

THE EFFECT OF PERCEPTUAL CHANGE: A STUDY OF CHINESE VISITORS
SATISFACTION USING EXPECTANCY DISCONFIRMATION APPROACH

ABSTRACT

Since the mid 1990's there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Chinese visitors to Australia, making China a significant inbound market. This study sought to ascertain how Chinese visitors perception of Australia changed as a result of their visit. It also examined Chinese visitors satisfaction across a range of tourism experiences. Research data was collected from 380 Chinese visitors and it was found that 'food', 'shopping' and 'tour itinerary' were areas where Australia underperformed on satisfaction. A gap between pre- and post-trip perceptions was detected and it was found that meeting visitors expectation of quality, variety and accessibility related aspects was particularly important in achieving greater satisfaction. The research findings offer Australian tourism operators and marketers an insight into the Chinese visitors trip experience and satisfaction.

Key words: Destination perception, visitor satisfaction, Chinese market, Australia

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INTRODUCTION

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2006) reported that in 2004-2005, approximately 5.5 million inbound visitors generated \$18.3 billion exports earnings, or 12 percent of Australia's total exports of goods and services. Sustaining the tourism industry has become an integral part of the Federal Government policies (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003). China is Australia's fifth largest international tourism market. Tourist arrivals from China are expected to keep growing over the next decade at an average of 15.7 percent per annum (Tourism Australia, 2006, June 14). Given the importance and potential of the Chinese market, it is vital to understand the need and experience of Chinese visitors to ensure continued development in this market. Nevertheless, China is also a relatively new source market for international tourism and little serious marketing research has been done on this segment by either the tourism industry or academics (Chon, 2005). Responding to the need for a better understanding of Chinese visitors, this paper reports the results of an empirical study aimed at analysing how Chinese visitors perception of Australia has changed as a result of their visitation, and the subsequent effect on their satisfaction with the trip experience. Based on the results, a number of conclusions and implications are provided to assist the Australian tourism industry in destination management of the Chinese leisure market.

INBOUND CHINESE LEISURE MARKET TO AUSTRALIA

Chinese outbound tourism started in early 1980s following the implementation of Deng Xiao-Ping's open-door policy. In the early stage of Chinese outbound tourism development, overseas travel by individuals for leisure purposes was still tightly controlled whereas professionals and government officials were encouraged to travel abroad to advance their knowledge and skills by engaging in more economic and cultural activities (Zhang & Lew, 1997). Consequently, official government and business travel had dominated Chinese outbound tourism until 1999.

The Chinese government has progressively eased its control over outbound tourism and the self-funded private travel sector has been growing rapidly in the last decade. This has been brought about by the cumulative effect of a number of changes including, an increasing disposable income and improving living standard, an expanding middle class, the relaxation on overseas travel and currency control, more holidays and the implementation of an annual leave entitlement in the public sector. These changes have promoted private holiday visitors to outnumber official and business visitors in the recent years. Several studies have discussed the factors contributing to Chinese outbound tourism, for instance, Wang and Sheldon (1995) and Zhang and Heung (2001).

Whilst there has been a drop in the percentage terms for business travel, as shown in Table 1, visitor arrival numbers from China to Australia for business and holiday have grown strongly. In 1995, business visitors made up more than 40 percent of the total market, holiday visitors accounted for less than a quarter of all arrivals from China whilst the remaining 36 percent was made up of visits for other purposes. The share of

business travel has gradually decreased to 20.3 percent in 2007. In contrast, the market share of holiday travel has expanded to 47.8 percent. The average annual growth rate for business tourism in the period of 1995-2005 was 13.3 percent as comparing to that of 28.6 percent for holiday travel (ABS, 1995-2007).

Insert Table 1 here

The rapid growth of Chinese holiday arrivals is a consequence of Australia being granted Approved Destination Status (ADS) by the Chinese government. ADS determines which destinations Chinese nationals can travel to for leisure. It also decides which foreign companies can operate in the Chinese market (UNWTO, 2003). In April 1999, Australia (along with New Zealand) was granted ADS status becoming among the first western countries that the Chinese government permitted its citizens to visit. This provided Australia with a competitive edge over other western countries as an attractive leisure destination for Chinese visitors (Australian Tourist Commission (ATC), 2003, November 13). The ADS gave Australia the access to first the market of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong Province, followed by six other tourist generating regions in July 2004, and finally the whole of China in August 2006, (Tourism Australia, 2007, June 26). Every ADS group tour to Australia is fully escorted by a locally based Chinese speaking tour guide (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). Tourism Australia, the main national marketing body, has demonstrated strong commitment to expanding the Chinese market, investing millions of dollars annually in marketing in China (ATC, 2004, April 29).

Aviation plays a vital role in connecting Australia to its tourist source markets. According to ATC (1998, March), adequate air service capacity on the China-

Australia route contributed to Australia's successful negotiation with China for ADS. In the period of 1996 to 2005, the direct China-Australia seat capacity has grown continuously by over 700 percent (Tourism Australia, 2006, June 19). The increase in bilateral Sino-Australia relations also promoted more business trips between the two countries, generating additional leisure tourism. According to Travel and Tourism Intelligence (1998), a great majority of all outbound Chinese business travel also undertook some leisure activities during their trip.

CHINESE VISITOR SATISFACTION AND PERCEPTION

Satisfaction has been a long-standing focal point for tourism marketing due to its impact on visitors post-trip behavior. In the context of visitor satisfaction with a tourist destination, researchers have been particularly interested in how satisfaction has influenced visitors willingness to return and to recommend to others. A high level of satisfaction derived at the destination encourages individual tourists to re-visit the destination and leads to positive word-of-mouth advertising (Kau & Lim, 2005; Yu & Goulden, 2006).

Depending on the degree of complexity of the consumption experience, the psychological processes and underlying dimensions of satisfaction vary (Oliver, 1997). Traveling to a foreign destination is a complex experience. Visitors may be satisfied with some aspects and dissatisfied with others. The overall satisfaction of a visitor's stay at the destination is a summary of satisfaction accumulated over numerous individual experiences. They may include a diversified range of physical and cultural destination attributes, the overall destination's attitude toward visitors, the perceptions of service quality and pricing, etc. (Pizam, Neumann & Reichel, 1978;

Yu & Goulden, 2006). Additionally, the cultural background of visitors may also affect the way they experience and interpret tourist products and consequently lead to different levels of satisfaction (Yu & Goulden, 2006).

At the destination level, visitors satisfaction with their holiday is closely related to their perceptions or images of the destination. As stated by Bigné, Sánchez and Sánchez (2001), “tourism image exercises a positive influence on perceived quality and satisfaction, because it moulds the expectations that the individual forms before the visit” (p. 609). For this reason, destination perceptions were often used when measuring visitor satisfaction with tourism and hospitality services. Pizam et al. (1978) derived dimensions of visitor satisfaction by measuring the perceived performance of destination on a list of attributes. Bigné et al. (2001) confirmed the causal relationship between image and satisfaction. Reisinger and Turner (2000) measured visitor satisfaction with Australia’s Gold Coast by comparing visitors perception of the Gold Coast with that of Hawaii. As every destination is unique, different sets of destination attributes have been adopted for different destinations in evaluating visitor satisfaction (Bigné et al., 2001).

Major approaches to measuring consumer satisfaction include the expectancy disconfirmation theory, the performance-only theory, and the importance-performance theory (Li & Carr, 2004). The expectancy disconfirmation approach compares performance against expectation. If performance exceeds the expectation level, a positive disconfirmation occurs and the customer is satisfied. In the case of expectation exceeding performance, negative disconfirmation occurs and results in a dissatisfied customer. In contrast, the performance-only theory suggests that

performance alone determines consumer satisfaction, regardless of the existence of any previous expectation. The importance-performance analysis incorporates consumer attitude in assessing satisfaction by simultaneously considering the importance and performance of product/service attributes. Attributes that score high on both importance and performance are assumed to be key features promoting satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). However this approach has been criticised for not distinguishing the relative contributions of importance and performance scores, and being ineffective and unreliable (Li & Carr, 2004).

In the field of tourism and hospitality services, the expectancy disconfirmation theory has been the most widely used approach (Yüksel & Yüksel, 2001; Li & Carr, 2004). The renowned SERVQUAL model for measuring service quality and customer satisfaction was conceptualized on the expectancy disconfirmation approach (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988). Tribe and Snaith (1997) also developed HOLSAT scale for measuring holiday satisfaction based on the expectancy disconfirmation approach. Additionally, Pizam and Milman (1993) have confirmed disconfirmations as a relatively good predictor of American visitors overall satisfaction with Spain. Weber's study (1997) on German visitors to Australia revealed a similar finding stating that "disconfirmations do indeed seem to have a considerable impact on trip satisfaction" (p.35). The influence of disconfirmation on satisfaction is particularly strong when visitors were segmented by reasons for travel (Pizam & Milman, 1993).

The comparative analyses by Dorfman (1979), Crompton and Love (1995), and Yüksel and Rimmington (1998) found that the performance only approach was the

most valid and reliable measure of satisfaction. These studies have often been cited in tourism and hospitality related literature to provide empirical support for the use of the performance only approach. However, Hudson, Hudson and Miller (2004) pointed out that the dependent variables used in these studies were performance based measures; hence, they are likely to produce a higher predictive validity for the performance only approach.

Fallon and Schofield's (2003) study is the only comparative analysis of the alternative models for measuring satisfaction with a tourist destination. Among the six models tested, the performance only model ranked the first, closely followed by the disconfirmation model. Another comparative analysis performed by Hudson et al. (2004) in the context of British travelers' satisfaction showed that the two approaches did not produce significantly different results, thus suggesting that either can be used to measure satisfaction. A similar conclusion was reached by Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki (2007), who attempted to settle the persistent debate between the disconfirmation based SERVQUAL measurement and the performance only SERVPERF scale by offering a meta-analysis of existing studies in the area. The two approaches were found to be equally adequate and valid.

With respect to informing management decision making, the disconfirmation approach certainly offers more useful insights than its performance only counterpart. According to Tribe and Snaith, (1998), performance alone does not provide sufficient information for management and enhance our understanding of satisfaction. This approach may also result in the establishment of inappropriate priorities by the management (Childress & Crompton, 1997). In contrast, the expectancy

disconfirmation concept is of practical use for monitoring and improving the business performance by detecting the gap between expectation and performance (Saleh & Ryan, 1991), therefore, it is preferred if the research objective is to identify areas of poor service quality for possible management intervention (Jain & Gupta, 2004).

Several authors (i.e., Dwyer, King & Prideaux, 2007; King, Dwyer & Prideaux, 2006; Li & Carr, 2004; Pan & Laws, 2003; Yu & Weiler, 2001) have written about Chinese outbound tourism to Australia from various perspectives. Among these studies, Li and Carr (2004) investigated the issue of visitor satisfaction in the Chinese inbound market to Australia's Gold Coast using performance-only assessment method. The study found that Chinese visitors were highly satisfied with Gold Coast as a holiday destination. The study also suggested that Chinese visitors were satisfied with Gold Coast's natural attractions, clean and safe environment, and good weather. However, they were less satisfied with shopping, food and cost related areas. The Gold Coast is only one stop on the itinerary and it is unlikely to dominate Chinese visitors overall experience in Australia. An assessment of Chinese visitors overall satisfaction with Australia would provide more practical guide to marketers and managers in attracting and servicing Chinese visitors.

Hossain, Salma, and Rolin (2004) and the ADS Visitor Experience Study (ATC, 2003) are two industry reports that studied the Chinese visitors satisfaction with Australia. The former focused on visitors undertaking guided group holiday tours from North Asian markets including China and concluded that visitors from North Asia were more dissatisfied with their trip to Australia than those from outside of the region. The most frequently cited reason for dissatisfaction for Chinese was value for

money, followed by shopping time. The later study found that Australia performed as well as other major Western countries including the US, Canada and European countries in terms of willingness to re-visit. However, Chinese visitors were significantly less satisfied with the tour package to Australia than those to other Western countries. The findings of the studies suggested a need to further investigate Chinese visitors satisfaction and explore its determining factors. This study aims to offer Australian tourism industry insights into managing visitor satisfaction through understanding what determines their satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

In light of the important link between satisfaction and destination perception, this study used expectancy disconfirmation approach to assess how Chinese visitors satisfaction with Australia was affected by their expectation and perception. Chinese visitors were asked to provide information regarding their pre- and post-trip perceptions about Australia as a tourist destination, satisfaction with the overall trip and various trip elements, social demographics, and trip related characteristics. A self-completion questionnaire was designed as the research instrument to collect the data.

Although being criticized for limiting respondent answers to the given set of attributes, multi-item scales have often been used in perception studies, given their ability to discover the latent structure of visitor perceptions as well as provide data on how each individual attribute is perceived (Gallarza, Gil & Calderón, 2002). A pool of attributes was generated based on literature review of general destination image studies (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gallarza et al., 2002; Beerli & Martin, 2003) and studies specifically focused on Australia's international tourism image (i.e. Reisinger

& Turner, 2000; Waitt, 1996) and Chinese visitors (i.e. Li & Carr, 2004; Yu & Weiler, 2001). In consultation with Chinese tour guides and other researchers in the field, attributes most relevant to the Chinese holiday market were selected from the attribute pool. The resulting list was refined further based on pilot study results and the final instrument contains 21 destination attributes. A statement was developed for each attribute and visitors were required to express whether they agree or disagree on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being 'strongly disagree' and 5 being 'strongly agree'.

The pre-trip perceptions of Australia and various elements of the package were shaped by information obtained through a broad array of information channels, such as Tourism Australia's active marketing campaigns, mass media, word-of-mouth, and their travel agencies. These perceptions form the basis of their expectations of Australia as a tourist destination and the service they would receive during the trip. Due to the difficulty of accessing the same sample before and after the trip, this study collected both pre- and post-trip perception data from the visitors in the same questionnaire immediately prior to departure from Australia. This method is known as the retrospective pre-test design as opposed to the traditional pre-test/post-test design which collects data on expectation before the consumption behaviour occurs. Despite the criticism that retrospective expectation may be inaccurate and incomplete, Dickson and Hall (2006) suggested that retrospective expectation and prior trip expectation are equally valid and people can accurately recall their prior trip expectation. Yüksel and Yüksel (2001) claimed that visitors conceptualisation of destination attributes and the importance of various trip attributes may change as a result of experiential learning during the holiday that involves multiple service encounters over an extended period of time. This would cause a change in the

satisfaction evaluation standard, also known as the response-shift bias, a significant weakness of the traditional pre-test/post-test data collection method that can be avoided by using the retrospective test design (Howard, 1980). As international visitors are likely to use the retrospective expectation, but not the pre-trip expectation in evaluating their holiday (Yüksel & Yüksel, 2001), it is appropriate to collect both the pre- and post-trip perceptions at the end of the Chinese visitors stay in Australia. Such an approach was also used in Truong and Foster (2006), Chaudhary (2000), among others. To improve the accuracy of the responses, pre- and post-trip perceptions were assessed separately at the beginning and end of the questionnaire.

Visitors satisfaction with overall trip and various elements of the trip were also assessed on 5-point Likert scale with 1 being 'strongly dissatisfied' through to 5 being 'strongly satisfied'. To ensure accuracy and to remove ambiguities, the questionnaire was written in English before it was translated into Chinese, and then checked by two different translators. The questionnaire was pre-tested on Chinese students and visitors in the Brisbane/Gold Coast region, which revealed no major issues with the validity of the scale and questionnaire design.

The research was conducted in the check-in area of Brisbane International Airport within a three-week period. Chinese visitors waiting for check-in were approached randomly for their voluntary participation in the study. In total, the survey returned 380 usable questionnaires. Despite the lack of direct air service, Brisbane International Airport was chosen as the research location for several reasons. Firstly, the examination of post-trip perception required the data to be collected immediately after the trip therefore surveying departing visitors in the airport was appropriate.

Secondly, it was impossible to draw a large national sample across different Australia international airports given the limited research resources and various security measures in place, especially in the post 9/11 era.

RESULTS

The demographics of the sample are summarised in Table 2. Chinese visitors in this sample were more likely to be male, married, aged between 25 and 44, and well-educated. These resemble those obtained in 2003 ADS Visitor Experience Study, which used a national sample and also found Chinese visitors were very well educated young to middle aged adults. More specifically, both samples have slightly more male than female, more than 80 percent of the respondents aged between 25 and 54, and approximately 20 percent of the respondents without a tertiary qualification. The similarities between the two samples suggest that collecting data in only Brisbane did not seriously bias the sample.

Insert Table 2 here

Table 3 below displays information on visitor satisfaction measured on 5-point Likert scale. With respect to Australia as a tourist destination, 87 percent of the respondents reported Australia as a 'good' or 'excellent' destination with a mean rating of 4.19. However, their overall trip satisfaction was only 3.90. They were more satisfied with Australia as a tourist destination than with their overall travel experience. In terms of individual elements of the trip, air transportation received the highest mean (3.91) followed by tourist attractions (3.88). 'Food and drinks' and 'shopping' had the lowest means of 3.11 and 3.27, indicating the relatively low performance in these areas as compared to other destination aspects. Dissatisfied visitors made up 20.1 and

16.1 percent of the total respondents for food and shopping, respectively. The tour itinerary is the third least satisfying element.

Insert Table 3 here

A factor analysis reduced 21 destination attributes to 4 general factors, which were subsequently named as ‘natural attraction and general environment’, ‘quality and variety of goods/services’, ‘cultural and well-known attractions’, and ‘accessibility’. The factor of ‘natural and attraction and general environment’ was identified as the most critical component in Chinese visitors perception. Attributes that belong to each factor are listed in Table 4. The factorability of the data, sampling adequacy, and internal consistency of the measurement were examined by checking the correlation matrixes, Bartlett’s test of sphericity statistics, KMO test statistics, anti-image correlation matrixes, and Cronbach’s alpha test statistics, which raised no concern. Random half sample validation of the factor solution was also performed to ensure that the results can be generalised.

Insert Table 4 here

Based on the factor solution, four compound variables were created for pre-trip perceptions by first adding together the scores for perception attributes that loaded on the same factor, and then dividing the total by the number of attributes in that factor. The same procedure was also used to create the four compound variables for post-trip perceptions. A paired samples t-test was performed on pre- and post-trip perceptions at the factor level and the results of the test are displayed in Table 5. After visiting Australia, Chinese visitors perceptions were significantly improved in all four factors

of perception. This indicated that the tourist products/services provided in Australia are generally meeting their expectations.

Insert Table 5 here

A regression analysis was undertaken to investigate the relationship between Chinese visitors overall satisfaction and their perceptual changes in the four factors. Table 6 contains the results of the regression analysis.

Insert Table 6 here

There was an overall relationship between satisfaction and the four independent variables of perceptual change, given that the model on the whole is significant, with $F(4, 207) = 7.751, p = 0.000$, and adjusted R square = 0.113. In terms of individual predictors, two of the independent variables contributed significantly to the prediction of visitors satisfaction. They are the improvements in ‘quality and variety of goods/services’ and ‘accessibility’. The regression coefficients for the two significant independent variables are $-0.228 (t = 3.372, p = 0.001)$ and $-0.124 (t = 2.619, p = 0.009)$, respectively. Because the independent variable of perceptual change was calculated by taking the post-trip score from the pre-trip score, a greater value indicates a less fulfilled expectation. Therefore, a negative sign for the coefficients was expected. The standardized regression coefficients showed that perceptual change in ‘quality and variety of goods/services’ was a more important predictor relatively than that of ‘accessibility’. Changes in the perceptions of ‘natural attraction and general environment’ and ‘cultural and well-known attractions’ did not seem to influence Chinese visitors level of satisfaction given the insignificant regression coefficients. Collinearity statistics of tolerance and variance inflation factors (VIF),

the scatter plot of standardized residuals against standardized predicted values, and the normal plot of regression standardized residuals for the dependent variable were inspected and the assumptions about collinearity, linearity and normality were satisfied. The regression result was also validated using random half sample.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Focusing on the leisure segment, this study of Chinese visitors perception and satisfaction provided useful insights into the Chinese leisure market and several implications may be drawn from the results to assist future destination management and marketing strategy. As revealed by factor analysis, Chinese visitors perception of Australia as a tourist destination comprises of four factors, representing the critical dimensions in visitors perception. They are ‘natural attraction and general environment’, ‘quality and variety of goods/services’, ‘cultural and well-known attractions’ and ‘accessibility’. A comparison between pre- and post-trip perceptions found that Chinese visitors perceptions of all four dimensions have significantly improved as a result of their trip experience. This implies a fulfilled expectation, which as suggested by the expectancy disconfirmation theory, should lead to satisfaction. In line with this result, the present study also found that Chinese visitors overall satisfaction with Australia and their trip was generally high, with only a very small proportion of visitors expressing dissatisfaction with their overall experience.

Although Chinese visitors had high level of overall satisfaction, the mean scores for satisfaction with individual elements of the trip varied between ‘neutral’ and ‘satisfied’. The fact that none of the mean scores fell between ‘satisfied’ and ‘strongly satisfied’ indicates that visitors were only weakly or moderately satisfied. In other

words, the tourist products and services in Australia were not considered outstanding in any of the aspects investigated in this study. In particular, there was some degree of dissatisfaction with 'food', 'shopping', and 'tour itinerary'.

Hossain et al. (2004) and Li and Carr (2004) also observed low satisfaction among Chinese visitors regarding 'shopping' and 'food' which should particularly raise the concern of Australian tourism industry. One of the factors attributing to the low satisfaction with shopping may be the unethical behaviour of some inbound tour operators, which has damaged Australia's image as a value-for-money destination (Australian Tourism Export Council, 2005, March 02). There were reported incidents of Chinese visitors being charged for walking on the beach and taken by tour guides to shops, which sold them over-priced goods. Visitors movements between hotels and tourist attractions were also monitored by their tour guides to prevent visitors from comparing prices (Australian Tourism Export Council, 2005, March 02; Jeffrey, 2005, April 02). It is estimated that, for Australia, the cost of the unethical practices will reduce package tour visitation and reach \$23.20 million in 2012 (Dwyer et al., 2007). The unethical practice problem is attributable to the unique structure of the Chinese inbound package tour market, with the power being concentrated in the hands of a few large operators and an intense competition between retail agents (King et al., 2006). Consequently, tackling this problem needs a long term approach and it requires efforts by tourism authorities, package wholesalers, independent travel agents, and other tourism businesses in both Australia and China.

There is a demonstrated link between satisfaction and intention to revisit the destination and positive word-of-mouth (i.e., Li & Carr, 2004). As Chinese visitors

were not strongly satisfied with any trip element, it is logical to expect relatively modest willingness to return and limited word-of-mouth with regard to each individual trip element.

As demonstrated by the results of regression analysis, the level of Chinese visitors overall satisfaction with their travel experience in Australia was significantly influenced by the degree to which their expectations of two perception dimensions have been met. These two dimensions are 'quality and variety of tourism goods/services' and 'accessibility'. Although satisfaction is more affective or emotional than quality (Bowen & Clarke, 2002), in the case of the Chinese leisure market, quality did play the most important role in determining visitor satisfaction. As implied, to achieve a greater level of satisfaction in the Chinese leisure market, the tourism industry in Australia needs to focus more on improving the quality and range of goods/services. Regarding the 'accessibility' dimension, although the tourism industry has little control over the visa application procedure, and geographical distance between Australia and China, improved communication between visitors and the host community can be achieved by providing more qualified Chinese speaking tour guides and tourist information in Chinese.

Additionally, whether visitors pre-trip perceptions of Australia's natural/general environment and cultural/well-known attractions have been met did not have an impact on visitor satisfaction. These attributes were however, an important component in Chinese visitors perception of Australia. As Pearce (1988) suggested, exceeding the expectations in some destination attributes may not influence satisfaction if these attributes are not valued by the visitors. Whilst this implies that natural and cultural

related tourist attractions might not be important destination attributes in improving Chinese visitors satisfaction, they are imperative in destination marketing given their role as critical perception component.

In conclusion, this study showed that Australia needs to improve its performance in the areas of 'food', 'shopping', and 'tour itinerary'. The study also found that meeting Chinese visitors expectation in relation to the quality and variety of tourism services was particularly important in achieving greater visitor satisfaction. To ensure sustainable development in this market, it is important for both the public and the private sectors of the tourism industry in Australia to address the commercial practices and service quality delivery issues.

As with all studies, the present research has its limitations. In this study, the selection of survey participants was restricted by the difficulty of access to the potential respondents. The research was conducted during the Chinese New Year period and surveyed only visitors departing from Brisbane International Airport. Due to the use of a convenience sample, the results from this particular study may not be generalized. In spite of this, this study has extended research on Chinese outbound tourism with respect to destination perception and satisfaction.

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Table 1

Chinese Tourist Arrivals to Australia for Business and Holiday Purposes

Year	Business		Holiday		Other		Total arrivals
	Arrivals	Share	Arrivals	Arrivals	Arrivals	Share	
1995	17,548	41.19%	9,853	23.13%	15,199	35.68%	42,600
2000	35,428	29.45%	40,596	33.75%	44,276	36.80%	120,300
2007	72,534	20.29%	170,917	47.80%	114,106	32.91%	357,557

Source: ABS (1995-2007)

Table 2
Visitor Demographics

Social-demographic characteristics		Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	207	56.6
	Female	159	43.4
	Total	366	100
Age	15-19	28	7.6
	20-24	31	8.6
	25-29	32	8.6
	30-34	59	15.9
	35-39	75	20.3
	40-44	65	17.6
	45-49	41	11.1
	50-54	24	6.5
	55 and over	14	3.8
	Total	369	100
Marital status	Single	88	23.5
	Married	277	74.1
	Other	9	2.4
	Total	374	100
Dependent Children	Yes	198	73.3
	No	72	26.7
	Total	270	100
Place of residence	Beijing	55	14.8
	Shanghai	91	24.5
	Guangdong	70	18.8
	Zhejiang	39	10.5
	Jiangsu	29	7.8
	Shandong	29	7.8
	Other	59	15.8
	Total	372	100
Education	Completed senior middle school or below	86	22.9
	College certificate or diploma	73	19.5
	Undergraduate degree	160	42.7
	Postgraduate degree or above	56	14.9
	Total	375	100
Occupation	Business owner	94	25.2
	Manager	95	25.5
	Professional	49	13.1
	Student	55	14.8
	Other	80	21.4
	Total	373	100

Table 3

Satisfaction Ratings for Australia and the Trip (measured on 5-point Likert Scale)

Trip elements	N	Mean	SD
Overall assessment of Australia as a tourist destination	308	4.19	0.64
Air transportation	360	3.91	0.64
Overall trip to Australia	359	3.90	0.63
Tourist attractions	360	3.88	0.73
Transfer between airport, hotels, attractions, etc.	310	3.67	0.73
Accommodation	363	3.64	0.83
Tour guide	306	3.64	0.93
Other leisure activities	331	3.62	0.83
Tour literary	308	3.56	0.77
Shopping	355	3.27	0.87
Food and drinks	358	3.11	0.91

Table 4

Dimensions of Perception and Attributes Belonging to Each Dimension

1. Natural attraction and general environment	2. Quality and variety of goods/services
Beaches	Tourism infrastructure/facilities
Natural attractions	Variety of souvenirs and duty free goods
Cleanness of environment	Quality of souvenirs and duty free goods
Place for rest and relaxation	Variety of entertainment/nightlife activities
Native animals	Quality of service staff
Climate	Opportunities for sports and adventurous activities
Safety and friendliness	Theme parks
3. Cultural and well-known attractions	4. Accessibility
Well-known tourist sites	Communication
Aboriginal culture	Easy to get to.
Museums/art galleries	

Table 5

Perception Change at the Factor Level

No.	Compound variable	Mean		Change in M	t	df	Sig.
		Pre-	Post-				
Pair 1	Natural attraction and general environment	4.29	4.39	-0.107	-4.62	327	0.000
Pair 2	Quality and variety of goods/services	3.59	3.72	-0.133	-3.66	303	0.000
Pair 3	Cultural and well-known attractions	3.63	3.85	-0.222	-5.77	315	0.000
Pair 4	Accessibility	3.30	3.50	-0.208	-5.30	333	0.000

Table 6

Estimated Regression Model

Dependent variable: Overall satisfaction	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.	Collinearity	
	Coefficients		Coefficients			Statistics	
	B	S.E				Tolerance	VIF
Constant	3.566	.035		100.953	.000		
'Natural attraction and general environment'	.053	.092	.044	-.576	.565	.730	1.369
'Quality and variety of goods/services	-.228	.068	-.278	3.372	.001	.619	1.615
'Cultural and well-known attractions'	-.003	.057	-.004	.057	.955	.667	1.499
'Accessibility'	-.124	.047	-.181	2.619	.009	.879	1.138