the age of 21 and working as executives or managers. These are the travellers with higher income and more available free time as compared to the average travellers. Thus they have more chances and greater means to travel abroad.

PACKAGE. The high percentage of housewives are perhaps those who are accompanying their husbands here either on business or on holidays. Otherwise it could be because they are not inhibited by occupational restrictions as mentioned above. Their time is their own.

as tour guides or package tour. This group with 41% of the total percentage of respondents.

PACKAGE - meaning through the purchase of low price 1200. A package deal is involved in one form or another. Here I have further subdivided the package deal into 3 small categories, that is:

- (1) Package - local only. Here the tourists only arranged for a package tour to facilitate their travelling in Penang. Prior to this that is from their residence in

CHAPTER VI

TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter deals with trip characteristics of my respondents such as type of trip undertaken, sources of information, reasons for trip, motives for choosing Penang as a destination, length of stay and food in Penang.

4.1 Type of Trip

From the data collected, I have divided the type of trip undertaken by my respondents into 2 major categories, that is OWN and PACKAGE.

OWN - meaning everything including accommodation, food, transport and travel from their homeland to and while in Penang is taken care of by the tourists themselves without involving any outside party such as tour guides or package tour. This group forms 48% of the total percentage of respondents.

PACKAGE - meaning through the course of the whole trip, a package deal is involved in one form or another. Here I have further subdivided the package deal into 3 small categories, that is:

- (1) Package - local only. Here the tourists only arranged for a package tour to facilitate their travelling in Penang. Prior to this (that is from their hometown to

Penang) no package deal is involved. This group represents the smallest size among my respondents with only 2%.

(ii) Package - foreign only. Meaning the tourists arranged for a package deal from their hometown to Penang. Upon arrival, further touring and arrangement is undertaken by the tourists themselves.

(iii) Package - joint. This form proves the most popular of the three types of package deal with 34%. Here the tourist engage the facility of a package deal throughout his whole journey, from his hometown to and fro Penang.

Overall, more than 50% of the respondents engaged a package deal in the course of their journey (52%) compared to 48% who arranged for everything on their own.

With rising costs of travel, package or inclusive tours are increasingly gaining popularity. They will most probably attract more mass tourism. (NST: March 23, 1981). What are the main attractions of the package tour? Through my conversation with the respondents, I obtained the following information. Many tourists being first time travellers to foreign lands prefer to leave the planning of their holidays to tour operators. Package tours are characterised by their flexibility, economy and comprehensiveness. These tours are comprehensive and include almost everything down to the finest details. Accommodation and meals are taken care of and one need not worry about being

Table 11

Type of Trip Undertaken
(Percentage)

Countries	Own	Package		
		Local	Foreign	Joint
Singapore	2	-	-	-
England	10	-	8	10
Australia	10	-	4	4
Holland	2	2	-	4
Germany	8	-	2	6
South America	2	-	-	-
Japan	0	-	-	4
Taiwan	6	-	-	-
Scandinavian Countries	8	-	2	6
Total	48	2	16	34

stranded in some forsaken place in a strange country without a bed for the night.

Tour operators handle the red tape for the international traveller which could prove confusing to anyone without the experience such as immigration requirements, international health requirements, hotel bookings as well as other arrangement pertaining to tours within a country when one gets there. The package deal can in this sense be seen as taking the worries out of their travel. Besides this the other

attraction is the relatively low price (obtainable because operators are entitled to group booking discounts) and also the meticulously worked out itineraries which enable tourists to see all the sights that mattered in a foreign country.

There is a correlation here between package tours (joint especially) with age. From my study, it is shown that package deals are relatively more popular among the older generation. This is probably due to the fact that the trip is fixed in advance and all his stops are well prepared and guided. In short, this resembles the most stable form of travel when they practically do not have to make any decisions for themselves. Their age perhaps hampered them from being adventurous thus they favour a nice, smooth planned holiday - all these provided for in a package tour.

4.2 Source of Information

Sources of information can generally be divided into 2 categories, that is social stimuli and commercial stimuli.

Howard and Seth (1968: 418) defined social stimuli as,

"those stimuli that emanate from other people. These may be linguistic or non-linguistic such as the other person's grimaces or other physical movements that transmit information to other people".

Most social stimuli are likely to come from family and friends or acquaintances.

Commercial stimuli are those which are received from sources other than social reference groups. (Crompton, 1977). The majority are likely to be impersonal stimuli received from broadcast or printed media.

There is substantial literature which indicated that the role of social stimuli on influencing behaviour is dominant when compared to commercial stimuli. Steiner (1964: 232) concluded that,

"word of mouth or personal communication from an immediate and trusted source is typically more influential than media communication from a remote and trusted source, despite the prestige of the latter".

Data collected during my study confirms Steiner's statement. Those who have interest in Penang have their interest whetted by and large by personal contact with those who have been to this region before (24%) or through brochures (20%) or reading books about it (16%).

Recommendation from others to the respondents in my study was generally directed to two areas:

- (i) Penang's natural environment especially the beaches;
- (ii) Penang's beach hotels.

Penang's natural environment as an 'island' with warm sunny weather, miles and miles of golden sand and sea seemed to be the highlight of past tourists to these respondents. Equal emphasis was given to the beach hotels particularly Rasa Sayang and Golden Sands, both rated as truly first class with every luxury and equipped with excellent

facilities and service. The personal touch such as the importance accorded to the guests by remembering their names even on their subsequent trips back to Penang, the friendliness and efficiency displayed by these hotel staff were highly praised and repeatedly highlighted.

In most cases where air travel and package tours are involved, it is likely that a travel agent would be contacted (18%).

The items or information sought by the tourists were mainly related to climate, places of interest, lodging and shopping facilities.

14% of the tourists did not gather any information prior to their visit to Penang. These included those who merely dropped in to Penang whilst visiting neighbouring countries like Singapore or Thailand. Their trip was unintended or unplanned. In other words, Penang only served as a convenient 'on the route stopover' for them.

Others include majority of those undertaking the package deal where the trip itinerary was already fixed in advance and all his stops well arranged beforehand. Hence the tourist's main attitude towards the trip is one of indifference - to see the place when the time comes.

The type of tour undertaken can determine the type of tourist one is. Cohen divides types of tourists into 2 main groups - the institutionalised and the non-institutionalised tourist. (Cohen, 1972)

The institutionalised tourist is one who sees the programmed services of airlines, travel agents, tour operators and fixed time

tables. This type of tourist is characterised by minimal involvement with the people of the country visited or their culture because of the use of hotels and other facilities developed specifically for the tourist. They do not expect to forego many of the leisure features to which he is accustomed.

"This form of tourist is the least adventurous and remains largely confined to his 'environmental bubble' throughout his trip. He makes almost no decisions for himself".

This type of tourist can be found among the 17% of my respondents who undertook the joint package deal.

Table 12

Sources of Information Regarding Penang

Sources of Information	Percentage (%)
No information gathered	14
Brochures	20
Books	16
Promotional films	6
Recommendation from others	24
Tour agent	18
Total	100

4.3 Reasons to Visit

In asking my respondents their primary reasons for the trip to Penang, 4 categories were formed. Almost three quarters (70%) of the total respondents came to Penang for a holiday, or for recreational and relaxation purposes, stating the beach as their main motive (see also Table 14), 10% came on business, 14% as a stopover and 6% for sentimental reasons.⁵

Table 13

Reasons to Visit (Percentage of Respondents)

Country	Holidays (%)	Business (%)	Senti-mental (%)	Stopover (%)
Singapore	-	2	-	-
Australia	18	-	-	-
England	24	-	2	-
Holland	8	-	-	2
Germany	10	4	-	4
South America	-	-	2	-
Japan	2	-	2	-
Taiwan	-	2	-	4
Scandinavian Countries	8	2	-	4
Total	70	10	6	14

⁵ Here sentimental reasons include:
- honeymoon, a couple from Japan;
- wedding anniversary, a couple from England celebrating their anniversary here for the 2nd time;
- the South American, an ex-Penang based war soldier back to recollect old memories with his family.

4.4 Motives for Choosing Penang As A Destination

To further obtain information regarding the specific reasons for visiting Penang, the following results were obtained. Although 17 categories were detected, but because of the small percentage of respondents in some categories, motives to visit were reclassified into 12 major categories in the analysis. (See Table 14)

It is interesting to note that the motive or reason for coming to Penang has some connections with the image the tourist has of Penang before arrival. (See Table 16). People come to Penang for many various reasons. Among the most popular are high reputation of Penang as the "Pearl" of the Orient projecting images of Penang as a beautiful island with clean, golden sandy beaches, hot climate and a place for complete relaxation amongst many of the tourists.

This reason ranks the highest with 22% compared to others. Recommendations and knowledge gained from books, brochures or films combined accounted for 14% of the motives for coming. Recommendations from friends and relatives are mostly on 2 aspects - towards the beautiful beach areas especially along Rasa Sayang and Golden Gands; and the excellent facilities and services offered at these hotels. One tourist mentioned that the picture by the hotel area with its sun-bathing decks, swaying palms, and local handicraft stalls nearby was exactly what she saw on television back in her hometown and is the reason which prompted her to make the trip.

Table 14

Motive or Reason To Penang

Reasons	Percentage (%)
1. High reputation of Penang as a vacation resort.	22
2. Strong recommendations from others who have been to Penang before.	10
3. Very impressed by books, read/promotional films seen back in their hometown.	4
4. Curiosity of the East, a place not well known.	6
5. Penang is part of the itinerary of their package tour.	10
6. Search for a place not crowded by tourists of the same nationality.	2
7. Penang is merely a stopover.	18
8. Heard that Penang is a cheap place to travel.	6
9. Curiosity about the people and culture of Penang.	2
10. Sentimental Reasons.	6
11. On business.	12
12. Penang is the starting point of visit to Malaysia.	2

"I had been told that Penang island is beautiful. The sister of my friend was once to Penang on her honeymoon trip and recommended the place to me. The price and duration of tour were also appropriate. I wanted to see the seascape of Penang in particular".

- an English

"Why Penang? Well, I've been to Penang before and I feel the unhurried and leisurely pace of life here is ideal for honeymooners. The island moves at a steady crawl with cyclists slowly pedalling along the streets and alleys and riding abreasts them are the trishaws found all over the island. Even the cars coast along at 30 miles per hour, and the people.... Well, they don't walk but saunters about dressed casually in shorts/trousers and shirts and slippers. The whole place has a carefree and informal atmosphere that is relaxing and the weather is just great. It's warm and sunny and it's well,.... just great fun".

- an English couple
on honeymoon here.

"I happened to see the photographic picture of Penang in a brochure. I wanted to go to the South-sea Island. I wanted to enjoy the bright sunshine on a South-sea island. Some other islands such as West Samoa and Micronesia are not convenient in the airline service. I did not like to go to such places as Hawaii because

these places are too much commercialised and always crowded by Japanese honeymooners. The package tour to Malaysia was the only one which fit our schedule. I did not know anything about Malaysia".

- a Japanese.

"Originally, I intended to go to New Zealand. But there was no airline flight to fit my schedule. I was working for a trading firm before, and my colleagues used to tell me that Penang is beautiful. My mother-in-law was once to Malaysia, and she recommended Penang to me too".

- an English.

"My husband finally selected this package tour; we looked for a vacation resort where one can relax quietly and a package tour plan which is reasonable in price and not long in duration. My husband has visited Singapore many times. So he planned to do shopping in Singapore and to enjoy a relaxed vacation in Penang. The package tour we bought seemed to fit the purpose".

- a German.

This study reveals that the availability of package tours which fit the schedule and budget are also important criterias to consider before a tourist embarks on a trip to Penang. It underlies 10% of the

total motives among my respondents in making their choice. The popularity of package tours can also be seen from Table 11.

A large number of tourists came to Penang unintentionally, (18%) that is they had not planned to do so initially. However, the location of Penang near to their actual destination of Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Australia (most commonly mentioned places) prompted them to 'stopover' having heard of Penang as the Pearl of the Orient.

A point need to be raised in this area; that is, despite this fact, why is there no interest to come to Penang intentionally? Why is Penang only visited as a stopover? Perhaps time was the factor or perhaps promotional efforts are still insufficient?

Only a small number of tourists stated that curiosity about the people and culture were motives for drawing them to this island. They had heard of the multiracial society of Penang and are curious to see how these people get along daily.

4.5 Length of Stay

Duration of stay varied considerably among my respondents. As shown in Table 15, 66% of the respondents stayed for about 2-7 days, 16% stayed for about 8-15 days and 18% stayed for only a day. As there is so much to see, learn and enjoy in Penang, is it possible to get acquainted with the island within such a short time or in just one short visit? Perhaps more efforts should be done to encourage a longer stay.

Table 15

Length of Stay (days) in Percentage

Countries	1 (%)	2-7 (%)	8-15 (%)
Singapore	-	2	0
England	4	18	6
Australia	4	32	-
Holland	-	4	4
Germany	4	10	2
South America	-	2	-
Japan	2	2	-
Taiwan	2	4	-
Scandinavian countries	2	8	4
Total	18	66	16

4.6 Food in Penang

Generally, the respondents evaluated favourably the Western style foods and Chinese foods which they took in Penang. However though quite popular, local food were not tried by some, especially the older generation who dared not venture for fear of stomach upsets, having heard of its 'hot and spicy' reputation! Others were those having no knowledge of such local cuisines or those not being able to identify the dishes.

Among the individual menu items, sea-foods especially lobsters and crabs, satays, steamboat and local fruits and fruit juices were top favourites.

About 60% of the respondents stressed delight in these local fruit and juices. However, some had negative opinions too. They referred to papayas and pineapples as not as juicy or as sweet as those in Bali or Thailand, reflecting the image they had of Penang fruits.

As Penang is an island, many who had expected sea-food to be very cheap were dissatisfied and a majority complained about the much-too-high price of crabs especially.

Although majority of these respondents stayed in the luxury class beach hotels, it is interesting to note that practically 80% of them took their meals at least once elsewhere - nearby restaurants, open air stalls in Georgetown, neighbouring relatively cheaper beach hotels.

One big complaint especially among the males (and especially among the Australians) was the high taxes (10% government tax and another 10% for service charge) imposed on hard liquor, considering "our main aim here is to holiday and relax and being Australians liquor is very important. We don't like to have to worry so much about our budget on drinks".

- "I suggest your government do something about the expensive price of liquor if they do not want to discourage tourism".

- "Everything is okay except the alcohol. Price is much too high. We combat this by buying beer from the supermarkets and keep it in the hotel fridges. But this is no fun anymore; afterall we're here on holidays to enjoy ourselves".

- "Liquor is very expensive here. We cannot splurge as much as we did back home in Australia or as in Fiji especially when we're at the discos".

Other States Visited in Malaysia

This area of my study reveals that there is a considerable amount of ignorance among my respondents about Penang - its location, geographical make-up or lifestyle of the people.

A large number of 66% has never been to any parts of Malaysia before and a few of these replies to "Have you visited Malaysia before" were:

- "Yes, I've been to Singapore".
- "Yes, two years back I followed my husband to Singapore".
- "Yes, if you consider Singapore to be in Malaysia".

An explanation for this assumption could be due to the fact that Singapore possesses basically similar characteristics as Malaysia, being also a cosmopolitan country with Malay, Indian and Chinese population thus displaying similar art and architecture and also perhaps

due to the short distance between the 2 countries, easily accessible within half an hour of each other. Since recommendations by friends or word of mouth prove the biggest source of information regarding Penang, this mistaken image might have been continued through the years via those who have visited both Malaysia and Singapore before.

have some idea of the destination... arrived at the first country... (Wong, 1971)⁵ This... the social or commercial... the host country because... and curiosity. Whether... who could in a way... For example, a person... would no doubt be... wise. Similarly, a... would be delighted... contrary would... expectations... with reality to ensure...

This chapter therefore... after arrival of the tourists.

⁵ Wong, 1971: 100.

CHAPTER V

ATTITUDE TOWARDS PENANG

Most respondents had collected some tourist information on Penang before arrival. Even if they had not done so, a tourist would have some image of the destination prior to their visit. The tourist arrives at the host country with certain stereotypes about the place. (Wong, 1971)⁶ This stereotype could have been formed through any of the social or commercial stimuli mentioned earlier, and in this sense the host country becomes a testing ground for his acquired knowledge and curiosity. Whether an image is justified after arrival or otherwise could in a way determine whether a tourist enjoys his trip or not. For example, a person expecting Penang beaches to be clean and beautiful would no doubt be dissatisfied if the situation turns out to be otherwise. Similarly, a person expecting to shop easily and cheaply here would be delighted if he should find such facilities here and on the contrary would be displeased if the conditions do not live up to his expectations. Promotional efforts should therefore go hand-in-hand with reality to ensure a continuous flow of visitors to Penang.

This chapter therefore deals with the images held before and after arrival of the tourists.

⁶Wong Loke Jame: ibid.

5.1 Image Before Arrival

The implications of the responses in this area can give the researcher an insight into the tourists' perceptions and attitudes they hold based on the image they had of Penang before arrival.

Considering the large number of respondents coming to Penang with the motive of holidaying on the highly reputed 'island in the sun', it is not surprising to find about the same number (44%) having images related to nature such as 'warm climate', 'beautiful sandy beaches and sea', 'full of green vegetation', and so forth. The association of 'warm climate' was particularly strong because most of the respondents especially during the early half of the study came to Penang to escape the winter in their hometown. 14% of the respondents thought of Penang as a peaceful vacation spot not very modernised and had colonial influence. Here lies their expectation to find many old colonial buildings. Other images too reflected to the socio-economic elements such as 'in a state of poverty like Hong Kong or Indonesia', 'unique culture' or on the contrary, imagined Penang as 'rather crowded and commercialised like Singapore' (6%).

16% had no idea at all about Penang. This was partly ~~shown~~ from the fact that 14% of the respondents did not gather any information prior to their visit (see Table 7) or the fact that Penang was merely a stopover, or the trip as part of the itinerary of a package tour, hence the indifferent attitude. Perhaps it could be due to the above fact that since their major motive was to relax by the beaches,

knowledge of Penang's reputation as 'The Pearl of the Orient' was a sufficient pull factor.

Among the shoe-string travellers, a common image held was that Penang is a meeting place for young travellers and a place for a cheap holiday. In this case, the researcher observes that recommendation from others who had been here before plays the most important role in luring such tourists here. This accounted for 8% of the travellers.

Table 16

Images Before Arrival

Images Before Arrival	Percentage (%)
1. No idea	16
2. Know of its reputation as a holiday resort	38
3. Small island with lots of greenery and vegetation	6
4. A vacation resort not very modernised but had colonial influence before	14
5. Poor and needy, a high level of poverty	8
6. Rather crowded, developed and commercialised	6
7. A meeting place for lots of young travellers. Cheap place to travel in.	8
8. Unique culture	2
Total percentage	100

5.2 Image After Arrival

Here the respondents were asked about the image they had of Penang from their arrival to time of interview. It is obvious here that the researcher is actually trying to find out the impression formed about Penang during their stay so far. Images after arrival is classified into two categories:

1. Image about the place (see Tables 17a and 17b);
2. Image about the people and culture (see Table 18).

It should be pointed out that the respondents' image about Penang did not improve after visiting the island. However, in some aspects what they saw and experienced were as imagined.

Image About the Place

38% of the respondents knew about Penang's reputation as a holiday resort and thus expected beautiful white sandy beaches, glorious sun and sea, and an idyllic place for relaxation. However though this proves the most popular impression formed, it was not fully justified because the figure only amounts to 22%. 12% complained that the image was not justified having expected more cleaner and better beaches with clearer water considering the fact that Penang is after all the 'Pearl of the Orient'.

"The sea water was not so beautiful as shown in the brochures".

"The sea water was grayish".

"The sea was not emerald green as I expected; the sea water was dirty".

Others complained that the climate was too hot (14%).

"The humidity was high and it was uncomfortably sticky".

Still others claimed:

"The beautiful island has miles and miles of pristine white beaches. It was fairly private. Sometimes we're the only ones sunbathing on the fine sands. The only distraction comes from the occasional motor scooters or a water skier whizzing across the waters".

"The sun and sea is just great. But the water scooters coming so near can be very dangerous. Moreover the noise is very irritating, destroying the peace of the area".

From Table 17a, it is seen that 2 contrasting views about the economic status of Penang existed among the respondents. Some (14%) had expected Penang to be not very modernised or developed. While others (6%) imagined it to be the reverse. In both cases, the images were not justified.

Table 17a - Key to Table 17b

Image After Arrival - Place
(Refer to Table 17b. The numbering
below corresponds to that in Table 17b)

Image	Percentage (%)
<u>Nature</u>	
1. Great island - a very beautiful and nice place for relaxation. A natural lush tropical island with fantastic beaches and sea.	22
2. Had better images of the island as a vacation spot. Had expected cleaner and whither sand, and more wavy sea.	12
3. Climate was too hot.	14
4. A very small island (accessible within a few rounds of touring).	2
<u>Socio-Economic Status</u>	
5. Much more modernised, developed and commercialised than expected. Standard of living is higher than expected.	18
6. Combination of 1 and 5 - a great holiday island, modern and has high standard of living.	10
7. A slowly progressing and developing place (Pace of progress is slow).	8
8. Tremendous place but price of tourism is too high (hotel, food, liquor).	8
9. Too many tourists around - crowded.	2
10. No opinion.	4

Table 17b

Image After Arrival - of the Place
(Percentage by Country)

Image Countries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Singapore	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
England	8	2	6	-	2	4	6	-	-	-	28
Australia	4	4	-	-	2	4	-	4	-	-	18
Holland	2	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	2	8
Germany	2	-	4	-	4	-	-	4	-	2	16
South America	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Japan	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	4
Taiwan	2	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Scandinavian Countries	4	6	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	16
Percentage (total)	22	12	14	2	18	8	8	8	2	4	100

Table 18

Image After Arrival - of People and Culture

Image	Percentage (%)
1. People are all very nice, helpful and extremely friendly.	50
2. People speaks good English.	4
3. It is obvious that the Chinese are controlling the business in the island.	2
4. People appear poor and needy.	2
5. There is an obvious gap between the rich and the poor.	6
6. Penang is rich in various cultures.	6
7. Penang has not much culture as expected.	2
8. Surprised at the way the different races get along without problems.	4
9. Ignorant about the different ethnic groups.	6
10. No impression formed.	18

A similar high percentage of 18% found Penang instead to be modernised, developed and commercialised basing on the fact that:

- "there is a large ownership of cars among the people"
- "the city is more modernised than expected"
- "hotels were grand, modern and very posh"

as compared to only 8% who expressed that Penang is a slowly developing and progressing place.

- "the setting in the brochure was too much sophisticated. It does not represent the reality".

This part of the questionnaire actually seeks to find the most general impression formed about Penang during their stay. The fact that at least 8% expressed regret over the high price of tourism particularly liquor indicates the degree of the effect of the government and service taxes on these tourists. The fact that pace of progress is slow in Penang is quoted by 8% of the respondents. The overall impression formed in this area is:

"a place where one can really relax. Nobody looked busy. It was really a place where one can relax. That's all".

"The country was underdeveloped in many aspects. There were many different races but I felt the Chinese influence was dominant".

The most striking feature of the people of Penang is their friendliness. This was the general opinion of 50% of the respondents. They were very touched by the warmth, friendliness and helpfulness of the Penangites they have met or observed - from shop assistants, to cab drivers, to hotel employees to total strangers.

At least 8% of the respondents came with the image that Penang has a high level of poverty with the people being poor and needy. This proves true to only 2% of the respondents after their arrival. However, the picture of economic inequality still persist with about 6% of the respondents stating that there is an obvious gap between the rich and the poor. They quoted the obvious differences between the sprawling bungalows and the small shabby huts along the stretch of the Batu Feringgi beaches and Georgetown area and also in the course of their tour.

"The difference in living level between the upper class people and the average people seemed to be very large. There were many beautiful Villas in Penang. In the striking contrast, the houses of average people were shabby. Also, people were badly dressed".

"Hotels and the surrounding areas were maintained beautifully. But, the houses of average people looked very poor".

From the small percentage in all the other categories it is obvious that the respondents' observation about the Penang's people and life was very limited and superficial. Other than talking to the researcher none of the respondents had personal contact with the native people. 18% of the respondents specifically mentioned that they were unable to form any impression about the people and culture because:

1. The nature of their tour itself - especially the 'package' type which hinders intermingling between the tourists and the locals. Due to the 'closed' nature where everything was pre-arranged by the tour operators - food, lodging and transportation and their fixed time-table, there is practically no opportunity for them to mingle with the locals to form a fair impression.
2. Others came here solely for business or recreation thus they would rather make full use of any free time available to enjoy the beach or to relax than to get to know the people.

- "I do not have a strong impression because the purpose of my travel was to enjoy a new life at Penang. But I thought the difference between rich and poor is very large".

- "I did not try to have a contact with locals so I can't say much. But I gathered the impression that the

housing condition is awful. There were many shabby houses".

- "I felt the people were very friendly. I was often talked to by people when I was walking. There were many different races in this place".

- "People's life seemed to be relaxed, easy and slow in tempo".

The overall impressions the respondents had of Penang varied from one respondent to another, some being favourable and some others unfavourable. They seemed to have been impressed, among other things with the following points: that Penang is an idyllic seaside and holiday resort with fantastic sprawling beaches, quite modernised and developed though the pace of life seemed to be very slow and relaxed; and the people are very helpful as well as friendly.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Tourism is a modern phenomenon. It is even said to be the quickest and least difficult form of development. As such, it is not surprising that pineapple which was the biggest export trade of Hawaii several years ago is now substituted by tourism being its top industry. In Japan, tourism has become the second largest industry and in the UK it is the fourth largest industry with chemicals, transport equipment and machinery earning more. It is a fact that one of the most dramatic features of international trade since 1945 has been the great expansion of the tourist trade, which is now and will remain an economic factor of outstanding importance. The speed and ease of travel, rising standards of living and widespread tourist propaganda have all stimulated the movement of people from one country to another; all meaning that holiday and travel are increasingly a part of modern living. From a mere amusement reserved for a happy few, tourism is developing into a necessity for the masses.

The individual tourists are the core of this massive industry. It is for them that we have scheduled airlines (Pan Am, Lufthansa, Qantas and MAS), charter airlines, hotel chains (Hilton, Holiday Inn, Sheraton), tour operators, car hire firms (Avis, Hertz) bus companies and a host of other companies involved with the tourist industry. It becomes imperative therefore to take a closer look into their personal views, opinions

and feelings about the host country in order to get a clearer basic picture and understanding of the situation so that appropriate plans can be carried out accordingly to further develop the industry.

There are however, few researches done in this context. This study highlighted the promotional effort of the tourism authorities. It also probed in depth at a face-to-face level into the views and opinions of these tourist with regards among other things, to their reasons for choosing Penang as their destination, their images or stereotype held of Penang before and after arrival and so on.

Since international tourism has contributed a substantial amount of foreign exchange to the Penang economy each year, it should be the responsibility of the government to take necessary steps to increase this major source of revenue.

This study may provide ideas and directions for attracting tourists to Penang.

6.1 Major Findings

This study revealed a number of interesting findings about the tourism industry in Penang.

The relevance of studying the characteristics of the tourists - their age group, their occupation and their specific reasons for coming to Penang can enable appropriate steps to be taken for the benefit of the industry.

In accordance with normal economic trends rapid industry and economic development, means higher wages for the working population leading in turn to an expanded salaried middle class to which the businessman, the management executives and the professional worker belong. The bulk of travellers in my study is drawn from this stratum of society, followed by housewives and pensioners. Advertising and promotions could hence be channelled through the proper media directed to these categories such as business periodicals, women or home magazines.

This study also indicated that there is a considerable amount of ignorance amongst these foreign tourists about Penang (and Malaysia) with regards to its geographical location, its relationship with Malaysia, its population or its people and culture. The most common knowledge or image of the island is that of its being a beautiful beach resort. These tourists have a misconception of Penang/Malaysia often linking it to Singapore as being one and the same. Despite this fact however, Penang proves the most often visited and popularly included in package tours as compared to other states in Malaysia.

Perhaps when speaking of tourism it is not surprising that one always imagines tourists visiting a place to see the tangible aspects such as the man-made creations of that country. For example, one usually thinks of the Haw Par Villa or the Jurong Bird Park when visiting Singapore, Leaning Tower of Pisa when in Italy, Buckingham Palace or the Trafalgar Square of London and the Reclining Buddha or Penang Hill when visiting Penang. However, this study shows that

contradictarily the more intangible aspects are also as important to the tourist industry in Penang.

The melting pot of Asian cultures that Penang is has resulted in a manifestation of a tremendous variety in architectural styles, places of worship (which are inextricably linked with legends and myths) religious festivals, clothes and handicraft. These factors were often mentioned by the respondents in my study. Tourists come to Penang to observe its culture and way of life. They are curious about the way this multiracial society could mingle easily and harmoniously.

Being the oldest former British settlement, the English language has taken strong roots in Penang which proves an advantage to these tourists.

However, the greatest asset to tourism in Penang is her natural environment which proves the major reason for their choosing Penang as their destination. Interviews and questionnaires revealed that the main attitude of a large number of these tourists towards travel to this region is one of indifference; their main objective being mainly to relax and enjoy the natural environment of the 'Pearl of the Orient', especially in beaches. It is not surprising therefore, to find that the nature of their trip is one of merely a stopover from nearby countries, or of Penang being one of the itineraries of their package tour.

However time is also a factor, considering the average length of stay is less than one week. This short span of time does not encourage much sight-seeing or acquaintance with the island. This factor has also resulted in the tourists not mingling with the natives, hence defeating the purpose of promotion as there is 'much to see, learn and enjoy in Penang. On arrival, they were most impressed with its calm, unruffled atmosphere with its 'island' atmosphere being already a natural pull. However, contrasting to expectations of being the 'Pearl of the Orient', much dissatisfaction was voiced regarding the dirty beaches and sea water. High prices of beer was criticised as the danger of the water scooters and its disturbing the peace of the beach area.

The increasing popularity and importance of package tours which conveniently fit the schedule and budget are becoming important criterias to consider before a tourist embarks on a trip to Penang.

The importance of the 'smile' or the friendly and helpful people of Penang should not be left out as a valuable asset in attracting foreign tourists to Penang. Myra Walds (1979: 294), an American travel writer, also pointed out this fact about the Thais.

Implications and Suggestions

What does all these facts show? What can be deduced from these findings and how can they be of any help to tourism in Penang?

Ignorance of the tourists about Penang implies insufficiency and ineffectiveness of the promotional and publicity efforts of the

Tourism Authorities. Word of mouth from past tourists seemed to be the most effective source of information to the present tourists about Penang, only then followed by media advertising.

There is a need for more rigorous promotion of Penang and a serious demand for a proper elucidation of the tourism plant in this region to allay the misconception of Penang/Malaysia being coupled to Singapore which might prove hazardous in the long run because tourists, after visiting Singapore might feel satisfied that they have seen the whole of the Malaysian region and return home without venturing into Penang/Malaysia: advocating an attitude of "you've seen one, you've seen all". Moreover, Singapore with its 'built-in' reputation poses strong competition in wooing the tourists. Tourists are attracted to Singapore by its position, commercial centre and other touristic image built up through a century of international repute.

Perhaps the Tourist Department should encourage and work more with the Malaysian Film Unit in development more new films on Malaysia's and particularly Penang's tourist attractions and ensuring that such films are regularly screened at key points in the market. While importance must be attached to the Malay element and image building, more effective themes can take the form of stressing the multiracial colour of the state. This strong point of Malaysia has not been sufficiently publicised. The tendency of most of the brochures and pamphlets is to emphasise on the Malays and the Malay culture only.

However the PDC, TDC and the private sector connected with the tourist trade must realise that the effort to increase the tourist trade of Penang does not end with promotion. Tourists who are lured to Penang through promotional efforts must be satisfied once they are here. This calls for a balance between promotional effort and the provision of tourist facilities. This will give satisfaction to the tourist who will in turn encourage others to come. The satisfied tourist is the best promoter. It is exactly such a balanced tourist's programme that has turned Hong Kong into a thriving 'tourist's paradise' in just a few years. Hence improvement of tourist facilities must go hand-in-hand with promotional efforts. Promotion creates in the mind of the potential tourist, a desire to visit Penang. When these potential tourists become actual tourists, the authorities should see to it that their holiday is not hampered by any unnecessary inconveniences.

Only when the target is specified can the proper means be taken to solve a problem. From this study, knowing that the strongest pull of Penang lies in its highly reputed beaches and hotel area, it is only wise to capitalise on this fact. Complaints voiced in this study by the tourists themselves can serve as guidelines to corrective measures in future. For example, the complaint about prices or liquor being too high is repeatedly voiced even in this small scale sample. This suggests that many more tourists might be as deeply affected by it. Hence steps should be taken to review this matter.

Since the tourists spend more of their time at the beach areas, perhaps more effort should be done to induce a longer stay. One suggestion is to introduce more water sports at these areas. This however, though recently popularised only around the Rasa Sayang and Golden Sands Hotel area with sky-gliding, yachting, water-skiing and wind-surfing, should be extended to other hotels along the beach. Cheaper accommodation such as huts or chalets like those found in Pulau Pangkor should be considered and built as alternatives to the luxury class hotels to accommodate more tourists especially the shoe-string travellers.

Indirectly, this study also foresees a potential problem. The Malaysian government in its aspiration to establish its own national identity by stressing on Bahasa Malaysia as its national language, could result in the coming generation being confronted with communication problems with the tourists, if a more serious effort is not taken to emphasise on English as an international language.

12. London, 1977.
13. Singapore Tourist Promotion Board,
14. 1975.
15. London, 1971.
16.
17.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Burkhart, A.J. and Medlik, S., Tourism - Past, Present and Future, Heinemann, London, 1973.
2. Cheowtirakul, Churdkiet, A Study of factors attracting American Tourists to Thailand, 1980.
3. Cohen, E., Toward a Sociology of International Tourism, Social Research, Volume 39, No.1, 1972.
4. Emanuel de Kart, Tourism - Passport to Development. Oxford University Press, 1979.
5. La Flamme, Alan G., The Impact of Tourism: A Case of the Bahama Island. Annals of Tourism Research.
6. Njoman S. Pendit, Pengantar Ilmu Parawisata, Jakarta, 1965.
7. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Tourist Development and Growth Report, 1966.
8. Pacific Area Travel Association PATA PATER, Malaysia 1972.
9. Perbadanan Pembangunan Pulau Pinang, Laporan Tahunan 1976-1982.
10. Rancangan Malaysia Keempat, 1980-1985.
11. Sutton, W.A., Travel and Understanding: Notes on the Social Structure of Touring, International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 8 : 218-222.
12. Schmoll, G.A., Tourism Promotion, Tourism International Press, London, 1977.
13. Singapore Tourist Promotion Board, Annual Report 1975-1981.
14. Turner Louis and John Ash, The Golden Hordes, London Constable 1975.
15. Young, George, Tourism: Blessing or Blight? Penguin Books, London, 1973.
16. Waldo, Myra, Travel Guide to the Orient and Pacific, New York, Macmillan.
17. Wong, Loke-jame and Low, P.G., Japan Tourist Market and Singapore, Research Department, Singapore Tourist Promotion Board, 1971.

Articles

1. The New Straits Times, 23rd March 1980.
2. Penang Travel News, April-June 1983.

University of Malaya



4831

4870

REC'D

LIBRARY