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**Gothenburg's Image as a Tourism Destination
among Typical Tourists and Sport Tourists**

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Tourism and Hospitality Management
Master Thesis No. 2006:90
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this thesis has involved numerous people, whose help is gratefully acknowledged. Firstly, the researchers would like to thank our tutor, Dr. Eva Gustavsson at Gothenburg Research Institute, Gothenburg University, Gothenburg, Sweden, for her encouraging supervision, continuous support and professional guidance during our whole period of research. Also, we would like to thank Professor Tommy Andersson for his inspiration when we started conducting our research, his time in reviewing our first draft and giving us helpful suggestions during the seminar. Finally, we are grateful to both tourism offices in Nordstan and Kungssportsplatsen for letting us carry out our survey inside their offices.

ABSTRACT

Destination images are critical to the success of tourism destinations, because they influence both the decision-making behaviour of potential tourists and satisfaction levels regarding the tourist experience. Gothenburg should possess a prominent destination image and distinctive brand in order to gain success in the international market and in today's increasingly tough global competition. The main purpose of the present study is to investigate the existing destination image of Gothenburg perceived by visitors, as well as the different images among typical and sport tourists. The reasons for emphasizing Gothenburg is because it lacks a clear positioning and distinctive tourism image in tourists' minds, appears to be under the shadow of Stockholm and was segmentation problems.

In order to investigate a comprehensive image of Gothenburg, both a structured and a unstructured method was used. Interviews were carried out with 369 respondents to collect data, together with an importance-performance analysis (IPA) as our theoretical framework. The IPA grid indicated that typical tourists and sport tourists had different perceptions towards five image attributes, namely accommodation facilities, different customs/culture, quality of food, sport facilities/ activities and shopping facilities.

The results from both closed-ended questions and qualitative analysis indicated friendly, clean and green and safety to be the most distinctive positive images or characteristics of Gothenburg. The knowledge gained from the primary data was used to formulate marketing strategies for two segments, and for guidance on image branding -- Gothenburg as the "Capital of Swedish Lifestyle".

Keywords: destination image, Gothenburg, typical tourists, sport tourists, importance-performance analysis, image attributes, image branding

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APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRES IN ENGLISH

1 Gothenburg's Current Tourism Situations and Image Problem Analysis

1.1 *Tourism Development and Trends*

Terrorism, natural disasters, health scares, oil price rises, exchange rate fluctuations and economic and political uncertainties – these were just some of the issues faced by tourism industry in 2005. Yet, according to the news from World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2006a, Dec 13), international tourist arrivals beat all expectations in exceeding 800 millions and achieving an all-time record. Although world tourism growth was moderate in 2005, it was still almost one-and-a-half percentage points above the long-term average annual growth rate of 4.1%, which means a consolidation of the bumper growth achieved in 2004 (+10%). Tourism has transformed itself into a successful industry, and today is one of the largest economic sectors in the world, representing “3-5% of GDP, jobs and investment in industrialised states and up to 30% in developing states, representing a socioeconomic lifeline for the poorest states as it is a top export” (UNWTO, 2006b, Nov 28). According to the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Nutek, 2006), over the last 15 years, foreign tourism in Sweden has increased by more than 80 percent. Therefore, the increase in Sweden has been at the same level as international travel elsewhere in the world, but better than the pattern for Europe as a whole, and it has more foreign visitors per inhabitant than the European average. Furthermore, Sweden has the largest share of foreign tourism in the Nordic Region, and has kept its position as a destination till date. Among the four largest Swedish regions, Västra Götaland has experienced the highest percentage increase since 1998, becoming the second international tourist destination in Sweden.

Cabrini (2002) identified some general trends of world tourism development: there is a clear tendency toward shorter stays when going on holidays, but “greater fragmentation of holidays” for reduction in working hours and an increase of paid leave days. This means modern tourists might travel several times throughout one year for a shorter duration. The climate change in terms of wider economic, political and environmental situations, and in the tourism marketplace will definitely create a

challenging situation for tourism destinations (Carter and Fabricius, 2006). On the other hand, there is a shift from active holidays to holidays as an experience, which aims to achieve a complete participative experience and obtain new knowledge as well as authentic emotions; and “higher demand for customised holidays”, especially by the mature part of the tourist market. Accordingly, Carter and Fabricius (2006) pointed out the growth in demand for more customised, experience based products meant the potential tourists would choose a tourism destination based on the type and quality of experiences that it offers. Undoubtedly, this will escalate competition levels among tourism destinations.

Therefore, in an increasingly competitive marketplace, it is essential for a tourism marketer to differentiate its destination from the competitors’. As Carter and Fabricius (2006) pointed, tourism authorities must pay equal attention in the future to: (1) the destination brand and the values that it conveys to customers; (2) the nature and quality of the destination experience. It seems as if the best way a tourism destination can position itself is to offer something unique to target market segments.

1.1.1 Image-Importance for Tourism destination

Given the primacy of “destination” in tourism as “the away-from-home locale wherein attractions and activities are located”, it is not surprising that so many academic tourism researches have been devoted to tourist destinations. Among them, some analyzed is life cycle or categories and designs, others on activities and characteristics linked to self-image, while a considerable part was focused on the perceptual mapping of it and relevant marketing strategies (Ryan and Cave, 2005). Studies on destination image began in the early 1970s, when Hunt’s (1975) influential work examined the role of image in tourism development. Since then, destination image has been one of the dominant areas of tourism research. As Gallarza et al. (2002, p.57) concluded: “In the interdisciplinary study of marketing, TDI (Tourism Destination Image) has been the subject of considerable research during the last three decades.”

Image is an abstract term that has been used differently in lots of contexts and

disciplines, thus creating different meanings. Definitions from marketing, however, point to the attributes that lie behind image and relate it to consumer behaviours (Jenkins, 1999). Thus when facilitating marketing, it is more important to understand the dissimilar aspects of an image that is shared by different particular groups, rather than held by individuals or commonly possessed. This will affect market segmentation and stimulate the formulation of marketing strategies. In our study, we adopted the definition by Lawson and Baud-Bovy (1977), who defined image as the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a particular place. It encompasses both the personal images and the stereotyped images shared by groups. The contents of these images were also enriched and specified.

Gallarza et al. (2002) statement concerning the importance of image to a tourism destination is universally recognized. This is due to the fact that it affects the individual's subjective perceptions and consequent behaviour and destination choice. As for the image's magic power, Tuohino and Pitkänen (2004) noted that the image of destination is undoubtedly one of the most important motivations for travel. And such images are usually created on the basis of publicity materials as well as non-tourism sources such as the media and the arts. Furthermore, tourism destination images are vital because they also influence the satisfaction level of potential tourists regarding the tourist experience. As Jenkins (1999) recognized that these functions are related to marketers' decision-making and sales of tourist products and services. According to Sönmez and Sirakaya (2002), it is safe to assume that the success or failure of the tourism industry at many destinations around the world mainly depends on images held by their potential visitors, and the effective management of those images by the destinations. Usually, destinations with positive images can be expected to thrive while those with less favourable or no images at all may never achieve their fullest tourism potential. However, as Echtner and Ritchie (1993) suggested, after reviewing destination image studies, you may discover that most researches have concentrated on images of states or countries but few on cities, even more scarcely on medium sized cities such as Gothenburg. Herein lies the meaningfulness of our study.

1.1.2 Market Segmentation

Due to intense competition and limited resources of most services companies, mass marketing, that was once a necessary strategy of many marketing plans, no longer became as cost effective and efficient as before (Pennington-Gray et al. 2003). Market segmentation has become a considerably important concept in the marketing strategies of companies (Diaz-Martin et al. 2000). It involved dividing a market into distinct groups of tourists who might require separate products and/or marketing mixes (Bowen, 1998). Among different types of market segmentation, the segmentation of tourists is one of the useful techniques in marketing the needs of target groups (Dodd and Bigotte, 1997; Snepenger, 1987) and lowering the costs and increasing effective penetration of appropriate promotional material (Dodd and Bigotte, 1997). Within the board context of tourism, there are many variables that can be used as development of clusters (Inbakaran and Jackson, 2005). Kotler (1991) classified some 14 variables into four major categories: demographic (age, gender, education, life cycle); geographic (trip origin, trip destination); psychographic (personality, life-style, values, and motives); and behavioural (user status, usage rates, and tourist activities/experiences). However, in recent years, the field of tourism marketing began to emphasize consideration of factors related to intangible service and the quality of the hospitality, the mobility of tourists, and the interactions of these factors (Sung et al. 2001). Morrison (1996) added more categories to Kotler's (1991) basic four in trip purpose, product related, and channels of distribution. The purpose of trip segmentation will be most relevant to our investigation of the tourism destination image of Gothenburg. Since it has been recognized as one of the non traditional segmentations closely related to travel motivation, it has therefore been approached from different perspectives in formulating marketing segmentation approaches (Sung et al. 2001). Also, as Morrison (1996) mentioned, purpose-of-trip segmentation has been gaining popularity in the hospitality and tourism industry as the primary segmentation base in dividing the market into different segments, according to the primary purpose of the trip.

1.1.3 The importance of sport to tourism destination

On the celebrations of the 25th World Tourism Day on September 27, 2004, the President of the International Olympic Committee and the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization signed a Joint Communiqué stressing that sport and tourism share common goals which promote peace, understanding and goodwill amongst nations (UNWTO, 2004). As living standards rise and working hours are reduced, people may have more opportunity to tour and practice sport. Both sport and tourism have great potential for further growth. Appreciation, development and support from tourism and sport domains were evidenced in supportive messages for the World Tourism Day. Just like Miranda and Andueza (2005) drew the conclusion from their case study, i.e. that sports are “an essential ingredient of tourism”, and in some way, they are an elementary part of lively holidays and “in harmony with the trends of present tourism- more active, selective and cultivated.”

The tight combination of sport and tourism not only stems from reality’s requirement but also based on those common natures and functions, both in economy and society, which they both possessed. Major sports events were believed to have capabilities of promoting a destination’s tourism, and such forces stimulate development and investment for infrastructure projects leading to a “generator effect” for sustained growth and employment (UNWTO, 2004). Naturally enough, the inter-relationship between sport and tourism not only linked to mega events, but also included many small national and regional events. Besides, the contribution of sport and tourism should be measured in terms of economic benefits, their social, cultural and educational values, such as their contributions to national unity and the international image of the host destination. (De Villers, 2003) Moreover, sport and tourism can build bridges between people, bringing individuals together to assist in making the world a smaller ”village” through improvement of understanding amongst cultures and establishment of tolerance and world peace.

According to the opinions of many experts, sports play an important role for tourism destinations when it comes to the marketing of vacations (Beier et al., 2004). Sports’ permeation not only meet the need to maximize the utilization of infrastructure after

big sport events, providing an opportunity to create, promote and structure new tourist attractions; but also strengthens the collaborative efforts by national, regional and local collectives to develop tourism. While, the challenge for sport tourism development is equal attention that is paid to both transforming “sport-events into tourism experiences” and transforming “tourism destinations into sport-practicing areas” (De Villers, 2003). Therefore, collaboration between these two sectors needs to be further developed.

1.1.4 Case Specific Introduction- Goteborg

Gothenburg, which is Sweden’s second largest city and capital of the county of Västergötland, lies on the banks of the River Göta and is the gateway to Scandinavia and its 25 million inhabitants. Founded by the Dutch in 1621, at the request of King Karl IX, Gothenburg rapidly became a prosperous trading centre. Gothenburg is an important administrative, commercial and university centre, the home of many national and international enterprises, has been well-known as a conference centre since the construction of its conference centre in 1917, and is also Scandinavia’s largest port (Wikipedia, 2006). The superior geographic location, which is the crossroads between continental Europe and Scandinavia, gives it convenient and developed transports, by sea, road and rail. Two airports, including one international which is well-served with public transports assisted in developing international travels.

Gothenburg is famous for her archipelago, sea-view, green spaces and abounds in gifts of nature. Nearly four hundred-years of history brought lots of classic architectures to Gothenburg, such as the Skansen Crown, Haga and many Dutch-style buildings, as well as very modern buildings like Ullevi stadium and Gothia Towers. Rich cultural and historical interests were left by time, including all kinds of museums and theatres, attracting thousands of visitors with the help of modern entertainments facilities. Shopping, cultural venues, entertainment and nightlife are all located within comfortable walking distance. This compact layout gives visitors chances to catch a glimpse of the city even if their schedules are tight, and facilitates them in reaching and catching the city’s spirit. Public infrastructures and services like tourist

information and tickets-selling systems are advanced and considerate enough to satisfy tourists (Göteborg Convention Bureau, 2006).

The tourism developing situation in Gothenburg is annually reported by the Göteborg & Co, in which all key tourism indexes commonly recognized by world are listed, SWOT analysis to last year's performance and a prospect for future are made. Göteborg & Co is a mixed public/private sector company, responsible for tourism development in the urban area of Göteborg. It is the only tourism organisation which has substantial financial standing, works throughout the urban area of Greater Göteborg and enjoys the support of the region's main economic and social partners who are also its members (Göteborg & Co, 2005). From its annual report for 2005, Gothenburg has been a very strong destination in the domestic Swedish market, and at the same time, it undertook overseas activities in Norway, the UK, Denmark and Germany. Furthermore, it positioned its major potential for growth over the next few years on abroad markets, primarily in Europe, i.e. international tourists would become its target market. Up to now, its marketing on foreign markets has been primarily done via the Internet at goteborg.com, trade fairs, workshops, during site inspections and through various collaborative campaigns with the Swedish Travel & Tourism Council (Göteborg & Co, 2006a). The actual effects of these strategies, as indicated before, are insufficient obviously. Therefore, much more image marketing and branding efforts should be put into abroad tourist markets.

1.2 Problem Analysis

1.2.1 Vague tourist destination image of Gothenburg

A vague or weak image indicates that the perceptions of the tourist destination are not very distinct, perhaps because it is not particularly known in the market (Jensen and Korneliussen, 2002). Due to increasing global competition and changing visitor profiles, projecting a distinctive and positive tourism destination image became the first priority, and critical success, of many tourism destinations. However, very few image studies to date have focused specifically on Gothenburg as a tourism destination. Mossberg (1997) studied the effects of the World Athletics Championship

on the tourism destination image of Gothenburg among foreign tourists. The results of her study showed that the tourists' image of Gothenburg was very vague. Most of the respondents did not know of any tourism attractions of Gothenburg whatsoever. Furthermore, the majority of respondents could not mention any images or characteristics when they thought of Gothenburg as a tourism destination. These results reflected that Gothenburg lacked a clear positioning and distinctive tourism image in tourists' minds. Mossberg (1997) further concluded that although there was intensive international media coverage during the WM, very limited information was transmitted about the image of Gothenburg. Even though destination marketers tried to position Gothenburg as "city of events" on the international market, there was no change in the image of Gothenburg after the mega-event.

Apart from few academic studies focused on the image of Gothenburg as a tourism destination, when we browsed the Internet pages, international travel magazines and travelling guidebooks such as Lonely Planet, it is also difficult to find the tourism offerings related to Gothenburg or just a few articles with limited tourist information. Gothenburg does not seem to be a prominent tourism destination, and it is not largely exposed to the international tourism market. The image of Gothenburg is still very ambiguous to foreign tourists. Many travel magazines just focused on the tourism offerings of Stockholm, as it is the capital of Sweden, and with a distinctive image as the "Venice in North Europe". So Gothenburg, as the second largest city in Sweden, always seems to be under the shadow of Stockholm on the international travel market. Fortunately, Göteborg & Co has realized in time that "to be successful on the international market, destination must have a well-known and clearly distinctive brand presented with positive messages. Attractiveness is determined partly by the quality of the products/destinations, the relative price, and the extent and effectiveness of the marketing. Brand awareness has played an important role in enabling West Sweden to compete internationally" (Göteborg & Co, 2005) In order to assist their initial works in image-building, we therefore conducted this study. Thereupon, building up a distinctive tourism destination image for Gothenburg city, one for the international market, and the marketing of this city as a famous brand becomes the main objectives of our study.

According to Tasci and Kozak (2006), despite the growing importance of tourism

destination image, research on destination branding has been given insufficient attention to date. They mentioned image in a tourism destination context, as in consumer products contexts, is an important part of brand. Destination image contributes to forming destination brand and to its success in the market. So as long as the image is positive, the brand would have a strong position in the market. A brand is therefore more than an image. A similar opinion was present by Jensen and Korneliussen (2002), when they studied Nordic destinations. They concluded that a brand should be regarded as a more comprehensive as well as a more differentiated construct than an image, in the sense that it relates to a wider spectrum of human nature than just the cognitive aspect of impressions or perceptions. Brand represents added value to products, and to be able to reduce risks in product decisions, such as, when tourists choosing a tourism destination. These are the reasons why we will focus on “destination brands” when suggesting to improve Gothenburg’s image as a tourism destination in the conclusive part of this study.

1.2.2 Tourist segmentation of Gothenburg

The formation of tourist destination image is influenced by the personal characteristics or internal factors of the individual (Beerli and Martin, 2003). This suggestion is also supported by Um and Crompton (1990), and they stated that the nature of beliefs about the attributes of a destination will vary depending on the internal factors of the individuals. Therefore, the perceived image of destination will be formed through the individuals’ own needs, motivations, knowledge, preferences and personal characteristics (Beerli and Martin, 2003). Thereby, allowing individuals to use their own personal perceived images to build a mental picture of the tourist destination (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; Gartner 1993; Bramwell and Rawding, 1996). Additionally, various studies concluded that tourists with different characteristics will have different perceptions towards destination image (Walmsley and Jenkins, 1993; Baloglu, 1997; Stern and Krakover, 1993).

Due to differentiation in characteristics and needs of tourists, the ability to identify and serve them has become a necessity for destination organizations (Bloom 2005). In order to manage tourists with various profiles, it is rational for Gothenburg destination

marketers segmenting tourists into specific target markets. According to Chon et al. (1991), marketing segmentation is a fundamental prerequisite for effective marketing. Segmentation refers to methodological process of dividing a market into distinct groups that might require separate experiences or marketing service mixes (Venugopal and Baets, 1994). After segmentation and development of target markets, tourists' needs are easily identified and coordinated efforts can be delivered accordingly.

“Göteborg is probably the city in Sweden that has the best ability to welcome major international arrangements and to do this with such generosity that also the visitors feel at home”, as stated by Göran Persson, the Prime Minister of Sweden (Swedish Radio SR, cited by Göteborg Convention Bureau, 2006), and in accordance with one of Göteborg & Co's objectives - building Gothenburg into an event destination. A new tourist group is growing - event tourism in Gothenburg. The authors have witnessed that 2005 and 2006 were all eventful years, especially for sports. The World Athletics Championship in 1995 and European Championship in 2006 are the two most representative mega sport events, and the smaller-size events such as the World Synchronised Ice Skating Championships at the Scandinavium. The home favourites Team Surprise won the event, which helped Gothenburg win the event again in 2008 against stiff competition. Göteborg will also bid and host different sport events in the near future, such as the Ice Hockey World Cup Old-Timers 2007 and World Figure Skating Championships 2008. And, according to the International Herald Tribune (2006), Gothenburg is looking into the possibility of working with the Swedish Athletic Association to bid to host the 2011 or 2013 World Championships in Athletics. Together with the Swedish Football Association, Gothenburg is also considering becoming a candidate for the Euro 2016 soccer championships. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that sport events will become one of main marketing strategies to attract and retain sport tourists to Gothenburg.

Although sport tourism constitutes one of the most important segments of the travel and tourism industry in Gothenburg, and sport tourism having become a portentous market segment of it, presenting by the key statistical figures as personal trips and average expenditures offered by Göteborg & Co. Yet, little academic research has focused on this tourist segment in Sweden. In order to fulfil the needs of this target

market, Gothenburg should investigate the specific needs of sport tourists. Kudo et al. (1993) reported that sport tourists in the walking event showed little interest in activities, and they concluded that tourists participating in sports event should not be treated as typical tourists by destination marketers. But, by referring to Gothenburg existing tourists' packages, except the golf packages, they lacked customized packages and offerings which targeted sport tourists. So, in our study, we will divide Gothenburg's tourists into two groups: typical tourists and sport tourists. By investigating the needs and importance of these two groups, specific marketing strategies can be developed to target different tourists.

Before ending this part, definitions of both typical and sport tourists needed to be introduced according to previous researches. And, we will explain the natures of each tourist group, which will be referred to later in our study. Ross (1994) defined typical tourists as people who undertook a journey to, and stayed, in various destinations, where their destinations were distant from their normal place of residence and work, and where they took on different roles and activities from the resident working population of the destination. Typical tourists intend to return to their place of residence after a short period and, therefore, their purpose is other than for permanent residence or paid work. On the other hand, according to Leiper (1979), sport tourists can be divided into three categories on the basis of travel purpose: event participants, event spectators, and sport lovers. Event participants are those whose main purpose of travel is to participate in an organized sport event, either competitive or non-competitive. Event spectators are those whose main purpose of travel is to attend an organized sports event. Sport lovers are those whose primary purpose of travel is to participate in self-organized sports. Nogawa et al. (1996) defined that sport tourists as a temporary visitor staying at least 24 hours in the event area and whose primary purpose is to participate in a sports event, with the area visited being a secondary attraction. Gammon and Robinson (2003) also stated that sport tourists can be classified by hard and soft definition. A hard definition of the sports tourist is quantified by active or passive participation at a competitive sporting event. We can classify a hard sports tourist as someone who specifically travels (staying in places outside their usual environment) for either active or passive involvement in competitive sport. Therefore sport will be the prime motivational reason for travel. Soft definition of sport tourists refers to tourists who specifically travels (staying in

places outside their usual environment) and who is primarily involved in active recreational participation of a sporting/leisure interest; for example skiing and walking holidays. The active recreational aspects are the distinguishing factors which differentiate it from hard definition.

In our study, for the typical tourists, we referred to visitors who undertake a journey to, and stay in, Gothenburg temporarily, with a primary purpose other than participating in European Athletics Championship, for example, for vacation, visiting friends and relatives or business. As for sport tourists, we included temporary visitors to Gothenburg whose primary purpose is participating in EM'06, with the area visited being a secondary attraction. For example, those EM spectators and EM participants, including athletes, coaches, journalists and those assisted in and organized EM such as volunteers.

1.3 Problem Definition and Purpose

The primary purpose of Göteborg & Co, as well as of the government to develop tourism of the city is “preserve and consolidate its position in the business and conference tourism market where international competition had become increasingly cut-throat”, according to Göteborg & Co (2005). And special attention was paid into leisure tourists for it believed “Leisure Travel conducts long-term initiatives to market Göteborg as a destination” Various leisure travel packages have been designed to market and promote Göteborg and the Göteborg region on the private market as “Sweden’s most attractive major city to live in, work in and visit” (Göteborg & Co, 2005). Though it touched on three core values of local community, but we can see its efforts tilted more toward economic development than tourism. And most of its market offerings focused on typical tourists generally, not meticulous enough to attract other segment tourists.

As for market segmentation, Göteborg & Co has differentiated its target tourist markets according to the natural seasons. For example, families, young people and couples of all ages, who visit during weekends and public holidays, are the main target groups during autumn, winter and spring seasons, in which cultural and entertainment offerings are presented in co-operation with the city’s stages. Besides,

Göteborg is a strong summer destination, which is targeted primarily on families with children, and Christmas at Liseberg is a new, top-class attraction in the long winter season. All these showed it only focused on its own offerings, rather than started from the natures and requirements of tourists.

In reality, according to Göteborg & Co (2006a), the city has actually worked to promote a rich, varied range of events in Gothenburg, with the aim of making the city “one of Europe’s leading event cities” and one of the “most popular city break destinations in Scandinavia” (Göteborg Convention Bureau, 2006). Major rock concerts and sports events, the annual city party or extravagant Christmas celebrations are all annual grand events in Gothenburg, and each event is a true festivity, for visitors and residents alike. Among colourful event markets, sport events are growing rapidly as previously mentioned. Thereafter, in order for Gothenburg to build up a distinctive image as a tourism destination among typical tourists and sport tourists, marketing segmentation will be essential in providing customized tourist services. Thus, the primary task is to understand Gothenburg’s image as held by particular tourism consumer groups in international markets, especially within Europe, which is its most targeted geographic area. It is vital to investigate the visitors’ image of Gothenburg in order to affect, by the means of enhanced marketing, their behaviour concerning travelling there.

Hence, the research problems for this study are:

- What are the existing images perceived by visitors to Gothenburg?
- Are there any differences between typical tourists and sport tourists on the image of Gothenburg?
- How to improve Gothenburg’s image as a tourism destination and among two segments?

In relation to this, great interests were found in examining visiting purpose, age and experiences on the image held towards Gothenburg. Background characteristics of respondents are viewed as important from marketing perspective, as they can help decision-makers know more about their target customers.

In order to facilitate the tourism organizations’ decision making regarding future

marketing strategies to be used in international markets, this study explores more foreign visitors' images of Gothenburg as a tourism destination. Considering the city's size and trying to control marketing costs, the results of the study will be useful in guiding where and how Gothenburg city can utilize her resources in the future to order to maximize benefits. This study will offer the tourism organisations in Gothenburg, especially Göteborg & Co, detailed suggestions concerning marketing measures such as branding strategies, advertisement campaign and providing customized facilities and services.

1.4 Information Need

In order to understand how image should be built up and functioned in marketing, extensive reviewing on previous studies on image of tourism destination is essential. Image studies on sport tourism destinations, even sport-events destinations are also worth referring to. Of course, the tourism studies focused on Gothenburg city or Sweden are of particular interest. The information achieved from previous studies is not only the guide of this case study, but also an important base when developing the measure instruments. In order to adopt a set of most appropriate image attributes to Gothenburg city, official documents or survey reports published by Gothenburg municipality and tourism organizations are type of information channel. The first-hand data about the impressions and specific opinions to Gothenburg's tourism image, possessed by both typical tourists and sport tourists for EM, is definitely the primary information required, because it will be the main focus of our study. Besides, information concerning respondents' background characteristics is also needed, including the demographics, travelling purposes, previous visits to Gothenburg and the days they plan to stay. These data can be used to analyze the differences between the two types of tourists, as well as formulating market segments and image branding strategies.

1.5 Scope of this Study

The reader should keep in mind that this study is only concerned with the EM'06 period, during which all sport tourists visited specifically for this grand event and

typical tourists have also been inevitably involved in it. Part of the typical tourists' attentions was drawn to the EM, sport facilities and relevant events, which will affect their perceptions to some image attributes of Gothenburg, such as increasing expectations and evaluations on sport facilities. This attribute is usually ignored by typical tourists during their holidays. The specific environment and atmosphere created by the EM arousing typical tourists' interests to this attribute. And, through conscientious evaluation on other might affected attributes, we decided to ignore the specialities of the study background because no big effects were found. Thereafter, images of Gothenburg as a tourism destination evaluated by our respondents will tend to be valid in generalizing for the tourist market of Gothenburg. Furthermore, though limited by manpower, resources and time, the primary data acquired from respondents are believed to be representative and validated due to our intensive sites-testing and timing works, as well as the adoption of in-depth interview method.

As neither of the researchers are fluent in European languages other than English, visitors who can speak or write English will be involved in the survey. This shortcoming limited our investigation, but fortunately, EM is an international sport event and most participants can speak good English. So, we still achieved quite a satisfactory response rate and interviewed numerous respondents with various identities. Additionally, more male respondents were interviewed because of the two interviewers' gender. And the differences among different visitor groups divided by demographic characteristics, such as nationalities, could not be compared validly for failure in choosing respondents deliberately in the interviews, which resulted in considerably unequal group sizes. However, the above deficiencies would not affect our study because we gave detailed analysis about the influences on image made by demographic characteristics because this research was mainly focused on two tourist target markets. What is more, during the later data-dealt processes, electronic translations and other technique tools were utilized to overcome the language limitation, because some references about Gothenburg or Sweden were only Swedish.

This study seeks to adopt a slightly different perspective by assessing image - not only in terms of preconceived model, IPA, a quantitative instrument derived from dimensions of destination image; but also attached equal importance to the qualitative analysis of words expressed by respondents. According to Ryan and Cave (2005), one

problem with such an approach is that findings may be place specific, but what emerged are the “complex nature of place image and the hierarchical character of its structure”, which will be constructive to put forward specific improving recommendations.

1.6 Outline of the study

In the first chapter, the reader has been given a background to the problem together with a detailed problem analysis, including a presentation of the research questions and the purpose of this study. The study’s limitations and information requirements were also presented.

The second chapter presents a literature review of relevant research on the subject, the reader will become familiar with the concept of destination-image, and how it has been studied in general as well as on a country and city-specific level.

The third chapter will outline the methodology, providing the reader with a constructive knowledge of how the investigation was conducted, which is essential for evaluating the results.

The results of the study with a detailed analysis to them will be presented in the fourth chapter. The final chapter will concentrate on the study conclusions and feasible improvement-suggestions.

2 Literature Review

This chapter, will begin with a presentation of the introduction to destination image, relevant literature related to destination image and previous image research of Gothenburg. Then, an introduction to importance-performance analysis in which the framework and relevant research will be presented.

2.1 Introduction to Destination Image

The importance of destination image is widely acknowledged in the tourism literature (O’Leary and Deegan, 2005). Destination image is also an important concept in understanding tourists’ destination selection processes (Mossberg, 2000). Crompton (1979, p.18) defined image as the ‘sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination’. But Jenkins (1999) argued that this definition only related to the individual, he mentioned it was more important to understand those aspects of image that were held in common with members of a particular group, which constituted a better market segmentation and development of appropriate marketing strategies. Jenkins (1999) proposed to use the definition by Lawson and Baud-Bovy (1977) who defined image as the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a particular place. Gartner (1986) described tourism image as a function of brand and the tourists’ and sellers’ perceptions of the attributes of activities or attractions available within the destination area. Goodall (1992) suggested that when prices are comparable, image is the decisive factor in holiday choice. O’Leary and Deegan (2005) also mentioned that tourism images are important because they affected potential tourist’s decision-making process. The researchers further believed that image affect the level of satisfaction with the tourist experience, which is critical in terms of encouraging positive word-of-mouth recommendations and return visits to the destination.

As suggested by the above researchers, destination image not only affects the selection process of potential tourists, but also tourists’ loyalty towards destination, word-of-mouth recommendations and ability to differentiate from competitors. Since image is so crucial to the success of destination, it is very important for Gothenburg to

investigate its existing destination image position and develop appropriate strategies to attract and retain its tourists. Since many research areas have been focused on destination image, those that have been selected in our study are particularly important and relevant to our investigation of image of Gothenburg. The following part, begins with a presentation of relevant literature that focused on destination image. This will be followed by a brief introduction of methodologies they have been used, which includes their measurement, data collection details and their strengths and weaknesses. After that the results generated from the research, implications and suggestions for different destinations will be presented. Finally, we will summarize what we have learned from different studies, the implications and suggestions that can be further developed in our case of Gothenburg.

2.1.1 Relevant Literature of Destination Image

1) Echtner and Ritchie (1993) have developed a conceptual framework for destination image measurement. In Fig.2.1 presented with the framework of three continua in their study: 1/attribute-holistic, 2/functional-psychological and 3/common-unique. The attribute-holistic continuum was based on previous research concerning human information processing from the fields of psychology and consumer behaviour. It has been proposed that any product is perceived both in terms of pieces of information in individual features, or attributes in terms of more gestalt, holistic and impressions. Based on the previous research findings, Echtner and Ritchie (1993) suggested destination image should be composed of perceptions of individual attributes (such as climate, accommodation facilities, and friendliness of the people) as well as more holistic impressions (mental pictures or imagery) of the place. For the second continuum, functional-psychological characteristics could be perceived as individual attributes or as more holistic impressions. On the attribute side, there were numerous perceptions of the individual characteristics of the destination (from functional to psychological). On the holistic side, the functional impression consisted of the mental picture (or imagery) of the physical characteristics of the destination, whereas the psychological characteristics could be described as the atmosphere or mood of place. For common-unique continuum, it highlighted the idea that images of

destinations could range from those perceptions based on “common” features to those base on “unique” features.

Echtner and Ritchie (1993) mentioned that since most of the previous studies have used structured methodologies, which were only limited for measuring the common and attribute-based components of image, but not effectively in capturing the unique and holistic components. So the researchers suggested combining the structured methodologies with the unstructured methodologies such as open-ended questions to fully capture the components of destination image. The researcher further developed the scales for the structured questions through an eight-step procedure. The open-ended questions were developed and examined by a panel of expert judges in the field of tourism, marketing and consumer behaviour. Both methodologies were later applied in four tourist destinations: Jamaica, Japan, Kenya and Switzerland for further investigation.

Echtner and Ritchie (1993) finally concluded their conceptual framework from a practical standpoint. They suggested holistic and unique images were important in categorizing a particular destination and used to differentiate in the minds of target markets. Furthermore, the researchers declared that the use of open-ended questions were not only useful in determining existing imagery but also for monitoring the effect of advertising campaigns on these images.

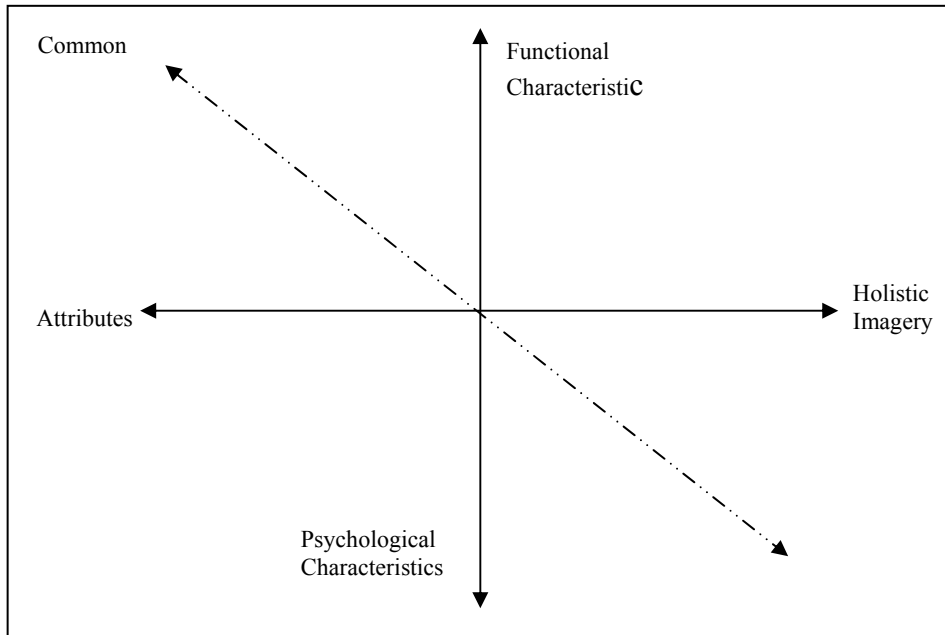


Fig. 2.1The components of destination image
(Echtner and Ritchie, 1993)

2) Ross (1993) investigated prominent ideal and actual destination images of backpacker visitors to the wet tropic area of northern Australia. Interviews were completed by undergraduate students who were trained with survey technique, questionnaire administration and interpersonal skills. The sample was gathered using a convenience sampling procedure, those students approached potential respondents at major tourist locations and asked if they were staying in budget traveller accommodation. The sample was not a random one nor claimed to reflect exact proportionality in regard to the various budget traveller groups visited that destination. Data were gathered during winter months and four hundreds questionnaires were completed with 14 % non response rate.

Respondents were handed with prompt card printed with semantic bipolar item (e.g. good roads = 1; bad roads = 5), they were asked to rate the wet tropics of northern Australia and their ideal holiday destination based on a comprehensive set of attributes. Subjects were also asked to evaluate the desirability of re-visitation, definite plans to visit, willingness to recommend to family and friends and their enjoyment levels. His study found out perceived friendliness of local residents, high quality tourist information and suitable accommodation were the most prominent ideal images, whereas the most prominent actual images were varied physical environment, friendliness of local residents and perceptions of authenticity. His study

also concluded that friendliness of local residents was the most potent determination associated with positive evaluations in both ideal and actual image, as well as related to enjoyment experiences, plans to return in the future and willingness to recommend the destination to family and friends. His study thus pointed out that in order for communities to continue in their friendly and welcoming manner, local residents should be perceived to have some control over their own environment and had critical input into the planning and development of their area. The author also argued that feelings of locals should be sufficiently encompassed by the planners and governmental agencies during the developmental processes of that area, so that segments such as backpackers would continue to perceive their host communities as friendly and welcoming.

3) Choi et al. (1999) used both qualitative and quantitative approaches as developed by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) to investigate the image of Hong Kong as a tourist destination. Their sample was selected during April 1996 at Hong Kong International Airport. Those visitors whose purpose was to visit Hong Kong for leisure or business, and who stayed for at least one day but less than one year, were considered as target respondents. A total of 180 interviews were made by three experienced interviewers, since 18 visitors refused to participate in the survey, only 142 usable questionnaires were obtained.

The authors adopted Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) three continuums of destination image to evaluate Hong Kong's image in their study. On the attribute side, both functional (observable factors, e.g. weather) and psychological attributes (less observable factors, e.g. safety) were included. For the holistic side, the functional impression consisted of physical characteristics of Hong Kong (e.g. skyscrapers) and psychological impression described as mood of place (e.g. crowded and stressful). For the final continuum, common-unique, 'Shopping paradise' and 'Oriental culture' are good examples of common functional and psychological factors. And for unique features, Victoria harbour and the return to China in mid-1997 can be described as functional and psychological characteristics of Hong Kong. In order to measure the functional and psychological attributes, the first part of the questionnaire consisted of 25 pre-developed Likert statements, respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on a seven-point scale, ranging from strongly agree (7) to strongly

disagree (1) upon each attribute. For the second part of the questionnaire, the researchers adopted three open-ended questions from Echtner and Ritchie (1993) to capture the holistic and unique components.

The researchers argued that by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, their results overcame the problem of limiting the study to attributes or functional characteristics and facilitated in figuring out tourists' holistic impression and feeling associated with destination. Choi et al. (1999) presented a comprehensive view on the image of Hong Kong; they believed marketers more easily understood the competitive position and uniqueness. Finally, the researcher suggested studies of other competitive destinations such as Singapore and Taipei should be carried out to determine the competitive advantage and market position of Hong Kong.

4) According to Schneider and Sönmez (1999), their study explored the image of Jordan as a tourist destination by interviewing intraregional and interregional attendees during the Jerash Festival and comparing their perceptions toward Jordan. Their survey was divided into three parts with questions focused on attendance motives, image and demographic information. Image-specific questions with a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) were designed to assess visitors' perceptions about Jordan as the host nation for festival and as tourist destination. Their survey was developed in English and translated to Arabic by a native Jordanian. In order to minimize translation errors and cultural equivalence problem, their instrument was then translated back to English by consulting a committee of Jordanian experts. Intercept interviews were conducted on three weekend and two weekdays evenings with the purpose of representing a variety of events and attendees. Their respondents were selected based on a systematic random sample of visitors at each location and refusal rate was less than 5 %. Finally, 410 usable questionnaires were collected, 65 surveys were from international attendees and the data presented in their study were focused on those respondents.

From their findings, there were no significant differences in perceptions of Jordan among intraregional and interregional visitors. Non-Jordanian festival attendees had a generally positive image of Jordan, but service offerings and hospitality issues appeared challenging for the tourism industry. Schneider and Sönmez (1999) also

concluded that Jordan's visitors were uncertain about the offering of events and things to do. The researchers suggested that the Jordan's government should invest in their service sector in order to enhance and improve tourism offerings. Promotion of nature-based or eco-tourism increased visitors' awareness of their nature resources and further expanded their tourism market. The authors believed mass media played a critical role in destination image formation. Jordan faced image challenges due to negative image projected by mass media, since the Middle East became prevalent a point in international politics and turmoil. Authors suggested that Jordan should differentiate itself both from and within the region, emphasized on internal cooperative marketing and planning efforts to enhance understanding of Jordan's offerings and maximize their marketing resources.

The small sample size was the main limitation in their study, further research with a larger sample size should be done to provide better generalization and more information for tourism marketers of Jordan.

5) Chaudhary (2000) measured the attitudes of foreign tourists by assessing their expectations and satisfaction levels in relation to India's image as tourist destination. Three groups of tourists (German, British and Dutch) have been compared with each other in her study to identify the gaps between expectation and satisfaction levels. Structured questions were used to collect attitudinal and socio-demographic data. Various attributes were used to investigate tourists' attitudes towards India, and they were selected based on reports and articles about India in the media and from a small survey of tourists. Both tangible and intangible attributes have been adopted and grouped under positive and negative forms.

The data collection phase was spread over two year periods to avoid the recency effect of any major disturbing events on tourist attitudes. Pre- and post trip data were collected at the same time from the tourists who had already visited India. Two hundreds questionnaires were distributed at airports, hotels and destinations in Delhi, Pune and Chandigrah, in which 152 were received for further investigation. In her study, tourists' expectations and satisfactions levels were evaluated by a five-point Likert scale. The author mentioned she adopted the approach proposed by Oliver (1980) in explaining consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Her results showed

most of the outcomes were less than expected, a negative confirmation constituted dissatisfaction among tourists. The researcher suggested that a planned image promotion campaign should be done to position India as an important tourist destination. On the other hand, attributes which led to tourists' satisfaction but had not been identified by marketers should be used in promotional messages to further boost its image. The findings also revealed that expectation and satisfaction levels of three important markets did not differ a lot regarding different attributes, which can be explained in that the sample size was not large enough to reflect cross cultural differences. Finally, the researcher concluded that further study was required since those results could only be regarded as tentative data due to small sample size.

6) Kim and Morrision (2005) investigated the images change of South Korea before and after 2002 World Cup by using three different national tourist groups. For their measurement, attributes related to the image of South Korea were generated based on literature review. A pre-test which involved 50 Doctoral and Mater's students majoring in hospitality and tourism was conducted to refine the list of image attributes. Those respondents were requested to indicate their agreement – disagreement with statements describing tourism attributes of South Korea that might be perceived differently after the 2002 World Cup. For example, respondents were requested to circle a 7-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) that they agreed best on attributes of the image of Korea. The same items were used for perceived images both before and after the World Cup. Since respondents were from Japan, Mainland China and US, the Korean questionnaire was translated into Japanese, Chinese and English by consulting various people with knowledge of the languages.

For the data collection, they were collected from tourists who visited South Korea about 3-4 months after the 2002 World Cup ended. Since the lack of availability of a known sampling frame, a convenience sampling procedure were used in their study. On-site, self administered questionnaires were distributed to those sitting and waiting in restaurants before their departure processing at the Incheon International Airport, and those who asked for tourism information at six major Tourism Centres in Seoul. Finally, 223 questionnaires from Japanese, 143 from Chinese and 173 from US tourists were used for the statistical analyses. The usable questionnaires excluded

those respondents who visited Korea during the World Cup, because authors believed that the images formed through direct experiences might affect the image during subsequent visits.

Major implications and conclusions from their study were presented as follows. The researchers confirmed that visitors from all three countries had more positive images after than before the World Cup. It seems to suggest the 2002 World Cup constituted a positive effect on the image of South Korea as a tourism destination. Second, the study concluded that respondents from three nations with different demographic backgrounds varied in image changes after the 2002 World Cup. Their results confirmed that foreign tourists were not homogeneous and thus differentiated marketing strategies should be applied with different targets, both in terms of promotions and in product development. Furthermore, the researchers suggested tourism destination images can be enhanced positively through international events in short time period. Kim and Morrison (2005) recommended further investigation is needed to confirm whether or not these image changes are stable or will return to their previous levels over a longer time period.

7) In the study of Auckland in New Zealand, Ryan and Cave (2005) analyzed the destination image by using a qualitative approach. The researchers used a semi-structured questionnaire and tape-recorded interviews in cafés and restaurants to collect two sets of data from domestic and overseas visitors. Their conversations took time varying from 20 to 45 minutes, and the first sample consisted of 25 New Zealanders in Christchurch and 17 in Wellington. Their second sample comprised similar numbers of respondents from three nations (English, Chinese and Japanese), who were interviewed in Auckland. Those respondents were requested to answer questions related first impression, description and activities recommendations in Auckland, and a category for analysis was formed for each question for analysis.

A hierarchical and relational image structure of Auckland was developed in their study. Based on the result of that image structure, the researchers suggested that two underlying dimensions to destination image existed and that domestic and overseas visitors can be located on different sections of the resultant diagrams. The authors mentioned their findings were consistent with the approach used by Fairweather and

Swaffield (2003) that the notion of distinct differences pertained between domestics and overseas visitors.

Ryan and Cave (2005) mentioned several limitations of their study. First, the sample size of their qualitative approach was too small which did not permit generalization. The tests of reliability and validity were another limitation towards their study, since the qualitative data interpretation was more difficult than in the case of statistical data.

Apart from limitations, their study better represented the complexity of image of place as possessed a dominant theme, from which was derived subthemes in a hierarchical and relational pattern based on frequency of mention. Their method of analysis permitted recognition of paradox within destination image, in which their results confirmed that components of image were both cognitive and affective, as suggested by Echtner and Ritchie's (1991, 1993) work. Their study indicated the possibility for respondents to consider both positive and negative components of image (Auckland is both seedy and exciting) at the same time, while individual components of image possessed both positive and negative connotations (Auckland is multiethnic).

2.1.2 Previous Image Research of Gothenburg

Mossberg (2000) evaluated the effects of World Championships in Athletics on the destination image of Gothenburg. The pre study was conducted two to three months prior to the event and the post study three to four months after the event. The respondents selected in her study were non - Swedish who travelled by ferries from England, Germany and Netherlands to Gothenburg. Since the researcher wanted to investigate whether the tourists' perception had changed as a result of the event's intense communication, so selected respondents were those who did not visit Gothenburg at the time the event was going on and neither intended to participate the event. Mossberg (2000) believed that the framework of Echtner and Ritchie (1993) for measuring destination image was highly relevant to her study. So both structured and unstructured techniques were used to present three continua of Gothenburg: 1/attribute-holistic, 2/ functional-psychological and 3/ common-unique. The open, unstructured questions were adopted directly from Echtner and Ritchie (1993) to

measure the holistic and the unique components of image. The list of attributes in her study was developed based on previous studies and has been revised for use at city level. The list was later discussed with experts from Tourist Board, marketing research company and was presented and discussed during one methodology seminar and one marketing class. The final list consisted of 26 attributes and each item was accompanied by a 7-point scale (1 =strongly disagree, and 7 = strongly agree).

The results reflected relatively small changes had occurred between the prior and post study. The attributes with low and high scores in the pre study yielded similar result in post study. Only hotel and restaurant quality, nightlife and few people understand English showed significant changes. The results from both the structured statements and the open-ended questions were summarized using two-dimensional diagrams. For the functional attributes, living standard, scenic beauty and quality of service were given high values and for the psychological attributes, cleanliness, safety and knowledge of languages yielded high performance. From the results, Mossberg (2000) found out that most of the respondents did not know of any tourists attractions in Gothenburg. The only unique attraction was Liseberg and many respondents mentioned general attractions associated with water. There were not even any unique attractions associated with psychological characteristics.

Mossberg (2000) mentioned that events were often claimed to be image-makers, but she doubted if people knew where other sporting events had been located. So the researcher recommended future studies to investigate image change of mega-event other than the Olympic Games. Mossberg (2000) also pointed out the low awareness of tourists services in Gothenburg could be a result of unclear positioning and most of the respondents participated in a long journey on a cruise ship and just stayed a short period at the destination. The researcher also mentioned that since those sportsmen/women were in focus during the mega-event, so the destination where the event were held can be of minor importance to this sport interested public. Mossberg (2000) finally concluded that mega sports events certainly attained intensive international media coverage, but unfortunately, the newspaper merely focused on the sport activities other than exposed tourist attractions in Gothenburg.

2.1.3 Summary

After studying different literature, their methodologies and implications towards destination image, we found that different methodologies had their own advantages and disadvantages. Table 2.1 showed the summary of methodologies of destination image studies which focused in our research.

For quantitative method, it is easier for those with less experience interviewers to administer because of its simplicity in coding, and the results are easier to analyze and with better validity and reliability. But the shortcoming will be the difficulties in incorporating holistic aspects of image since specific set of image attributes were pre-determined by the researcher. On the other hand, qualitative method allows respondents to freely describe their impression towards destinations which reduce interviewer bias, and easier to incorporate holistic image components in the study. But the validity and reliability are more difficult to attain subject to small sample size.

The above destination image studies help us to generate ideas on methodologies for our Gothenburg studies. After reviewing all those studies, we agree with Echtner and Ritchie (1993), in order to measure Gothenburg's destination image in a more comprehensive way, we will adopt both structured and unstructured methodologies in our study.

Subsequently, since most of the image studies just focused on performance or satisfaction levels on the image attributes to conclude the projected image of tourism destinations, they ignored levels of importance of those image attributes towards the visitors. Therefore, in our Gothenburg study, we will not only focus on investigating the performance of those image attributes, but also the importance of them towards visitors when they evaluate Gothenburg as tourism destination. We believed by using Importance-Performance Analysis will help us to present a more comprehensive picture about the projected tourism image of Gothenburg. So in the next part, we will introduce relevant studies about Importance-Performance Analysis.

Table 2.1
Summary of methodologies of destination image studies

Authors	Objectives	Methodologies
Echtner and Ritchie (1993)	To examine the concept of destination image and design techniques for its measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both structured and unstructured • Six-point Likert scale on 35 image attributes • Three open-ended questions to determine holistic and unique image
Ross (1993)	To investigated prominent ideal and actual destination images of backpacker visitors to the wet tropics area of northern Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only structured • Prompt card with semantic bipolar item to rate image attribute (e.g. good roads = 1; bad roads = 5)
Choi et al. (1999)	To investigate the image of Hong Kong as a tourist destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both structured and unstructured • Seven-point Likert scale on 25 image attributes • Three open-ended questions to capture holistic and unique components
Schneider and Sönmez (1999)	To explore the image of Jordan as tourist destination among interregional and intraregional visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only structured • Five-point Likert scale on 12 image statements
Chaudhary (2000)	To measure the expectations and satisfaction levels of India's image as tourist destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only structured • Five-point Likert scale based on 10 positive and 10 negative image statements to determine the expectation and satisfaction level
Mossberg (2000)	To evaluate the effects of World Championships in Athletics on the destination image of Gothenburg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both structured and unstructured • Seven-point Likert scale on 26 image attributes for both pre and post study • Three open-ended questions to capture holistic and unique components
Kim and Morrision (2005)	Changes of images of Korea before & after World Cup 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only structured • Seven-point Likert scale on 21 image items • Five-point Likert scale on image changes, brand values and levels of familiarity after 2002 World Cup
Ryan and Cave (2005)	Investigated Auckland's image as a tourist destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only qualitative • Semi-structured questionnaire • Tape recorded interviews with keyword written notes

2.2 Introduction to Importance-Performance Analysis

To be successful in business, one must understand how customers perceived their product and service attributes their importance and performance when compared with other competitors (Chu and Choi, 2000). Before the introduction of Importance Performance Analysis, destination marketers always strive to determine the correct image positioning, but they rarely query whether the attributes captured by the marketing messages are actually important to visitors (O’Leary and Deegan, 2005). Until the late 1970s, in recognition of the fact that consumer satisfaction is a function of both expectations related to certain important attributes and judgements of attribute performance. Martilla and James (1977) invented the IPA technique as a performance indicator of the automobile industry. They pointed out that IPA is a low-cost, easily understood technique that can yield important insights into which aspect of the marketing mix a firm should devote more attention as well as identify areas that may be consuming too many resources. Since then, IPA has become a well-accepted managerial tool that has been broadly used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of brands, products, services and retail establishments in various industries (Chapman 1993; Cheron et al 1989). With its ease of application and simplicity, IPA provided an attractive snapshot of how well the company meets customers’ important concerns on selected attributes, as well as offered guidelines for company’s future resources allocation decisions (Oh, 2001). In the mid-1980s, researchers started to apply IPA in the tourism and hospitality industry. Mengak (1985) started to use IPA to evaluate perception of 255 travellers to a visitor centre. Evans and Chon (1989) used the IPA technique to develop and assess tourism policy in two destinations in the United States. Since that time, IPA has been continually used and gained its popularity in hospitality and tourism research (Chon et al. 1991; Duke and Persia 1996; Haahti and Yavas 2004).

In our case, with the use of IPA technique, it will help Gothenburg to identify the needs and requirements of target segments. It also helps Gothenburg to investigate strengths and weaknesses of its destination attributes, which offers guidelines for destination marketers future resource allocation decisions. More specifically,

Gothenburg will be in a better position to develop tailor-made marketing strategies to different target segments, other than given them homogeneous offerings.

The following part, begins with the introduction of the concept of Important and Performance Analysis, the three-step process to develop the IPA grid and implications derived from IPA according to Martilla and James (1977). This will then be followed by a presentation of relevant literature that used IPA technique in tourism and hospitality industry. A brief introduction about the methodologies they have used, results generated from IPA, their implications and suggestions for different destinations and hospitality industry. Finally, we will summarize what we have learned from different studies, the implications and suggestions that can be further developed in our study of Gothenburg.

2.2.1 Framework of Importance-Performance Analysis

Since Myers and Marks (1968) demonstrated that consumer satisfaction is a function of both expectations related to important attributes and judgments of attribute performance. Martilla and James (1977) believed that IPA has been found to be a useful technique for evaluating the elements of a marketing program. In their research, they demonstrated the use of IPA technique in a three-step process by using the automobile as an example.

First, the researchers stated that a literature search and conversations with responsible department personnel should be done in order to develop key attributes for further measurement. Then their respondents were asked two questions about each attributes: How important is the attribute? And how well did that attribute perform? The last step was the mean score of importance and performance for each attribute were calculated. The researchers further mentioned that virtually identical results would have been obtained using median rather than mean values. The attribute ratings were plotted as points on a two dimensional plot called the IPA grid; the components were effectively divided into a four quadrant grid. The authors used automobile dealer's service as an example to present the grid (Fig.2.2)

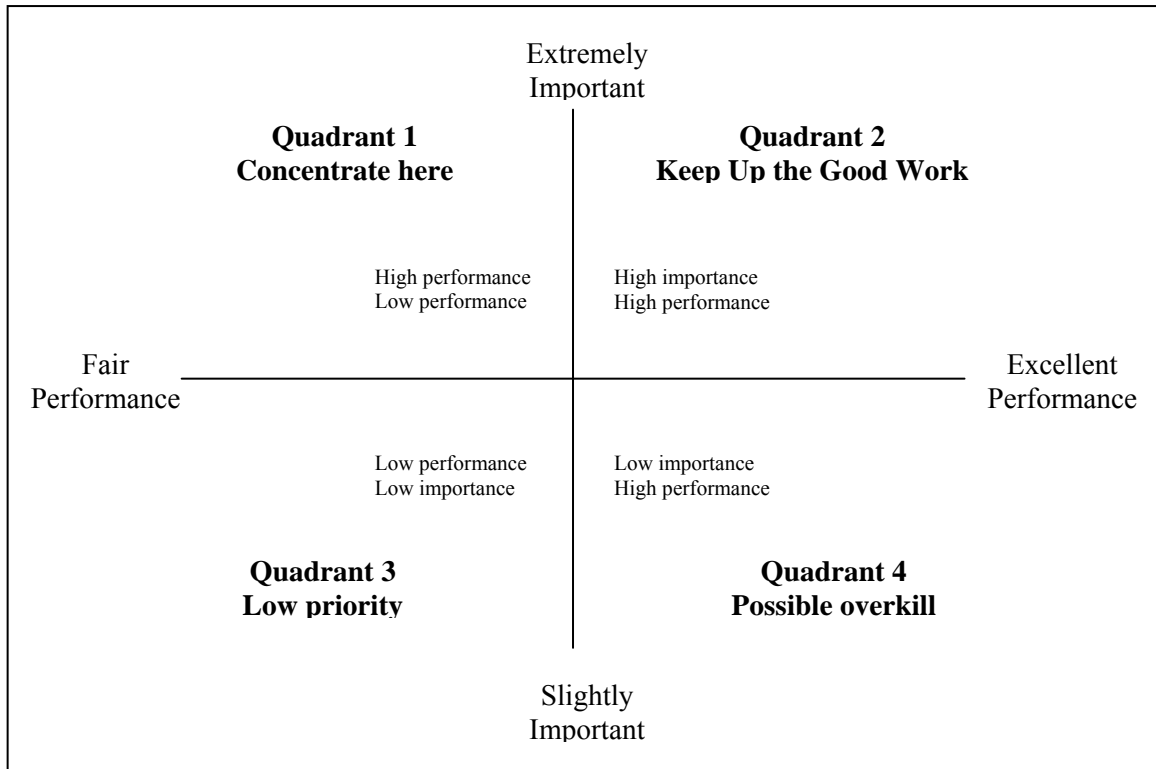


Fig. 2.2 Importance-Performance Analysis Grid
(Martilla and James 1977)

Quadrant 1: Concentrate here

Consist of attributes that were high in importance and the customers rated the dealer’s performance as low

Quadrant 2: Keep up with the good work

Customers rated attributes that were high in importance as well as pleased with dealer’s performance.

Quadrant 3: Low priority

Customers rated low satisfaction with dealer’s performance, but they did not perceive that features to be very important.

Quadrant 4: Possible overkill

Customers only attached slight importance to those attributes, but the dealer was judged as high in performance.

In the final part of the study, the authors shared some important tips on using Important Performance Analysis. First, they pointed out the importance in determining relevant attributes. Focus groups, unstructured personal interviews and

managerial judgment should be used to identify important factors and screen down the attribute list to a manageable size. Second, separation of the important measures and the performance measures helped to minimize compounding and order effects. Thirdly, median values as a measure of central tendency were theoretically preferable to means because a true interval scale might not exist. However, if the two consistently appeared reasonably close, means should be used to avoid discarding the additional information they contained. Moreover, the researchers pointed out that attention should be given to the extreme observations since they indicated greatest disparity and might be key indicators of customer dissatisfaction. Finally, differences between loyal and disloyal customer ratings might reveal important strategy implications as well as provided validity checks.

2.2.2 Relevant Literature of Importance-Performance Analysis

1) Crompton and Duray (1985) investigated the image of Texas in Britain to illustrate the relative efficacy of four alternative importance-performance plotting methods. Content analysis of British tourist publications, press and pilot testing of British respondents were made to select 28 semantic differential items for their study. From their findings, the researchers concluded that the self-stated methods, which consisted of mean and median value plots, yield similar results. Twenty five out of twenty eight attributes appeared in the same quadrant using both methods. Their findings confirmed the study of Martilla and James (1977), which showed that two methods generated similar results.

Moreover, their results found out that the statistical methods, which comprised Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients in conjunction with median values, produced similar attribute positionings. The authors concluded there was little support for the contention that using a non-parametric statistic might yield different results or be more appropriate than using parametric statistic. Since substantial differences existed between self-stated and statistical methods, the researchers mentioned the challenge was to identify which of these two approaches was most appropriate to use.

The use of self-stated methods might result in inaccurate attribute positioning, thus led to development of inappropriate marketing strategies. The authors suggested that when marketers used IPA to evaluate or refine marketing strategies, median and mean performance measures in conjunction with some form of correlation analysis should be used to yield more accurate results. Marketers should pay special attention between quadrants I and III or quadrants II and IV, since fluctuations in attribute positioning between plotting approaches were more likely to occur in those quadrants, which might result in false conclusions and suggestions to the users.

2) In the early 1990's, important performance analysis has been further used by tourist organization to investigate destination image and develop marketing strategies among different target groups. Chon et al. (1991) assisted Visitors Bureau of Virginia, United States to investigate destination image of Norfolk among residents in four regions of Virginia. To identify the attributes for their questionnaire, they analyzed the content of promotional materials published by the Norfolk Convention and Visitors Bureau and conducted focus groups in several Virginia locations. Surveys were then mailed to respondents consisted questions that asked how they perceived Norfolk's performance on 15 tourist-attracting attributes and how important those attributes were to them. Mean importance and performance scores of 15 attributes were calculated and plotted on the grid.

Importance-performance analysis based on comments from all respondents was developed. The results indicated Norfolk as being strong in the availability of water activities, suitable accommodations, historical sites and tours of the naval base and ships. But the authors argued that since needs and wants of in-state travellers were heterogeneous, those finding did not provide enough information to differentiate Norfolk among four target districts. Results among four geographic regions compared with the aggregate data were also presented to provide better marketing implications. For instance, in overall, festivals fell into quadrant III (low performance, low priority). But residents of Richmond and Hampton Roads considered Norfolk's festivals to be high in both priority and performance. So authors suggested different marketing and promotional strategies should be initiated to tailor the needs of each region, thus to maximize the effectiveness of the marketing activities. The researchers believed that with this information in hand, the bureau was able to change their

promotional strategy considerably. Chon et al. (1991) finally concluded that IPA method helped Norfolk discover the features that were important to Virginia travellers as a group, but it served valuable function of showing the differences in the various markets within the state.

3) Chu and Choi (2000) further extended the use of importance performance analysis to the hotel industry. Their study compared the perceptions of business and leisure travellers, in terms of importance and performance of hotel selection factors in Hong Kong.

The hotel attributes were selected based on a review of relevant literature and three group discussions, which comprised of academic staff, hotel and travel agents, potential visitors to Hong Kong. A pilot study was also carried out to improve the comprehensibility and clarity of the questionnaire instrument. The sample was chosen from Hong Kong international airport, systematic sampling approach has been used, every fifteenth traveller passing through the security entrance after check-in was approached and given a questionnaire for self-completion.

Those attributes were grouped into six dimensional factors by employing factor analysis with VARIMAX rotation. Factor means of the perceived importance and performance of each factor were calculated and plotted into the graphical grid. The mean Importance and Performance ratings derived from data provided the grid cross-hairs presentation on which four quadrants were identified. Paired sample t-test were carried out to find whether any significant difference existed between the business and leisure travellers' perceived importance and perception of performance of the hotel factors. An independent sample t-test was also performed to identify the significant difference on perceived importance of hotel selection factors between business and leisure travellers.

The results revealed that both business and leisure travellers had the same perceptions towards all six hotel selection factors. Value factor fell into the Concentrate Here quadrant, service quality, room and front desk and security fell in the Keep Up the Good Work quadrant, business facilities and food and recreation belonged in the Low priority quadrant. No attribute was found in the Possible Overkill quadrant. Although

the results of independent sample t-test indicated no significant difference on hotel selection factors perceived by business and leisure travellers, but the two groups did differ from each other in hotel selection. Business travellers placed Room and Front Desk to be the most important to them, whereas leisure travellers rated security as most important.

After they had presented the results of their study, the researchers concluded the use of IPA to investigate the perceived importance and perceptions of hotel's performance could contribute to further research studies in the area of consumer decision-process theory. IPA technique could be extended in comparing hotel selection criteria for male and female tourists, Asian and Western tourists and for hotels of different categories. By identifying the needs, desires and expectations of different segments, hoteliers could develop more comprehensive marketing tactics to tailor visitors' needs and expectations. They would be in a better position to develop tailor-made marketing strategies and to achieve competitive advantages. Finally, IPA technique had helped to divide the hotel selection factors into four identifiable quadrants, hoteliers were better informed about how customers perceived their products and services.

4) Apart from the ease of application, simplicity and popularity in hospitality and tourism research for many years, IPA is also subject to criticism. Oh (2001) revisited several conceptual and methodological issues, but often overlooked, in using the IPA framework. The author critically reviewed past studies, reanalyzed published data to raise questions. Several issues have been addressed that warranted further attention and research.

First, the IPA literature lacked a clear definition of attribute importance and without a standardization of the concept of importance, the implications which would then offer different situations for the users of IPA. And with its multidimensional nature, when it was not properly controlled, could weaken the validity and reliability of importance measures, especially in field survey setting. The absence of a clear criterion concept that could be related to attribute importance is another issue; many researchers mixed the use of importance with expectation which caused ambiguity.

Oh (2001) pointed out that in traditional IPA studies; the respondents were typically directed to consider one attribute at a time when they were providing importance ratings. Those method inflated importance ratings of most attributes, which in turn, restricted the variation in importance scores. The use of absolute importance in firms' action plans was questionable, since it did not reflect competitive business environment. The causal relationship between importance and performance has not been considered by most IPA studies. The traditional IPA grid with that causal relation could offer serious misinformation depending on the nature and magnitude of the relationship. Apart from the between-concepts correlation, correlations among the attributes, both within importance and within performance, could have contributed pattern dispersions of attributes on the IPA grid. Absence of guidelines for developing a set of attributes to be used would be another shortcoming. Length restrictions of surveys often constituted the overlooking of critical attributes, which should be included in the feature list of the study. Another notable inconsistency in the results of past IPA studies aroused from the location of the horizontal and vertical axes or "cross-hair" points of the grid. In constructing the IPA grid, there were conflicting results depending upon whether the actual or scale means were used as the cross-hair point (Oh, 2001). Furthermore, Since IPA viewed firm's better-than-wanted performance as "overkill". However, in today's market place, firms were striving to deliver not only simple products but also quality services which exceeded customers' satisfactions. Therefore, the goal of IPA with the strategic philosophy mismatched with most firms' objectives.

After revisiting and discussing conceptual and practical issues of IPA, Oh (2001) concluded with suggestions for future IPA studies. A clear definition of importance and performance was a prerequisite to future IPA studies. It would not only eliminate confusion between importance and expectation, but also provided a basis for precise interpretations of study results, which improved the value of obtaining information. Future research should specify a common criterion concept. By relating both importance and performance concepts to one or more criterion variables, the comparability between importance and performance can be improved.

A causal modelling approach should be developed to clarify the role of importance as compared to other similar concepts, such as expectations, in consumer decision

making behaviour. A better understanding of implication of co-variation between importance and performance could be achieved. The level of abstraction in attributes should be commensurate with the target level of follow-up management decisions. Selection of attributes should be based on a prior judicious trade-off between exhaustiveness and practicality of the information to be obtained. The authors also recommended using scale means as cross-hair point when constructing the IPA grid. The meaning of the original scales provided easy and valid interpretation of the data. Finally, Oh (2001) believed that the original IPA grid provided a basis for further elaboration in many directions. Additional cross-hair within each quadrant can be built to improve accuracy in classifying attributes and deriving strategic suggestions.

5) Most researches into destination image mainly considered perceived or real performance of a destination rather than both the importance and performance of attributes formed the image was a shortcoming (Haahti and Yavas, 2004). For researchers to produce meaningful results for tourism officials, and help them to better understand the tourists' image formation process. Haahti and Yavas (2004) used IPA technique to investigate the destination image of SantaPark in Lapland.

Data for their study were collected via personal interviews from 82 tourists who visited SantaPark during the Christmas of 2001. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of importance of 13 factors in evaluating a theme park on five-point scales. Respondents were also asked to evaluate their satisfactions with these attributes on seven-point scales ranging from "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied". The mean scores for both importance and performance of attributes were calculated and placed on the grid. The grand means for both importance and performance were used to determine the "cross hair" point in constructing the IPA grid. The results showed that six factors fell into the "keep up the good work" category. They were theme, space design, personnel, range of activities, road signs and information facilities. None of those attributes fell in concentrate here designation. Several factors including ticket prices, shopping and value for money were deemed low priority.

Haahti and Yavas (2004) believed their results were enlightening in several ways. First, important and unimportant attributes were being identified when visitors evaluated SantaPark. Second, SantaPark's performance was identified in terms of those attributes. Third, the IPA grid pointed out the SantaPark's areas of strength and

weaknesses. This type of information was critical for the park administrators, and concerned civic, business and government groups, since they would prioritize and design courses of action to better market the park. The researchers suggested administrators should continuously scan the environment and try to detect changes in the salience of “low priority” factors. Because any changes in the importance level of factors, which were currently deemed “low priority”, would convert them into “concentrate here” factors. The researchers finally concluded their limited scope of study need further studies to cross-validate their results. Replication studies with larger samples would permit better generalization. Also, periodic assessments would be helpful to the SantaPark management in detecting changes in visitors’ sentiments over time and guide them in formulating more precise marketing strategies.

6) In recent years, important-performance analysis has been further developed by researchers when investigating attributes performance pre- and post-visit of destination. O’Leary and Deegan (2005) used IPA technique to investigate Ireland’s image as tourism destination in France. The research process was composed of three phases, they began by reviewing relevant destination image literature and developed a master list of attributes that theoretically measured destination image. Content analysis of written information, such as guidebooks and visual information were included in their study. Later, pre-test was carried out by distributing questionnaire to a random sample of 80 French visitors. Respondents were requested to list the first three words or expressions that came to mind when they thought of Ireland. Finally, the responses were analyzed and distilled to develop a final list of attributes for the questionnaire. In the second phase, questionnaires were distributed to French visitors to Ireland, they were asked to rate the importance and performance of Ireland with respect to the same list of attributes pre- and post-visitation on five-point Likert scale. In the final phase, mean scores of importance and pre- and post-visit performance were calculated and compared for each attribute and were entered into a series of IPA grid. The importance-performance grid positioned the grand means for performance and importance that determines the placement of the axes on the grid.

The results of both pre- and post-visit showed that price quality ratio, litter free and access were situated in the concentrate here quadrant, which reflected they were underperformed and did not match with importance level. Since those attributes that

policy makers could influence that performed poorly, O’Leary and Deegan (2005) concluded there was urgent need to deal with these challenges to ensure the continued success of the tourism industry in Ireland. The researchers also pointed out that although the natural environment of Ireland has performed well until now, the negative appraisal of litter could have side effect on it in the future. The researchers further recommended a constant monitor should be carried out to ensure those projected images such as people, pace and place imagery were still an accurate portrayal of contemporary Ireland. Finally, O’Leary and Deegan (2005) concluded that a careful appraisal of Ireland’s tourist offerings could facilitate reorientation of marketing focus to reflect the changing realities of Irish life. And at the same time, it avoided false or inaccurate advertising which harmed repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations.

2.2.3 Summary

After reviewing the above studies, we find that IPA technique is useful in analyzing the importance and performance of attributes towards companies and destinations. Among all those studies, most of them adopted the self-stated methods. Mean values of importance and performance were calculated and plotted on the importance-performance grid. The grand means for both importance and performance were used to determine the “cross hair” point in constructing the IPA grid. According to Martilla and James (1977), median values are theoretically preferable to means because a true interval scale may not exist. But they further suggested the investigator should compute both mean and median values. If they are consistently similar, then mean values should be plotted because of the greater amount of information they provide. Since self-stated methods have been widely used by different researchers and believed to be more simplify (Crompton and Duray, 1985), we will adopt these methods in our study. But as suggested by Martilla and James (1977), we will calculate both means and median values, if they yield similar results, mean values will be adopted in our study.

3 Methodology

This chapter will introduce the concrete research methods for each stage of the whole survey process; therefore, these methods will be presented according to the research progression. After identifying the research problems and determining the information requirements, as shown in Chapter One, an appropriate research design will be developed for a given set of research objectives (Hair et. al. 2002). A detailed survey plan will be presented in the second part of this chapter, after determined specific research method to collect required information. Furthermore, the construction of the measurements to the image of tourism destination is the key step in designing the questionnaire and carrying out the survey, so it will lead the third part. After that, questionnaire designing techniques and actual distribution skills are concluded. Finally, a brief description will be given to the techniques dealing with the raw data, which followed by an assessment to the accuracy of the data received through questionnaire survey as the ending part of this chapter. As for the data-analysis, it will be described exhaustively in the next chapter.

3.1 Research Design

As a master plan of the methods and procedures that should be used to collect and analyze the data needed by researchers (Hair et. al. 2002), the research design should involve such considerations as the data type, data-collecting means, the sampling methodology and procedures, schedule, budget and so on. It generally directs the overall research progress.

3.1.1 Types of data needed

Primary and secondary data sources are both absolutely necessary for this study. Being a market situation analysis, introduced by Hair et al. (2002), the objectives of this study are the following: the impressions and expectations of different tourist market segmentations of Gothenburg, its target markets and main tourism attractions, the city's positioning and development planning.

These objectives can be achieved from the analysis to the visitors' image of Gothenburg as a tourism destination, which is the topic of on-site survey. The data stemming from a survey research method, one of the primary data sources, unquestionably belongs to firsthand data, which is a kind of raw data and structures assembled specifically from actual subjects for current research problem, and which has yet to receive any type of meaningful interpretation (Hair et al. 2002). Therefore, the primary data can be said to be the mainstay of this study.

If information is already available which can help to resolve the research problems, then it would be wasteful of resources to collect new information for the purpose (Veal, 2006). Apart from those related literatures on the topic listed in the former chapter, another existing data resource is also essential for this study. Reliable secondary data should be gathered in order to know about what tourism organisations and EM management did to meet consumers' needs or expectations, whether they have mostly delivered added value to satisfy consumers, their statistics and evaluations for the actual results (can be compared with our conclusions). The collecting and storing large quantities of such information is a kind of routine functions of management for most governments and other organizations. Therefore, data on preparations and management for EM'06 visitors, the total number of visitors and their brief profiles, expenditures and other consuming behaviours et al. are all received from the official documents or survey reports of relevant organizations like Göteborg & Co, EM committee and tourism bureau. Just like Veal (2006) said, this kind of data can really reveal answers to some important or background questions more quickly and at less cost than 'First-hand' data.

From above, the objectives of this research and specific information requirements determined a combination of descriptive and exploratory research designs should be employed to collect primary data to resolve the defined research problem.

Descriptive Research design is used to describe the existing characteristics of a defined target population or market structure. This image assessment survey only partially describes how consumers rate different tourism factors, for instance, hotel service, convenience of attractions' location, food quality, which obviously belongs to descriptive research. Despite the fact that descriptive research is unable to address any

of the “why” questions associated with a given research problem, the data and information generated through it still can offer researchers some evidences that may “lead to a course of action” (Hair et al. 2002).

Exploratory research was undertaken after descriptive design because of actual needs. After receiving the overall “importance” and “performance” data, which are quantitative, through a descriptive research design on the image of Gothenburg, researchers would like to understand more clearly their complaints and suggestions to the city’s tourism. These qualitative data structures only can be gained through exploratory research method, as believed by Hair et al. (2002).

3.1.2 Data Collection Alternatives

Methods and techniques actually used to collect the required data are the heart of any research design (Hair et al. 2002). Among the common tools of collecting data, we chose a self-administered survey as our main research method. With the exception of qualitative technique that is also utilized during the collecting process though it only supplements main collecting methods.

Quantitative method- Questionnaire Surveys

Questionnaire-based surveys are probably the most commonly used quantitative technique in leisure and tourism research, which are most suitable when “quantified information is required concerning a specific population and when individuals’ own accounts of their behavior or attitudes are acceptable as a source of information” (Veal, 2006). And among the six types of questionnaire survey, Veal (2006) adopted “Site/user survey” finally, after having failed to conduct “street survey”. The site/user survey means users of a leisure or tourism facility or site are surveyed on-site—sometimes referred to as “visitor survey” and sometimes as “intercept survey”. This research topic is a visitor-survey, involving both a tourist survey and an audience survey in a specific sports environment.

Usually, visitor surveys take the form of street surveys, but differ from a traditional “street survey”, with another type of questionnaire survey, in essence for the reason

that the visitor surveys are more controlled (Veal, 2006). In this study, the visitors to Gothenburg are intercepted and interviewed in the street, tourism attractions or public areas like the squares and information centers et al. Simply put, everywhere the prospective respondents are thought to congregate and are to interview are tested for conducting the survey.

Qualitative Method- in-depth interviews

After receiving the overall quantitative primary data through the questionnaire survey, firsthand communicating experiences with respondents, which are qualitative in nature and can reveal in-depth information about their attitudes, emotions and perceptions (Hair et al. 2002), become the more invaluable data to be collected. This kind of data inspires the researchers to put forward effective and feasible resolutions to the research problem— improving the image of Gothenburg as a tourism destination in the minds of various visitors for this study specifically, meeting the ultimate purpose of this research. Moreover, as the primary data collected by qualitative method does not generally lend itself to statistical analysis, conclusions are not based on such analysis (Veal, 2006), only small samples need to be involved. This economical way of collecting is quite suitable for this research.

The reason for choosing in-depth interviewing technique is that it is within the researchers' ability. In-depth conversations between some thoughtful respondents and researchers emerged spontaneously during the survey process. The talkative respondents were asked a set of semi-structured, probing questions developed from open-ended questions in a face-to-face setting, which is just the situation, described by Hair et al. (2002), of carrying out an in-depth interview.

This method proposed by Hair et al. (2002) verified by these interviews: “the more a respondent talks about a topic, the more likely he or she is to reveal underlying attitudes, motives, emotions and behaviours.” A typical example is that if interviewer did not use an in-depth interview method to ask further questions, then many respondents who rated “two” or “three” for the attributes of image would be inclined to say nothing for the first open-ended question. But most of them complained a lot about these low-mark items just through interviewers' inquiry into their reasons.

At the end of this part, the collection method for secondary data is to be introduced. In brief, the researchers utilized electronic methods in asking help from those relevant organisations such as e-mails and by searching relevant websites.

3.2 Survey Plan

3.2.1 Defining the population and determining the sample size

The defined target population in this study are all non-domestic visitors travelling to Gothenburg during the EM'06, which is obviously a huge group, makes random selection of a subgroup when it becomes necessary.

Brunt (1997) stated that in deciding the size of the sample is almost invariably the first question in the survey design, because it is related with sampling error, which will affect the data quality. If the authors possess the popular misconception that a larger population requires a larger sample to generate more accurate results, they would have been unable to do as much as they would like to do, limited by resources. While according to Veal (2006), the absolute size of the sample has no necessary relationship with the size of the population. And, those criteria and formulas put forward to determine a sample's size become totally useless for this study because it is a non-probability sampling method. Hair et al. (2002) mentioned the determination of the necessary sample size in non-probability sampling is often decided by the researcher subjectively and intuitively based on either previous researches or the amount of resources available.

Thus, in this case, the sample size was decided by the two researchers subjectively, after a discussion and consideration of time and energy. No funding was received for this study and therefore no budget was drawn up. The total number of interviews was 369.

3.2.2 Non-probability Sampling Procedure

The convenience sampling, or called "accidental sampling" is obviously utilized by the researchers during the survey because the samples were drawn at the convenience

of the researcher or interviewer, totally by subjectively self-selection (Hair et al. 2002). The assumptions behind this are the target population- various visitors to Gothenburg are homogeneous and the individual interviewees are similar to the overall defined target population with regard to the characteristic being studied. In fact, the different characteristics of samples have no effect on this study objective because they are ignored for seeking a kind of universality. Moreover, we benefited a lot from reduced screening costs and time because we can easily identify potential respondents from the targeted population only through observation skills on location (Hair et al. 2002).

The actual sample distributions according to several demographical factors will present in Table 4.1. The researchers were quite satisfied with the achieved sample size and its distribution because the whole work was accomplished on the schedule and exceeded the 300 respondents which over the amount planned originally.

3.3 Survey Instrument

3.3.1 Construct Development

The elements that make up what researchers measured - the object - are called “constructs” defined by Hair et al. (2002). In this study, the construct can be defined as the “images of Gothenburg as a tourism destination” from above descriptions. In order to facilitate measuring to such an abstract construct, its “domain of observables, which is the set of identifiable and measurable components” should be discriminated (Hair et al. 2002). Though there are many guides on developing a customized scale in questionnaires, it is still quite common for researchers to utilize standardized scales which have been developed by previous studies. The advantage of using existing scales is to avoid meaningless repeated work for widely used scales which are generally applied in measuring. Further, the use of common measurements facilitates comparison between studies (Veal, 2006). Thereafter, various previous studies were referred to elicit the relevant destination image attributes and dimensions, which will be used as measurable constructs to investigate the images of Gothenburg. The steps of building up image constructs in our study will be described as follows.

Firstly, a review of the relevant destination image literature was conducted to develop a master list of attributes that theoretically measure destination image (O’Leary and Deegan, 2005). Our attributes were developed on the base of Jenkins’s study in 1999. He investigated all image attributes used by 28 previous researchers and generated a master list of attributes which are most commonly used by previous researches. All of the studies conceptualize destination image as comprising such features as attractions, climates, culture, host populations, recreation and scenery (Jenkins, 1999). Since most of the studies were developed for countries and states, then they may not completely represent the image of Gothenburg at a city level. Fortunately, Mossberg (2000) has conducted an investigation on Gothenburg’s image as a tourism destination during the World Championship in Athletics in 1995, which can help us a lot. In order to choose most appropriate image attributes of Gothenburg, she discussed with experts from the Tourist Board and from a marketing research company; then presented the results in seminars and marketing courses to improve it. Through consulting and repeatedly discussing with different professionals, a final list of 26 attributes related to the image of Gothenburg was adopted in her research. We believed that those attributes can perfectly represent the image of Gothenburg. So in our study, some of our attributes are generated directly from her study.

Secondly, content analysis to second-hand information about Gothenburg, such as guidebooks, visual information, Gothenburg’s official website, annual report of Göteborg & Co and travel brochures, all provided us with a great deal of information about the images projected from a tourism destination (Jenkins, 1999). This method in building constructs is not our creation, but has been adopted and tested by lots of previous studies. For example, Dilley (1986) conducted a survey of the images used by different national tourist organizations in projecting their destination image to the North American market. Twenty one countries’ brochures were analyzed, and their images were categorized according to the type of information communicated. And, when Lindström (2004) described the media images applied to Majorca, all relevant Swedish newspaper during the period of 1950-2000 were collected.

Finally, after our discussion based on the reference of previous studies and secondary sources about Gothenburg’s situation, sixteen attributes related to destination image of Gothenburg were selected, as listed following: (1) Accommodation Facilities; (2)

Clean & green city; (3) Climate; (4) Costs / price level; (5) Different customs / culture; (6) Friendliness of local people; (7) Historic sites / museums; (8) Local infrastructure / transportation; (9) Nightlife / entertainment; (10) Personal safety; (11) Quality of food; (12) Restful / relaxing atmosphere; (13) Scenery / natural attractions; (14) Sports facilities / activities; (15) Shopping facilities; (16) Tourist information and support. These attributes will be used by adopting IPA technique to study their importance and performance toward our respondents.

3.3.2 Measurement Scales

Because one of the main objectives of this study is to evaluate imaged perceived by visitors through their experiences in Gothenburg, it may not be criticism of specific features that is important but users' overall evaluation of the experience (Veal 2006).

Ordinally interval hybrid scales

Scales are “numerical indexes used to measure constructs or variables which are generally not intrinsically quantitative” (Veal, 2006). “Ordinally interval hybrid scales” was designed for respondents' rating job, which presented in “two sets of scale point descriptors” (Hair et al. 2002). We used primary descriptors-“not important” and “very important”, “very poor performance” and “very good performance” to identify only the extreme end points of a set of secondary cardinal numbers- from “1” to “5”, which make up the range of raw scale descriptors. This scale bestows the freedom of interpreting what the in-between numerical scale descriptors truly represent to respondents themselves. And "odd-number" scale point was to meet the need of those respondents who are truly neutral to a question. In fact, visitors' evaluations on tourism performance can be exactly regarded as their satisfaction-level for experienced these attributes. The results of such an evaluation can be used to compare visitors' evaluation of one attribute with another. And the whole scale measurement system decided closed-ended question is the only possible format.

Nominal Scales

Nominal scale is the main scale employed in this investigation. As Hair (2002) stated, the level of scale format needed in collecting raw data will determine corresponding scale design pattern in phrasing questions to respondents. In this study, the detailed information on respondents' demographics and their in-depth opinions or complaints only required respondents to "provide some type of descriptor as the raw response" (Hair et al. 2002), thus the open-ended questions were phrased like that. (See Appendix)

Pre-coded questions are often used when asking respondents personal information, such as gender, age, education level et al. because of convenience and prevent respondents embarrassed about divulging precise figures. Though the actual figure is often more useful for analysis purposes, interval scale is still necessary in this case, because age groups can reduce offence to respondents, especially to women and the elderly; also grouping categories of staying-days' can reduce the amount of options.

From above, the complete scale measurements, consisting of three critical components: the question, the dimension and attributes, and the scale point descriptors. (Hair et al. 2002)

3.3.3 Questionnaire Design

The significant principle in designing questionnaires is "to take it slowly and carefully and to remember why the research is being done" (Veal, 2006). Before designing this questionnaire, the researchers have sought out as many previous relevant studies as possible for reference. They affected the designing ideas. More specifically, a similar study to image of Gothenburg which conducted by Mossberg (2000) during the EM'95 was found to be relevant and guided our study.

Formulation of questions/setups

Closed-ended attribute questions were set up from the attributes of "image" and its scale measurements illustrated in the former part. The same as other pre-coded questions in this questionnaire, they offered respondents a range of answers to choose

from by ticking boxes. On the other hand, open-ended questions can avoid the main disadvantages of survey method, which is limiting the use of extensive probing by the interviewer. It can help us to gather more detailed and in-depth data than forced-choice or rating scales if answered properly (Hair et al. 2002).

In an interviewer-administered survey, a combination of the two question types is usually adopted (Veal, 2006). Even in one question, two questioning ways can be integrated. For instance, when the question is asked in an open-ended manner, but the questionnaire includes a pre-coded list where the answer is recorded like the question 5 in “Visitor Profile”. Additionally, if respondents answer ‘other’ in question 6, they are required to write in details of what the ‘other’ is (See Appendix)

The sequence of Questions

The order of questions was another important factor should be taken into account when designing the questionnaire. Generally, the questions should be arranged in a logical and comfortable manner (Veal, 2006). Moreover, the questionnaire should “begin with easy questions” so that respondents would not be discouraged. So we put those background questions on respondents’ own demographic characteristics such as age, gender, nationality and education level at the beginning of questionnaire. Furthermore, these general information questions could promote the development of the necessary ‘comfort zone’ between the researchers and respondents, who are total strangers to each other at the beginning of survey (Hair et al. 2002). When respondents feel more familiar and at ease, the question/answer exchange process will go more smoothly and respondents are more thoughtful and honest with their answers.

The motive for putting the closed-ended questions before the open-ended questions stemmed from the same guideline: from simple to difficult. The complex attributes of a tourism destination image are chosen from previous professional studies, making it become a relatively fixed scientific construct, only requires respondents to choose from a predetermined set of scale points, reducing considerably the amount of thinking and effort of respondents.

Another rationale for having the closed-ended questions earlier than open-ended ones is that respondents’ first thoughts can be recorded more reliably, and the step by step

familiarity with the topic may inspire them more ideas on the next difficult, self-administered questions. It is believed that this long preparation process can facilitate respondents to form more comprehensive opinions to improve the responses' rate and quality to the last probing questions. However, the other side of coin is the response rate of open-ended questions will perhaps be lower than expected because of losing patience after determined lots of attribute alternatives, especially when they are in a hurry. The risk of receiving rough or "don't know" answers increases.

Layout

The questionnaire of this survey was designed for respondents' convenience, aiming to make readers follow all the instructions easily and answer all the questions that are destined to be answered. So clarity is the most important standard for layout, which is believed to be able to give respondents a good overall impression to the questionnaire, and then stimulate high-quality responses. For example, enough answer spaces should be left for open-ended questions in case that some respondents evade answering just because they cannot find places to write down their ideas or irritated by the densely-covered looking.

Another design principle for questionnaire's layout is "compact" as the response-rate may increase with the page number of questionnaire decreases (Veal, 2006). And a type-set questionnaire will also benefit researchers for ease of handling and carrying. In addition, respondent-completion is permitted in this questionnaire survey when several appropriate respondents appeared simultaneously. Thus, in order to ensure quality of the data produced in such situations, extra care should be taken with layout because it is very difficult to rectify faults 'in the field', even under interviewers' monitor.

3.3.4 Questionnaire Distribution

We adopt a face-to-face interview and interviewer-completion form, where the interviewer reads out the questions from the questionnaire and records the answers (Veal, 2006). Though it costs researchers much more than respondent-completion, but it is more controllable and can ensure the quality of responses, and increase the

amount of completed valid questionnaires. Typically a visitor-survey interview will take about 5 minutes, directed by Veal (2006). Like his calculation, given the need to check through completed questionnaires, the gaps in visitor traffic and the need for interviewers to take breaks, the expectations is for interviewers to complete an average of six interviews in one hour. Such estimates are of course necessary when considering survey schedule. While in fact, respondent-completion in varying degrees was also permitted as some respondents preferred, which quickened survey's speed but weakened interviewers' controllability.

In order to accomplish the questionnaire survey at designated sites within a time frame, we considered every trivial factor throughout the survey process for limited manpower. For example, meticulously choosing and repeated testing survey locations and times, selecting prospective respondents and utilizing specific communication skills.

Sites-testing and timing

The whole of Gothenburg city and its residents were involved in this grand event, from the City Festival began on 4th of August, 2006 to the end of all competitions, 13th of August, 2006. In view of the fact that the 19th European Athletics Championship, which is the essential background of this investigation, started from 6th till 13th of August 2006, researchers decided to use this period as the time frame for the survey. That's to say, the questionnaire survey must be accomplished within this time frame; neither can be started in advance nor delayed, even one day.

The number of event sites during EM was almost 20 (Göteborg & Co, 2006b), located everywhere in the downtown are: Götaplatsen, Avenue, Ullevi stadium, Liseberg and so forth. Varied activities and events were carried out in every important site of the city according to specific day. Guided by the brochure of Program/Event Calendar for city festival (Göteborg & Co, 2006c) and the timetable of matches in the EM, we first spent four whole days in testing most appropriate surveying sites and response-peak hours. That's to say, repeated tests have been done at the different time slots for one site to find where and when the surveys can be conveniently carried out and easily to achieve maximum response rate. Three main surveying sites and their individual "rush hours" were decided and focused on in the following days:

Firstly, the tourist information centres in Kungssportsplatsen. This is a big tourist office and souvenir shop located in the heart of downtown, situated alongside of the Avenyn. Tourists and other visitors touring around in Gothenburg can not miss it. So, the rate of meeting qualified respondents- foreign travellers was high. The long queue for inquiring and exquisite souvenirs intercepted our respondents. While the only deficiency was that many tourists visiting for tourism information had limited knowledge about the city because they had just arrived shortly. Among them, some refused to accept surveys directly with this excuse; as to those who are quite enthusiastic to do us a favour, we superseded respondents with limited knowledge by asking such questions: “How long have you been here?” and “Have you experienced the city?” In order to screen out the respondents, the golden survey period decided by researchers was the whole afternoon before supper, that’s 12 am to 7 pm. The high responses rate in this period constituted it as the main source of typical tourists in prospective respondents.

Secondly, the public square in front of Ullevi stadium. It was a wonderful place that we found EM sport tourists easily. At the end of each match, the square was crowded with the stream of spectators, before athletes, coaches and other staff came out. They were inclined to stay there for a while, waiting companions, drinking, talking and resting or reviewing one day’s work. This gave us better opportunities to intercept spectators than at the beginning of matches for they were not in a hurry to enter the stadium. The golden survey time was from 7 pm to 10 pm because most matches finished during this period and at the end of the daily competition.

Thirdly, on the main road from Gothia Hotel to Ullevi stadium. Since it was the hotel where athletes, coaches, and other staff for the EM’06 are staying, they inevitably passed this road in taking part in competitions. Though either spectators or athletes, coaches and other working staff were quite busy and usually rushed on their way, making it impossible to interrupt them for completing a questionnaire, the response rate would increase sharply during a suddenly heavy rain or marathons in accumulating crowds. Consequently, it was regarded as another source of sport tourists to the EM among prospective respondents.

The reason for choosing these sites was that they are the most popular sites respectively for the two groups. When human resources, time, economy and other practical factors put constraints on the research, these two main surveying sites gave us valuable chances to reach a large number of respondents within a short period of time.

Reminded by Veal (2006) for Fieldwork Arrangements, we remembered cautiously to ask for the permission to conduct questionnaire survey from those public places, such as park, stadium and tourist information offices, which are thought of as 'public' but in fact are in charge of some public or private organizations.

The same tests have been done to following sites in the downtown, proved that they are not suitable for questionnaire investigation.

(1) **The Avenyn**, especially its starting point from Götaplatsen, the heart of culture in Gothenburg (Göteborg & Co, 2006b), where held the opening and closing ceremonies and other grand music programs. It was hard to stop pedestrians on the street to do questionnaires because they were in hurry to their specific destination and in those sunny summer days, both respondents and researchers felt hot under the sun.

(2) **Nordstan** is the biggest shopping mall in Sweden (Göteborg & Co, 2006d) with tourist office located inside, so we went there by once. But actual experience showed that this information office was not as efficient as that one locating in Kungsporsplatsen. The reasons are: it is too small and most people going there were new arrivals within half an hour for it situated nearby the main train station.

(3) Being the largest amusement park in the Nordic countries (Göteborg & Co, 2006e), **Liseberg** possessed over 3 million visitors in last year (Göteborg & Co, 2006a). So we believed it could unquestionably fascinate much more visitors- from the children of all ages to 80-year-old adults by special offers during the EM'06. Furthermore, most visitors with children will definitely visit this famous amusement park and easily approached as our prospective respondents, because they were free and at ease when their children playing on the rides. So it was an ideal interviewing location in researchers' expectations. But, after spending 2 nights and several hours

during the daytime there, researchers found most visitors are local people or from neighbouring cities or districts. Usually, these people were quite familiar and content with Gothenburg, so could not put forward any novel viewpoints, naturally beyond researchers' requirements. Of course, there are considerable foreigners, but it is too difficult for the two Asian researchers to differentiate between Swedish and other European people. Rates of 'right' selection were too low, which seriously affects surveying speed, forcing us to give it up later on. Another important reason for discarding it was that children were the main consuming group, indeed, while their guardians were not free at all even when they were not on the rides. As they needed to take care of their children or took photos for them. The questionnaire survey embarrassed many guardians concentrating on the questions, which may make them divert attention from their babies.

(4) The Central Station, though there are quite enough tourists, and the travellers sitting in the waiting hall were willing to spare time to do the questionnaire, most of them are Swedish domestic travellers. Even if they were foreigners, they either just arrived, knowing little about the city or in a hurry to catch their departing trains. Only one interview achieved within one hour showed that this was obviously not an appropriate site for conducting the survey.

Above all, the testing job produced a quite satisfactory spread over the city, even if the investigation was carried out in 3 major sites. This not only ensures the results' reliability, but also improves response rate and survey speed quite well in the following days, saves a lot of energy for researchers, which makes the quality of in-depth interviewing can be maintained.

Selecting prospective respondents and communicating with them

Visitors to Gothenburg during the event can be divided into two main groups to meet the needs of this survey: sport tourists to the EM'06 and typical tourists with various travel motivations.

In this case, choosing sampling units- our interviewing respondents relies on our subjective preferences in pretty degree, as described in "non-probability sampling" before, but several procedures are still drawn from practice: First of all, distinguishing

whether he/she is a local resident or visitor through his outfit. Then, judging where he/she comes from-abroad or domestic, by his/her speaking language or looking. Finally, using opening remarks to verify our presumption and probe his/her willingness to cooperate. As we knew that in face-to-face interviews, it was unlikely for interviewers to approach potential interviewees and read mechanically from a script because maintaining eye contacts is necessary for a successful interview (Veal, 2006). Hence, a proper opening-remark should be prepared in advance. Apart from topic and purpose of this survey, identification of the organization represented by the interviewer is also needed (this was reinforced by an identity badge worn by the two researchers), because respondents have a right to know what organization will utilize the information gathered. Additionally, respondents in an on-site survey are generally more interested in knowing how long the interview will take and what sort of questions they will be asked. Therefore, we tried our best to unify such minimal opening remarks: “Excuse me, do you like to spare 5 minutes to do a questionnaire?”, “It is about the image of Gothenburg as a tourism destination. We are students from Tourism Management, Gothenburg University and would like to know your impressions and suggestions to the city’s tourism.” The formal questionnaire interview can be started when respondents have agreed to participate.

Interpersonal communication skills, listening skills, interpretive skills and personality are all indispensable techniques for the in-depth interview to the two probing questions in this questionnaire, as Hair et al. (2002) stated in his book.

3.4 Methods of preparing data for analysis

3.4.1 Data Validation

This is an evaluation process to the data collection approaches and data’s quality.

Quality of Primary Data

Curbing, means cheating or falsification in the data collection process (Hair et al. 2002); can be guaranteed by the two authors that it has never occurred during their survey. Every response is assured to come from actual respondent without fraud or

bias and following a rigid scientific interviewing procedure. Guided by Hair et al. (2002), we targeted 10% of completed interviews for “callbacks”, that is 37 respondents in this case. They left their e-mail addresses or telephone numbers on the top of their individual questionnaire voluntarily or met the request of interviewers for further inquiries.

However, whether or not a questionnaire survey can reach its objective depends on many other factors, among which are uncontrollable for researchers: respondents may tend to exaggerate or understate in their answers to some questions, or make mistakes when recalling some accurate memories, even have an inclination to give answers they believed can please the interviewer and so on (Veal, 2006). Thus the validity of questionnaire-based data- the extent to which they accurately reflect what they are meant to reflect- is a necessary concern for actual analysis..

The researchers have to some extent, to simply live with those inevitable limitations of survey method and hope that inaccuracies are not significant and some of them can cancel each other out. For instance, there is one possibility that the interview experience itself may cause respondents to change their perceptions. Because it forced them to think through some topics which they might have only superficial consideration before, their opinion becomes mature gradually is a natural trend (Veal, 2006).

The researchers, however, can take some measures to evade some validity problems. Some crucial questions repeatedly asked in this questionnaire, presented in different forms of course. For example, an early attribute question asks respondents to evaluate the actual performance of different tourism factors. Next to it, detailed explanation is required to write out to those poor performance items in their minds. If they said “nothing unsatisfactory” but gave lowest marks to any attribute, the honesty and consistency of their responses might be doubted. Such “similar questions at the beginning and the end of the interview” can be used efficiently to test the reliability of responses. There is another example in this questionnaire.

Quality of the Secondary Data

As mentioned before, this study partially relied on the use of secondary data. The secondary data used are comprised of other image studies about tourism destination in general, and particularly those similar-topic studies to Gothenburg city during past sport event. Other sources of secondary data are those statistics from Göteborg & Co, tourism bureau and Swedish Tourism almanac. They are fairly up-to-date, and, to a certain extent, even comparable to the primary data for these organizations also conducted relevant surveys on tourism during the EM'2006. Usually, these surveys have a broader scope and are conducted with ample resources, in personnel or financially. Besides, these studies are guided and supported by professional research companies or departments, hence the methods and material used in them should be considered trustworthy. For these reasons, the secondary data used in this case can be considered of high-quality.

3.4.2 Data Editing and Coding for computer analysis

The answers in the questionnaires should be transferred into computer programs for further analysis. Different question types require different computer programs to be used, and then it is natural to take up different coding ways for those answers. The analyses in Chapter 4 are all based on those codes.

Coding for Visitor-Profiles

The questions on the respondents' profile were coded by the order of the response alternatives in the questionnaire, meaning that the first response alternative for the first question received code one, the second code two, and so on. The same procedure of coding was applied to all 7 questions relating to the background characteristics of respondents.

Preparing the Attributes- response for statistical analysis

In the SPSS documents, the answers to the attribute questions were coded from 1 to 5, where one equalled "Not important"/"very poor performance" and five "very important"/ "very good performance". As the IPA measurements in this case produced disaggregated data sets, for which it is difficult to "find out what the entire set of

responses means because there are ‘too many numbers’ to look at”. Thus, each set of data needs some “summary information developed that describe the numbers it contains” (Hair et al. 2002). Basic statistics and descriptive analysis should be developed for this purpose, which was performed by the numerical coding to the answers of closed attribute questions.

As a measure of central tendency for ordinal data, the median was calculated, which is in accordance with Hair et al. (2002). However, since the number of response alternatives was only 5, the median does not offer very detailed information, and therefore the mean was calculated as an additional measure of central tendency.

In order to know if most of the respondents had similar opinions, dispersion associated with the distribution of responses to questions needed to be examined (Hair et al. 2002). The percentage of respondents who have chosen each response alternative was given (of all respondents answering the question), rather than other measures of dispersion such as range and standard deviation, also because of the limited response alternatives. We believed these percentages can provide a better view of the dispersion than other measures.

Editing the Open-ended Questions’ responses

A coding system to open-ended questions aims to “group the responses into a manageable number of categories” (Veal, 2006). The answers to the open-ended questions, containing exactly the results of in-depth interviews, are very diverse and in individual expressions. However, it is still possible to interpret them afresh through the interpretation of the researchers’ and categorize them according to meaning.

In this case, in order to view and examine these responses more easily and clearly, all the answers of open-ended questions were recorded in an Excel-document, this was then followed by the consolidation. We put those of the same or similar meanings into one group-a meaningful category and assigned individual code-certain regular words to each frequent response-group. The ultimate aim was to try to group as many responses as possible into as few as possible meaningful categories. After being classified into different groups, a frequency analysis was made to determine the Gothenburg’s images and attractions that are most commonly mentioned by those visitors, together with their most popular complaints about Gothenburg’s tourism as

well as helpful suggestions for improvement. Only assisted by these results, the researchers would be able to realize the real problems and think out corresponding resolutions.

3.4.3 Data Entry

Data entry seems to be quite an easy job but is actually a source of errors when researchers just begin to deal with the raw information. Particular carefulness and great patience should be paid to this work. Inputting the answers to a computer program, in this case, the SPSS documents, is rather mechanical, repetitive work. In order to diminish the risk, we divided the task load to several occasions, thus ensuring that concentration was kept at a high level throughout the time. At the same time, we have tried another way of entering this task. One read the codes of those answers, while the other typed them into the files. This method produced many interactions between us and allowed both of us to simultaneously check the data, and this method was most beneficial in improving the efficiency.

Each questionnaire was ranked by a serial number after printing-out. So each response was arranged in the same order as in the SPSS documents, in case there is a need to check one specific questionnaire.

3.4.4 Error Detection

Errors can considerably decrease the accuracy and quality of the raw data, so the researchers must be aware of various errors and try to either eliminate or, at least, control them. According to classifications of Hair et al. (2002), two main errors should be carefully identified.

Non-probability Sampling Errors

There are numerous opportunities for carelessness to let in errors during the sampling procedure. For example, selecting prospective respondents was limited by many factors such as survey times, sites and subjective criteria in the interviewers' minds.

Doubts rose naturally to the sample's representativeness. However, being the intrinsic deficiency of non-probability sampling method, measuring the representativeness of the sample is totally impossible because sampling error can not be accurately assessed (Hair et al. 2002). So, the raw data and results are not generalized to the defined population with any measure of precision.

Fortunately, sufficient attentions have been paid to each step in sampling conductions, as previously described in detail. Moreover, since the sampling method is determined by the actual information needed, it can very well meet the original data requirements. The aim of this study is to give suggestions to relevant management, not to provide them with absolute truths. Thus, the sample can be considered to be reasonably representative for the quite homogeneous population, and the results of the study can be claimed to be fairly reliable.

Non-sampling errors

All errors that can enter the survey research design that are not related to the sampling method or sample size. Most types of non-sampling errors can be traced back to 4 major source groups: respondent error, researcher's measurement/design error, faulty problem definition and researcher's administration error. It cannot be directly measured by a statistical formula, but they are controllable.

1. Non-response Errors

Given the self-selection and the voluntary nature of participating in the data collection process associated with convenience sampling, researchers should give serious considerations to the extremely important issue of non-response error (Hair et al. 2002). It rises from two sources: one is non-response of individuals and the other is non-response for specific questions.

The non-response of individuals, just means some people refused to take part in the questionnaire survey. Only about 2 out of 10 persons approached refused to fill the questionnaire, making the response rate around 80%, quite satisfactory for us. The most common reason given for refusal was "in a hurry / have no time", especially when street-interception were conducted. Another rather frequent reason was "have no idea / know nothing about it" because they just arrived or have not experienced the

city very well. This lack-of-knowledge group was superseded initiatively by interviewers even though they are quite willing to fill the questionnaire according to their imagination or expectations. Therefore, the non-response individuals were ignored by researchers for their relatively small proportion and little influence to the study.

The non-response for specific questions referring to some respondents left some questions unanswered or forced to stop in the middle, even near the end of the questionnaire, by some outer factors. It can be said that such a phenomenon is more noticeable in open-ended questions. About 90% questionnaires returned were certified to be sufficiently qualified to the survey. This success should be owed to researchers, who have made serious checks regarding the responding process. In-depth interviews are often used by researchers when they notice that respondents have difficulties in answering questions, and do their best to inspire responses. So, the number of non-response for variables was not more significant than the non-responses of individuals.

Looking into the reasons behind this, the major one is that they had no idea/did not know about specific aspects of Gothenburg's image, caused by lack of experience, even if they really try to express their impressions. The minor reason is they did not want to take the trouble or spend much time in answering those in-depth questions.

For these uncompleted questionnaires, we decided to keep them in the statistical analysis since even the non-responses are dispersed in the questionnaire; they can still show in which aspects the visitors most lacked knowledge, which might just be the deficiencies existing in Gothenburg's tourism. Therefore, the descriptive analysis to them will be included in the next chapter. It is safe for statistical analysis by SPSS as missing data will be listed alone.

2. *Measurement Errors*

Researcher-completion and in-depth review helped to minimize measurement errors related to research methods because considerate explanations were provided to respondents as soon as they presented any confusing expression during their answering process. Regarding the correctness of the questionnaire, we have enough cause to believe that it has measured what it was supposed to because it was a very

elaborately designed survey instrument introduced before. Extensive literature research is the most solid foundation for tailoring measurement scales and questions for this study.

3. Errors Related to the Researchers

Because of some interviews and communications were conducted in this survey, so the errors relating to the impact of researchers cannot be neglected. Respondents' opinions and attitudes are inevitably influenced or guided by researchers' words and expressions. However, this influence was deliberately diminished by us as completely as possible.

Besides which, it is still possible that the researchers may make a wrong analysis and interpretation for the data, giving rise to misleading conclusions. In order to avoid this error, consultation with experienced supervisors who had carried out a similar topic study and guides from professionals in SPSS system were used.

4 Data Analysis and Results for Gothenburg Tourism Image

4.1 Demographic and travelling characteristics of respondents

Of the 369 respondents, 183 (49.6 percent) were typical tourists and 186 (50.4 percent) were sport tourists. Table 4.1 showed the demographic and travelling characteristics of the respondents respectively. According to it, the majority of the respondents interviewed were male, with typical tourists accounting for 58.5 percent of their own segment and male sport tourists with 62.9 percent in sport segment. Nearly 90 percent of the typical tourists and 72 percent of sport tourists aged below 50, and senior (aged over 50) typical and sport tourists accounted for 10 percent and 28 percent respectively. Respondents aged 20 to 29 occupied the highest percent of both segments. For the country of residence, Germany and Sweden accounted for the highest percent for both typical and sport tourists. For the typical tourists, 32.8 and 12.6 percent were from Germany and Sweden respectively. And for sport tourists, 16.7 percent were from Sweden and 16.1 percent were from Germany. Followed by Holland and Ireland, they occupied more than ten percent and nearly nine percent of typical and sport tourists respectively. With regard to education level, the results showed that the majority of typical (73.3 per cent) and sport (72.6 percent) tourists were university students or above graduates, in which respondents who were university graduates occupied the highest percentage for both type of tourists. For the travelling characteristics of respondents, most of the respondents were first time visitors to Gothenburg, nearly 62 percent of typical tourists had never been to Gothenburg before, and 57 percent of sport tourists were first time travellers. The survey also indicated their primary purpose of this trip. For typical tourists, the majority of them visited Gothenburg for vacation (76.5 percent), and others were mainly for visiting friends/relatives and business. Since we screened respondents when we carried out the survey, all sport tourists visited Gothenburg with primary purpose of attending the European Athletics Championship. For the number of days planned to stay in Gothenburg, more than 50 percent of typical tourists would like to stay less than 4 days and nearly 28 percent of them would like to stay more than a

week. But for sport tourists, the number of days they would like to stay was more than typical tourists, since over 50 percent of them plan to stay more than 6 days in Gothenburg, which throughout the EM. The survey further showed the tendency of respondents to revisit Gothenburg for travelling in the future, the majority of both typical (91.8 percent) and sport tourists (82.3 percent) mentioned they would like to revisit in the future. Finally, respondents were asked whether they would recommend Gothenburg to friends and relatives, the majority of both typical (97%) and sport tourists (97.3%) mentioned they would recommend Gothenburg to friends and relatives after they returned to their own countries.

Table 4.1 Demographic and travelling characteristics of respondents

Gender	T (%)	S (%)	No. of times visit to Gothenburg	T (%)	S (%)
Male	58.5	62.9	First time	61.7	57
Female	41.5	37.1	More than once	38.3	43
Age	T (%)	S (%)	Primary Purpose of the trip	T (%)	S (%)
20 or below	9.3	5.4	Vacation	76.5	/
20-29	41	26.9	Visiting Friends / relatives	14.8	/
30-39	21.8	23.1	Business	2.2	/
40-49	17.5	16.7	Others	6.6	/
50-59	8.2	17.7	Attending EM	/	100
60 or above	2.2	10.2			
Country of Residence	T (%)	S (%)	No. of days plan to stay	T (%)	S (%)
Germany	32.8	16.1	one day	27.9	4.3
Sweden	12.6	16.7	2-3 days	25.7	15.1
Ireland	-	8.6	4-5 days	10.4	24.3
Holland	10.4	3.2	6-7 days	8.7	21.1
England	7.1	6.5	more than a week	27.8	35.1
France	7.1	5.4			
Others	30	43.5			
Education Level	T (%)	S (%)	Revisit it or not only for travelling	T (%)	S (%)
Junior High School	4.9	5.4	Yes	91.8	82.3
Senior High School	21.8	22	No	8.2	17.7
University students	T (%)	S (%)	Recommend it or not	T (%)	S (%)
University Graduate	21.9	10.2	Yes	97	97.3
Post Graduate	43.7	53.2	No	3	2.7
	7.7	9.2			

Note: Typical Tourists (T): N = 183; Sport Tourists (S): N = 186

4.2 Importance and performance analysis for Close-ended Question

Martilla and James (1977) pointed out median values as a measure of central tendency were theoretically preferable to means because a true interval scale might not exist. But they also suggested that users compute both median and mean values of importance and performance ratings when carrying out importance-performance analysis. If the two values appeared to be reasonably close, Martilla and James (1977) recommended using mean values to avoid discarding the additional information they contained. By referring to other IPA studies, the majority of researchers have used the means values of importance and performance ratings when determining the ‘cross-hair’ (Vertical and horizontal lines) point in the IPA grid (Chon et al. 1991; Haahti and Yavas 2004; O’Leary and Deegan 2005).

To analyze our data, we first calculated the median and mean values of each attributes among three groups (all visitors, typical tourists and sport tourists). These values were then compared to the grand median and mean (i.e., the median and mean importance and performance rating for all 16 attributes taken collectively). We found that these two values of all three groups were reasonably close. So in our study, the mean values were then adopted to create three IPA grids: one representing importance and performance results of all visitors, another two representing the importance and performance results of tourist and sports tourists respectively. ‘Cross-hairs’, using the grand mean of the importance and performance parts for three groups, were plotted on the grid to separate the image attributes into four identifiable quadrants (see Fig. 1). The data was then presented on a grid where each attribute was plotted according to its importance and performance. The two-dimensional grid presented the importance of attributes on the vertical axis from high (top) to low (bottom) and the performance of attributes on the horizontal axis from high (right) to low (left) (Chu and Choi 2000).

In all questionnaires, respondents were asked to rate each of 16 image attributes of Gothenburg on a five-point Likert scale (in which 1 = not important and 5 = very important) according to the importance they attached to the attributes when evaluating Gothenburg’s image as tourists’ destinations. They were then asked to rate each of

these attributes on the same five-point Likert scale (in which 1 = very poor performance and 5 = very good performance) according to how they thought Gothenburg performed.

4.2.1 Importance of image attributes of Gothenburg by all visitors

In order to address the importance of image attributes of Gothenburg by all visitors, the mean scores were calculated. The survey results were presented according to the mean importance ratings in column three of Table 4.2. It showed the 16 image attributes of Gothenburg had mean scores ranged from 3.08 to 4.12, donating that all visitors ranked these attributes between “neither important nor unimportant” and “very important”. The top four most important attributes were “personal safety (mean = 4.12)”, “clean and green city (mean = 4.11)”, “friendliness of local people (mean = 4.08)” and “tourist information and support (mean = 3.93)”. These attributes were similar to the priorities addressed by tourism organization in Gothenburg, which projected Gothenburg image as friendly, clean and with an internationally competitive visitor service (Göteborg & Co 2005). But for the safety issues, they were mentioned in neither the official tourism website nor their operations report. Most tourists rated personal safety as the most important consideration when visiting Gothenburg, as safety and physical security are the primary conditions for normal tourism development of a destination, region or country (Reisinger and Mavondo 2005). After the 9-11 terrorist attack in United States in 2001, and the terrorism occurring in London, Madrid and Sharm El Sheik in recent years, there is a growing perception of the world as a more risky place to live and travel (Fischhoff et al. 2001), and this perception could have serious implications for destination marketers.

Due to world-wide pollution and global warming issues, health hazard are higher than ever before, more tourists are concerned about the environmental issues while choosing tourists destination. Since Gothenburg is famous for its environmental friendliness, clean and green surroundings, so visitors might expect Gothenburg as clean and green city and rated this as an important attribute. Moreover, they considered “friendliness of local people” as an important attribute for visiting Gothenburg. Since Göteborg & Co ambitiously projected Gothenburg as a friendly

city, these images have been promoted in their tourism website, travel brochures and promotion video. And according to Hoffman and Lou (1988), in their study of visitors to Phoenix, Arizona, they found that the most important variable in any decision to return in the future was the visitor's image of the friendliness of the residents. Friendliness became an important attribute for visitors when they visited Gothenburg and if they intended to re-visit in the future. Moreover, tourists are usually strangers and new to the destinations visited, they expect to have tourist information and support such as good visitor service, detailed maps to inform them and help to interpret the destination in more depth.

In contrast, “night life / entertainment (mean = 3.08)”, “historic sites / museums (mean = 3.18)” and “shopping facilities (mean = 3.23)” were rated as the three least important attributes. It was understood why “nightlife / entertainment” was rated low, as some of the typical tourists were families with children, nightlife such as bars and disco would become unimportant to them. Also for the sport tourists, some of them were athletes and coaches of the European championship, they might require a more regular and healthier resting time for better performance for competitions, they would not consider night life or entertainment as important attributes during their stays in Gothenburg. And according to Göteborg & Co (2005), their summer target were families with children, promotions and programs might emphasize activities which were suitable for children other than night life of Gothenburg, therefore visitors may viewed night life as an important issue when they visited Gothenburg. The low importance of historic sites, museums and shopping facilities were mainly affected by sport tourists' evaluations, since most of them visited Gothenburg with main purpose of participating EM, they might not schedule their time in visiting historical sites, museums and shopping, so relatively low important mean scores were indicated in this case.

4.2.2 Performance of image attributes of Gothenburg by all visitors

The mean scores of the performance of Gothenburg on the same attributes were also calculated. In Table 4.2 column four, presented with the mean performance ratings of 16 attributes ranged from 3.10 to 4.28. They were much higher than the importance

attributes, which reflected all tourists held positive attitudes towards Gothenburg's images. The tourists gave the top ratings to "personal safety (mean = 4.28)", "friendliness of local people (mean = 4.24)", "tourist information and support (mean = 4.24)" and "clean and green city (mean = 4.22)". These four attributes were evaluated by all visitors as good performance to very good performance.

For personal safety, most visitors felt Gothenburg was a safe place. In fact, during the EM period, special efforts were paid by police in maintaining safety in Gothenburg. As from our observations, extra police manpower was allocated in the city centre and the competition arena, many police patrolled the streets to help tourists and control the flow of people. Also, there were over 3000 volunteers over the city assisted during EM and Gothenburg party, they maintained safety arrangements such as a proper queuing system to avoid overflow of people. Furthermore, Sweden consistently maintained a peaceful and safe image in the world. The non-alignment in peacetime, neutrality in wartime was the security doctrine on which the Swedish foreign and defence policy was based for almost 175 years. Sweden is also actively involved in world political efforts to keep world peace, especially in the United Nations. Sweden and Swedish diplomats have frequently acted as mediators in various conflicts (Britton, 2006a). This country image will directly affect tourists' perception of Gothenburg as it is the second largest city in Sweden.

For the friendliness of the local people, most tourists perceived Gothenburg people as very friendly towards them. From our interviews, many tourists shared their experiences when they met the locals. They mentioned that local people were helpful and showed sincerely in different ways. For example, tourists viewed hotels, restaurants and shops provided with quality customer services, staff were very friendly and helpful in solving their problems. Also as tourists were unfamiliar with the city and asked for directions, locals were truthful in helping them.

Furthermore, most tourists rated high performance in tourist information and support. During the EM period, information stands for EM and tourism activities were placed in strategic locations within the city. Tourists were provided with information about the schedule, venue and transportation arrangements of activities related to city festival and tourist attractions. With the help of these stands, tourists were better

informed about Gothenburg offerings and planned their trips more effectively. According Göteborg & Co (2005), Gothenburg tourist office was named Sweden's best tourist office in the city category in 2005. They aimed at offering an internationally competitive visitor service to prospective and existing visitors alike. Also, their staffs were well-trained with a good knowledge of the information needs of visitors, combined with professional use of new technology in a user-friendly way. From our observation and personal experiences, most of their staff were very professional and provided with tailored services. They were knowledgeable in explaining and recommending tourism products to visitors and arranged appropriate packages according to tourists' specific requirements. Göteborg & Co also provided digital interactive brochure stands at around 80 strategic locations such as halls, hotels and campsites. The stands offered up-to-the-minute information about cultural, entertainment, shopping, attractions and sightseeing information to visitors. Tourists could easily access tourist information without any boundaries.

In addition, with reference to the performance rating, most tourists viewed Gothenburg as a clean and green city. Gothenburg has a beautiful cityscape with many green spaces in the central parts of the city. Botanical Gardens, the Horticultural Society Park and Slottsskogen are situated within walking distance from the city centre. Tourists can relax and have a walk in those green surroundings. Furthermore, during the EM period, special attention was paid on rubbish collection and recycling. From our observation, extra rubbish bins with clear recycle divisions were placed in many places, which showed the City of Göteborg took initiatives in protecting the environment. According to City of Göteborg (2005), they engaged in environmental work and proceeded to an extensive level. The City took part in a large number of projects, processes and activities which focused on climate issues, urban development and consumption patterns in a sustainable society. For example, the Road Traffic Office worked out a new "Environmental Traffic Programme" in 2005. It aimed to meet the environmental quality norm for nitrogen dioxide in the Gothenburg region. With support and investment from government, clean and green environment can be preserved in an optimal level in Gothenburg.

On the other hand, "cost/price level (mean = 3.10)", "historic sites/museums (mean =3.55)" and "difference customs/culture (mean = 3.56) were perceived as relatively

low performance. A well-established perception is that Sweden is generally an expensive country to live in (Britton, 2006b) and it is famous for its high value added tax. Sweden is the EU country with highest normal VAT rate of 25 % (Nordström 2004). So this will directly affect the image of Gothenburg and projected it as an expensive city to travel. From our questionnaire, some tourists commented that tourism products in Gothenburg were not value for money. This finding was consistent with the results presented by Mossberg (2000). In her investigation, it concluded Gothenburg as an expensive city to visit, since tourists in both pre and post study rated Gothenburg with high price level and expensive good and services.

Moreover, tourists also rated historic sites/museums as low performance. It can be explained by the low participation of the sport tourists. Since most of the sport tourists only focused on the EM competition, they did not have time to visit tourist attractions and might not be interested in museums and historical sites, so they just rated this attribute by their preliminary impression but not by real experiences. Furthermore, tourists did not think Gothenburg had distinctive customs/different culture. Since some of the tourists are from Nordic countries, they thought Gothenburg's culture was similar to other cities in Sweden and Scandinavian countries and were not very different from their own culture.

Finally, the overall performance rated by all visitors with mean of 4.16, which concluded that most visitors thought Gothenburg overall image attributes as high performers and they satisfied with the overall image projected by Gothenburg during their travels.

Table 4.2 Mean ratings of importance and performance of image attributes of Gothenburg: All visitors (Both typical tourists and sport tourists)

Attribute Number	Attribute Description	Mean Importance Rating ^a	Mean Performance Rating ^b
1	Accommodation Facilities	3.39	3.85
2	Clean and green city	4.11	4.22
3	Climate	3.35	3.67
4	Costs / price level	3.44	3.10
5	Difference customs / culture	3.43	3.56
6	Friendliness of local people	4.08	4.24
7	Historic sites / museums	3.18	3.55
8	Local infrastructure / transportation	3.72	4.05
9	Nightlife / entertainment	3.08	3.75
10	Personal safety	4.12	4.28
11	Quality of food	3.76	3.90
12	Restful / relaxing atmosphere	3.86	4.06
13	Scenery / natural attractions	3.73	3.97
14	Sports facilities / activities	3.48	4.04
15	Shopping facilities	3.23	3.93
16	Tourist information and support	3.93	4.24

Notes: ^aRating obtained from a five-point Likert scale of 1 = not important, 5 = very important

^bRating obtained from a five-point Likert scale of 1 = very poor performance, 5 = very good performance

4.2.3 Importance of image attributes of Gothenburg by typical tourists and sports tourist

Table 4.3 and 4.4 shows the mean scores of Gothenburg attributes rated by typical tourists and sport tourists in relation to importance. Typical and sport tourists were consistent in rating the importance of image attributes of Gothenburg, both of them rated “clean and green”, “friendliness of local people” and “personal safety” as three of the most important attributes. Additionally, sport tourists also rated “sports facilities/activities” as important image attribute of Gothenburg. Since they visited Gothenburg with the purpose of attending EM, sport facilities, arena and related activities such as the EM opening and closing ceremony would be considered as important for them.

On the other hand, typical tourists rated “sports facilities/facilities (mean = 2.91)”, “accommodation facilities (mean = 3.09)” and “nightlife/entertainment (mean = 3.10)” as the least important attributes. Most typical tourists aimed at vacation and visiting

friends when they travelled to Gothenburg, they might not interest in participating sport activities or using sport facilities, therefore they rated this attribute as low importance. For the low importance in accommodation facilities, over half (51%) of the typical tourists were young people or backpackers, they could not afford hotels equipped with various facilities due to limited budget, instead they would prefer choosing youth hostels with basic facilities as their main choice of accommodations. Also those tourists who were families with children prefer stayed in campsite instead of expensive hotels, so they might view accommodation facilities as unimportant to them. For the nightlife/ entertainment, as mentioned in the importance attributes for all visitors, both typical and sport tourists rated it as low importance. In contrast, except “nightlife/entertainment (mean = 3.06)”, sports tourists rated “historical sites/museums (mean = 3.03)” and “shopping facilities (mean = 3.16)” as least important attributes. Since sport tourists focused on EM and related activities, they might not have other free time to visit tourist attractions and for shopping.

4.2.4 Performance of image attributes of Gothenburg by typical tourists and sports tourist

Column four of Table 4.3 & 4.4 presented with the performance of image attributes by two groups of tourists. Typical tourists rated “tourist information and support (mean = 4.26)”, “personal safety (mean = 4.21)” and “friendliness of local people (mean = 4.17)” as top three in performance rating. But in contrast, sports tourists gave top ratings to “sports facilities/activities (mean = 4.36)”, “personal safety (mean = 4.35)” and “clean and green city (mean = 4.31)”. From the results, we found that two groups of tourists had different perception towards the performance of image attributes of Gothenburg, except for personal safety. These differentiations might arise from different needs and purposes in travelling to Gothenburg.

On the other hand, the three lowest ratings by typical tourists were given to “costs/price level (mean = 3.02)”, “difference customs/culture (mean = 3.54)” and “climate (mean = 3.58)”. These ratings were consistent with sport tourists, since they also rated “costs/price level (mean = 3.18)”, “historical sites/museums (mean = 3.42)” as worst performance, except “difference customs/culture (mean = 3.58)”, it

was different with typical tourists. So Gothenburg marketers should find out their problems and try to improve them.

Finally, the overall performance rated by typical tourists with the mean of 4.11, whereas sport tourists rated with the mean of 4.20, which concluded that sport tourists are more satisfied and impressed compare with typical tourists on overall Gothenburg's image attributes.

Table 4.3 Mean ratings of importance and performance of image attributes of Gothenburg (Typical Tourists)

Attribute Number	Attribute Description	Mean Importance Rating ^a	Mean Performance Rating ^b
1	Accommodation Facilities	3.09	3.67
2	Clean and green city	4.13	4.13
3	Climate	3.30	3.58
4	Costs / price level	3.42	3.02
5	Difference customs / culture	3.57	3.54
6	Friendliness of local people	4.03	4.17
7	Historic sites / museums	3.33	3.67
8	Local infrastructure / transportation	3.62	3.99
9	Nightlife / entertainment	3.10	3.71
10	Personal safety	4.03	4.21
11	Quality of food	3.66	3.89
12	Restful / relaxing atmosphere	3.91	4.02
13	Scenery / natural attractions	3.79	3.95
14	Sports facilities / activities	2.91	3.70
15	Shopping facilities	3.30	3.99
16	Tourist information and support	3.94	4.26

Notes: ^aRating obtained from a five-point Likert scale of 1 = not important, 5 = very important

^bRating obtained from a five-point Likert scale of 1 = very poor performance, 5 = very good performance

Table 4.4 Mean ratings of importance and performance of image attributes of Gothenburg (Sport Tourists)

Attribute Number	Attribute Description	Mean Importance Rating ^a	Mean Performance Rating ^b
1	Accommodation Facilities	3.69	4.03
2	Clean and green city	4.10	4.31
3	Climate	3.40	3.76
4	Costs / price level	3.46	3.18
5	Difference customs / culture	3.30	3.58
6	Friendliness of local people	4.13	4.30
7	Historic sites / museums	3.03	3.42
8	Local infrastructure / transportation	3.82	4.11
9	Nightlife / entertainment	3.06	3.78
10	Personal safety	4.22	4.35
11	Quality of food	3.85	3.9
12	Restful / relaxing atmosphere	3.80	4.11
13	Scenery / natural attractions	3.67	4.00
14	Sports facilities / activities	4.05	4.36
15	Shopping facilities	3.16	3.86
16	Tourist information and support	3.92	4.21

Notes: ^aRating obtained from a five-point Likert scale of 1 = not important, 5 = very important

^bRating obtained from a five-point Likert scale of 1 = very poor performance, 5 = very good performance

4.2.5 Importance Performance Grid for all visitors

After identifying the importance and performance attributes of tourists, the importance and performance scores were then entered into an IPA grid. Results in Fig. 4.1 indicated the IPA grid with attribute ratings of all tourists. Among the 16 variables related to Gothenburg's image features, seven attributes were located in "keep up the work" quadrant, indicated the image attributes were perceived to be very important to tourists, and at the same time, tourists rated Gothenburg as high level of performance on those attributes. These seven attributes were personal safety (10), clean and green city (2), friendliness of local people (6), tourist information and support (16), restful/relaxing atmosphere (12), scenery/natural attractions (13) and local infrastructure/transportation (8). Gothenburg marketers should try to maintain the performance of these attributes, because they were important attributes which sustained positive tourism image of Gothenburg. And there were no attributes that were firmly located on the "concentrate here" quadrant, which means no attributes were perceived to be very important to tourists, but performance levels were fairly low. But one attribute – quality of food (11) fell into an indifference performance

location on the border of “concentrate here” and “keep up the work” quadrants. Special attention should be paid to this attribute with regular review to monitor the performance of food quality. Otherwise, it might be underperformed and fall into “concentrate here” quadrant. It is better for Gothenburg to improve the food offerings to avoid this problem. Six attributes fell into “low priority” quadrant; they were cost/price level (4), difference customs/culture (5), accommodation facilities (1), climate (3), historic sites/museums (7) and nightlife/entertainment (9). These attributes were perceived to be of low importance to tourists and low performance. Although performance levels were rather low in this cell, marketers should not overly concern since they were not perceived to be very important. Limited resources should be expended on this low priority cell (Chu and Choi 2000). In addition, sports facilities/activities (14) and shopping facilities (15) were fell into “possible overkill” quadrant. These attributes were low importance perceived by tourists, but relatively high performance. Tourists were satisfied with the performance of the organizations, but Gothenburg tourism organizations should consider present efforts on the attributes of this cell as being over utilized (Chu and Choi 2000).

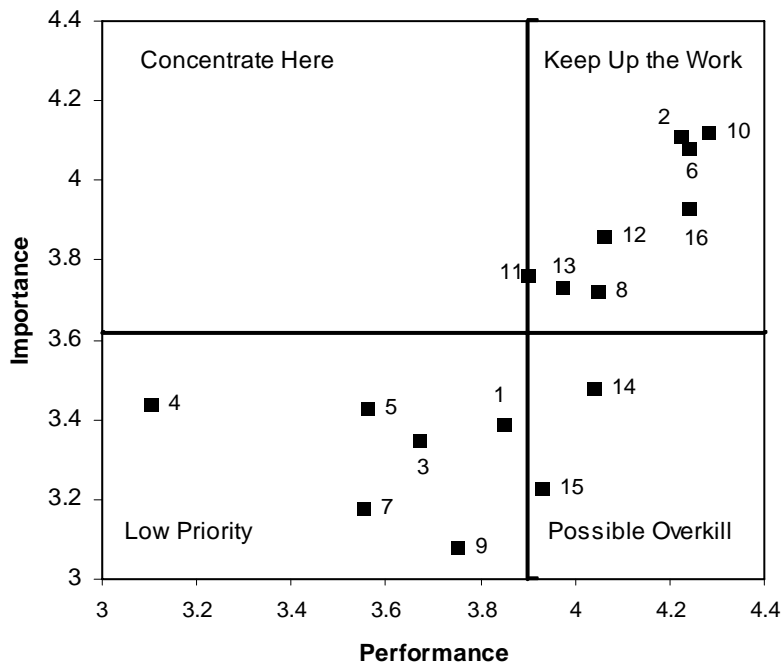


Fig. 4.1 Importance Performance Grid with Attribute Ratings for Gothenburg (All visitors).

Notes: The importance and performance means given each attributes by Gothenburg’s visitors are plotted in the four-cell typology above. Each number refers to a specific attribute, according to the followings:

1. Accommodation Facilities
2. Clean & green city
3. Climate
4. Costs / price level
5. Different customs / culture
6. Friendliness of local people
7. Historic sites / museums
8. Local infrastructure / transportation
9. Nightlife / entertainment
10. Personal safety
11. Quality of food
12. Restful / relaxing atmosphere
13. Scenery / natural attractions
14. Sports facilities / activities
15. Shopping facilities
16. Tourist information and support

4.2.6 Importance Performance Grid (Typical and Sport tourists)

Examining Segments

A false assumption often held by destination marketing organizations was that the needs and wants of tourists were homogeneous (Chon et al. 1991) But, in fact, many researchers confirmed that tourists were heterogeneous, and thus differentiated marketing strategies should be applied according to the nature of target markets, both in terms of promotions and in product development (Chon et al. 1991; Kim and Morrision 2005). So, to avoid making some inappropriate suggestions and conclusion, in the next part we will examine and explain differences in perceptions of importance and performance of both typical and sports tourists, as shown by the IPA grids in Fig. 4.2 & 4.3. Since they have different perceptions towards five image attributes, namely accommodation facilities, different customs/culture, quality of food, sport facilities/activities and shopping facilities, we will examine differences quadrant by quadrant.

The Concentrate Here quadrant

As we explained before, image attributes fell into “concentrate here” of the IPA grid were important to tourists, but Gothenburg’s performance levels were fairly low. From Fig. 4.3 of the IPA grid, sport tourists placed quality of food (11) in this quadrant. It reflected that sport tourists viewed that quality of food was important to them during their stays in Gothenburg, but they were not satisfied with the food quality here. Around 68 percent of the sport tourists in our survey were over 30, with high purchasing power and were more willing to spend on food and drinks. This result supported by Saayman et al. (2005) that sport tourists over 35 were those who spent significantly more on food than those under 25. And according to Gibson (2004), most of the sport tourists incurred food consumption as their major cost during their stays; therefore they might seek better quality of food and rate it as importance during their visit in Gothenburg. Furthermore, sport tourists concerned about their health, especially athletes, coaches and those who aged more than 50, they seek healthier food and drinks with high nutrition standard. But from our survey, sport tourists complained there were limited choices of food, too much junk food and expensive food and drinks in Gothenburg. The quality of food and drinks did not match with expectation of sport tourists and were underperformed, so marketing efforts should be focused more on promoting the variety of food in Gothenburg, addressing the quality

of food and the nutrition standard in their promotional message to potential sport tourists.

Furthermore, from Fig. 4.2 of the IPA grid, typical tourists placed different customs/culture (5) in an indifference importance location on the border of “concentrate here” and “low priority” quadrants. The typical tourists were uncertain towards the importance of different customs/culture, but they were not satisfied with the performance of culture, which reflected the absence of distinctive customs and culture in Gothenburg. Previous researchers indicated culture played a significant role in motivating international tourists to travel (Hanquin and Lam, 1999; Oh et al., 1995). Oh et al. (1995) concluded a large proportion of Australian leisure tourists seek an opportunity to increase knowledge by experiencing a different culture. Therefore, destination marketers should pay attention on this attribute even though importance was uncertain at this moment. Regular review should be done to check whether typical tourist changed their importance rating toward culture and customs in Gothenburg. A slight change in importance rating will constitute different implications for destination marketers, since attribute will either fall into “concentrate here” or “low priority” quadrants.

The Keep up the Work quadrant

Attributes in this quadrant were the strengths of Gothenburg, they were perceived by respondents as very important and Gothenburg performed quite well. Destination marketers should maintain attributes performance and keep up the good work. From Fig. 4.2 & 4.3, there were similarities and differences among typical and sport tourists. Both typical and sport tourists located clean and green city (2), friendliness of local people (6), local infrastructure (8), personal safety (10), restful/relaxing atmosphere (12) and tourist information and support (16) in this quadrant. These six attributes were considered satisfactorily in meeting both typical and sport tourists' needs. Among these six attributes, both typical and sport tourists rated clean and green city (2), friendliness of local people (6) and personal safety (10) as top criteria when visiting Gothenburg. These matched with the key elements of Gothenburg's projected tourism image, namely, friendly and clean city. But the image of safety was not yet projected by the Gothenburg's destination marketers.

Clean and green city, with a mean importance rating of 4.13, appeared to be the top criterion when visiting Gothenburg for typical tourists. This sends a meaningful message to destination marketers of Gothenburg, in that they should concentrate on this aspect from the tourists' desires. Resources should be directed to improve or maintain Gothenburg as a clean and green city. Special policies should be addressed to keep Gothenburg as environmental friendly and destination marketers need to ensure that Gothenburg projected this image to potential tourists. They should emphasize on clean and green image of Gothenburg when planning promotional activities.

In contrast, personal safety was the top priority rated by sport tourists, followed by friendliness of local people, and clean and green city. Sport tourists gave a higher mean importance score on personal safety (mean = 4.22) than typical tourists (mean = 4.03). In fact, safety and security have been reported as a main concern related to sport events (Toohey et al., 2003). For Gothenburg, a safety and security image could differentiate itself from competitors and attract more sport tourists. Special safety and security measures should be carried out during the sport event to ensure sport tourists feel safe during their stays in Gothenburg.

Friendliness of the local people was the next important attribute as perceived by both types of tourists when they visited Gothenburg. Tourism is a highly competitive industry, since tourists can choose to travel among various destinations. What differentiated from other competitors was not only the hardware such as tourist attractions and infrastructure, but also software such as the friendliness and welcome of the local people. Tourist attractions and infrastructure could be imitated and transcended easily by competitors, but friendliness and attitudes of local community were difficult to change and replicate by competitors in short term. Since Gothenburg has been perceived by both types of tourists as a city with friendly residents, destination marketers should further sustain and promote this competitive advantage to potential visitors.

Apart from the similarities, there were differences in attributes perceptions among typical and sport tourists in this quadrant. Unlike sport tourists' locating quality of food in "concentrate here", typical tourists were satisfied with the food quality and

located it in this quadrant. Most than 70% of the typical tourists were those aged under 20 to early 30, they were backpackers with limited budget and might cook by themselves in youth hostels or consume fast food from restaurants such as McDonalds or Burger King. The limited budget also narrowed their choices to experience food offerings in Gothenburg. Therefore, they might have lower expectation and be easily satisfied compared with sport tourists.

Furthermore, sport tourists also added accommodation facilities (1) and sport facilities/activities (14) in this quadrant, compared with typical tourists and with total visitors' perceptions. Attributes related to sport facilities/activities were rated by sport tourists as top fourth according to the importance rating and also viewed as satisfactory with its performance. Since sport tourists visited Gothenburg with the main purpose of participating sport events, it was undoubtedly that they were more concerned about sport facilities and activities compared with typical tourists. Destination marketers should try to maintain the performance of this attribute and promote to potential sport tourists that Gothenburg was equipped with well-developed arena and sport facilities. As for accommodation facilities, sports tourists rated it as of importance and satisfied with Gothenburg's performance. Since most of the sport tourists incurred accommodation as their major cost during their stays (Gibson 2004), they might regard accommodation facilities as one of the most important parts of their trip. Also sport tourists interested in sports might exercise regularly, so they would have special requirements. For example, accommodations equipped with spa or well-developed fitness facilities would become their priorities. Since sport tourists were satisfied with performance of accommodation facilities in Gothenburg, this might be one of the selling points towards potential sport tourists while delivering promotional messages.

In addition, image attribute of scenery/natural attractions (13) was located in this quadrant by typical tourists. Since Gothenburg is famous for its natural attractions such as archipelagos, lakes and sea, especially during the summer period. It is expected that tourists rated this as an importance attribute and satisfied with its performance. But unexpectedly, sport tourists placed this attribute in an indifference importance location on the border of "keep up the work" and "possible overkill" quadrants, which reflected a lower importance compared with typical tourists. While

EM occupied most of their time, they might not have spare time to visit other attractions. Destination marketers should further promote the natural attractions of Gothenburg and attract sport tourists to stay longer to visit other tourist attractions.

Low priority

Attributes in this quadrant were regarded as low in both importance and performance; relatively fewer resources should be devoted into them. Climate (3), costs/price level (4), historical sites/museums (7) and nightlife/entertainment (9) were perceived as low priorities by both typical and sport tourists according to Fig. 4.2 & 4.3, among these attributes night life/entertainment was perceived by both types of tourists as low in performance. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, since the summer target of Gothenburg was families with children and sport tourists were more concern about their health with much regular resting pattern. Nightlife and entertainment will not be selling points of Gothenburg towards both target segments. Destination marketers should not spend too much resources and efforts in promoting these attributes to either segment. Cost/price level was perceived as lowest performance by both typical and sport tourists within this quadrant. Since Sweden always projected an image as are expensive country, and in fact, many tourists complained about the price of food and accommodations.

For the differences between two groups, unlike sport tourists who placed accommodation facilities (1) and sport facilities/activities (14) in “keep up the work” quadrant, typical tourists located these two attributes in “low priority” quadrant instead. As explained before, most young typical tourists tended to trade off accommodation facilities against price, they undervalued Gothenburg’s accommodation’s performance since they mainly stayed in youth hotels or camping sites equipped with basic facilities. As for the sport facilities/activities, they are usually regarded as unattractive and easily ignored by typical tourists, since most of them travelled to Gothenburg with the purpose unrelated to sports. Moreover, sport tourists added different customs/culture (5) and shopping facilities (15) in this quadrant, reflected their low interests and under-evaluations towards these attributes. They also tended to rate them as under performance since they knew little and lacked experiences on these attributes, resulted by sports-focused visits. According to our survey, some sport tourists were athletes and coaches, since their trips were sponsored

by their countries or official sport organizations, they could not extend their stay in Gothenburg. And most of their time was filled up with competitions and training. They did not have time either to experience Gothenburg's customs and culture or spend on shopping. Destination marketers should provide tailored offerings and attract them to re-visit Gothenburg as typical tourists.

Although the above attributes might seem to be low in both performance and importance at this moment, destination marketers of Gothenburg should not totally neglect these attributes and remove all their resources. If the perceptions of tourists suddenly change, the existing unimportant attributes might become important in the future, attributes will fall into "concentrate here" quadrant and require extra efforts to increase performance. Gothenburg's tourist organization should review these attributes regularly, especially those with mean scores near to the "cross-hair" of importance and make sure appropriate marketing strategies can be developed accordingly.

Possible Overkill

This cell contained attributes of low importance but relatively high performance. Although respondents were satisfied with the performance of Gothenburg, present efforts have been regarded as over utilized. According to Fig. 4.2 & 4.3, image attribute related to shopping facilities (15) was placed by typical tourists in this quadrant. Given that Gothenburg did not project an image as a shopping paradise compared with other European countries such as Paris and Italy, most tourists did not expect to set shopping as a high priority for their Gothenburg visiting. This attribute was similar to hygiene factor (Herzberg et al. 1959), it did not lead to higher levels of satisfaction by tourists but without it they will be dissatisfied. Therefore, Gothenburg should strike a balance between attaining optimal level and avoid over-utilization of its resources when providing shopping facilities. For the sport tourists, there were no attributes firmly located in "possible overkill" quadrant, as mentioned before, nature (13) located in an indifference importance location on the border of "keep up the work" and "possible overkill".

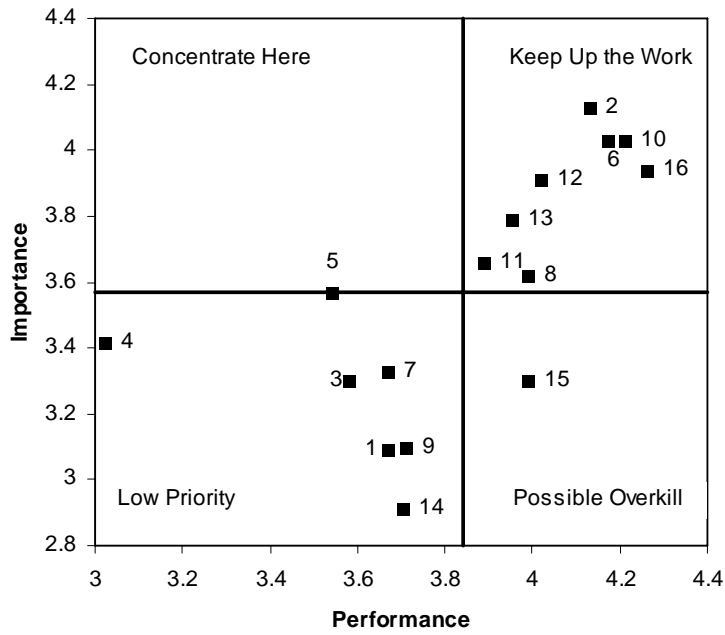


Fig. 4.2 Importance Performance Grid with Attribute Ratings for Gothenburg (Typical Tourists)

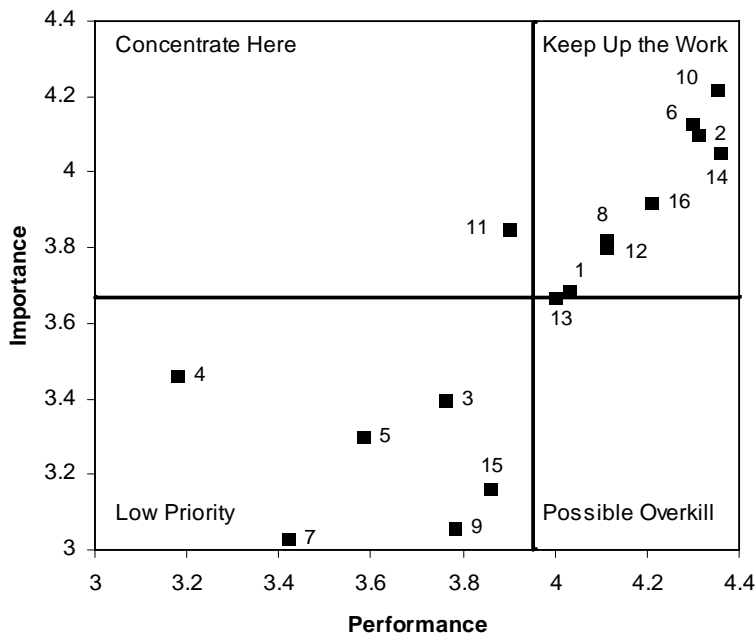


Fig. 4.3 Importance Performance Grid with Attribute Ratings for Gothenburg (Sports Tourists)

4.3 Qualitative analysis of respondents' comments

A quantitative statistic method, based on qualitative categorizing work, was used to deal with the qualitative data gained from open-ended questions. Those occurring more frequently responses will be presented in Table 4.3.1 to Table 4.3.4, displaying an initial view of the respondents' perceptions. The frequency of each category will be shown as a percentage of all the responses received to that particular question (excluding the non-responses). Moreover, each question's answers will be divided to list as two types of respondents- the typical tourist and the EM participant besides the "Total" column. This is to facilitate the comparison between the two groups. Only direct conclusions from these tables will be presented in details behind each chart. A deeper analysis and more general conclusions to the results in tables will be made in the summary of survey results, the last part of this chapter, combined with IPA results to close-ended questions.

4.3.1 Visitors' image of Gothenburg

There are 367 respondents put forward their impressions of Gothenburg, i.e. the response rate of this question is 99.5 percent. Among them, 361 respondents offered 2nd impression and 353 respondents submitted 3rd descriptive word to Gothenburg's image in their minds. Frequencies analysis was used to deal with the 1081 impressive phases on Gothenburg's image. Having grouped all synonyms relatively most mentioned by respondents (more than 10 times), we drew a Table below. They are ordered as their appearing orders in visitors' minds, which can tell us which one is the "First impression", the most powerful impression in decision-making for its lasting effects (Mckee, 2006).

Table 4.5 Image of Gothenburg in visitors' minds

Image	First Impression (Mentioned times)		Second Impression (Mentioned times)		Third Impression (Mentioned times)		Total	
	(T)	(S)	(T)	(S)	(T)	(S)	Mentioned Times	Percentage
Friendly/Helpful	24	45	41	46	20	26	202	54.7%
Nice/ Good city\town	27	26	7	12	7	10	89	24.1%
Clean	18	15	10	18	7	12	80	21.7%
Beautiful/Scenic/Natural	22	15	9	5	11	5	67	18.1%
Green	14	8	11	12	7	2	54	14.6%
Relaxing	8	5	10	4	5	6	38	10.3%
Attractive	4	2	7	1	9	9	32	8.7%
Lively	4	4	3	8	3	5	27	7.3%
Safe	2	3	3	5	4	9	26	7%
Sea/Coast/ Archipelago harbour/ships	5	1	8	4	5	3	26	7%
Good Climate (warm/cool/sunny)	1	5	2	6	7	4	25	6.8%
Sportive	3	4	1	6	2	8	24	6.5%
Great atmosphere	1	3	2	3	3	12	24	6.5%
International	5	3	3	5	4	1	21	5.7%
Open	4	3	3	5	3	1	19	5.1%
Pleasant & Cosy	4	2	1	4	3	5	19	5.1%
Rainy & wet	4	4	2	1	3	4	18	4.9%
Cultural/Historic/Classic	1	2	6	1	4	1	15	4.1%
Wonderful/Great	3	6	1	0	2	3	14	3.8%
Quiet	1	3	2	1	3	3	13	3.5%
Compact	1	3	2	2	3	2	13	3.5%
Colourful /Diverse (Lots of things can see or do)	2	0	4	1	2	3	12	3.3%
Crowded	4	1	4	0	2	0	11	3%
Easy to walk around/ reach sites	2	0	1	3	3	2	11	3%
Good shopping	0	0	4	0	5	1	10	2.7%
Other scattered phases	191						51.7%	
Missing Values	26						7%	
Total	369						100%	

Notes:

1. Typical Tourists: (T), Sport Tourists: (S)
2. The right column (percent) designates the number of times the phase was mentioned in relation to the total number of respondents (369); accordingly the right column shows the mentioned time of answers that included the word/category in question. The left column indicates the phases raised by respondents most frequently. (≥ 10)

From the Table 4.5, “Friendly”, “Nice” and “Clean” are the first three frequent images in visitors’ minds. Among the twenty-five kinds of images relatively more frequently mentioned by visitors, only two are negative impressions - the weather and overcrowding due to EM. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that Gothenburg possess quite a positive image in its visitors’ minds. But this does not mean that there is no problem with Gothenburg’s image as a tourism destination. On the contrary, a serious defect was revealed when we studied the answers more carefully. Considerable numbers of respondents (37%) used rather general terms, such as “nice”, “good”, “attractive”, “great/wonderful” which can relay little distinct information. This shows that the images of Gothenburg were still rather vague for visitors. Therefore, future efforts to image-building should focus on strengthening Gothenburg’s distinctive attractions, let visitors not only feel great generally but know clearly what attractions in Gothenburg are irresistible for them.

On the other hand, those specific images held by respondents give readers a clearer image of Gothenburg. For example, “friendly” has displayed to be the most outstanding image of Gothenburg, proving the city has actually achieved one of its targets in image-building (Göteborg & Co, 2005). Visitors’ high evaluation of local residents is an optimum start to form a good relationship between tourists and host communities of tourism destination. According to Pizam (2000), tourists who have more favourable feelings towards their hosts, the higher is the satisfaction-level with their stay and experience, and more positive is the change in their attitudes towards the destination.

Categorizing results also showed to us that Gothenburg’s pure natural beauty; great atmosphere, which gave visitors various good feelings like relaxing, lively, colourful, sportive; “Water city” with lots of lakes, sea and archipelago views, including the nice harbour and famous shipping trade; as well as a cosy summer were all outstanding aspects for visitors. Combining these distinct answers with the information about whether their respondents have visited Gothenburg before, it became evident that respondents who had been to Gothenburg or had spent a long time here had more detailed impressions on Gothenburg than the newcomers.

Other aspects of Gothenburg impressed visitors

As for other scattered descriptive phases of their impression on the whole city, “a fresh typical Swedish or Scandinavian culture/style”, “small and town-like”, “a modern big city with strong metropolitan atmosphere”, “a cultural and historical city processing strong classical atmosphere and old styles”, “a cosy residency in good weather”, “young”, “accessible for its good geographic location and facilitating transportation”, “exciting”, “explorative”, “lots of people but in good order”, “impressive” and “homely” are all images that Gothenburg impressed more than one visitor.

Many other tourist attractions impressed respondents are listed as following: (1) Swedish social system and structure: With 12 respondents referring to it. In their eyes, Gothenburg is a free, democratic and legally-protected city, and with low population density. It has been well developed, setting up with admirable beneficial system and provide its people perfect life conditions, so its citizens are worthy admiring. Furthermore, it offers lots of opportunities for various people. (2) Nice environment: the beautiful countryside and forest, blue sky and good-quality air are all appreciated by tourists. (3) Perfect infrastructures of Gothenburg: Firstly, convenient public traffic signs and transportations which facilitated visitors’ travelling around the city allows them easily find the attractions, and to feel quite happy walking around or riding bicycles, together with the old tram is quite funny for them. Secondly, 8 respondents thought there are many good restaurants/cafés, which offered delicious food. And three respondents appreciated Swedish fish and seafood particularly. Four visitors liked its evening-views, music programs and colourful nightlife. Thirdly, ten respondents referred to “good shopping” for they enjoyed many shops and shopping centres gathered in the downtown area. (4) EM: There are 18 respondents impressed by EM. Eleven of them believed it was quite professionally and efficiently organized. And five of them enjoyed the strong atmosphere of EM spread all over the city, for example, the sports-loving locals and the enthusiastic spectators.

To look into the meaningfulness of these impressions, deeper studies combining demographic characteristics are required, especially for these scattered images, because these scattered images are given by minorities, and opinion who are not representative enough for whole population. For instance, opposite to the majorities

complained about the high price level, there were two respondents who believed that the cost level here was quite cheap. In order to prove these two responses are special, not meaningful for population, we checked their backgrounds and found that both of them were comparing Gothenburg with Norway, though one was Dutch.

Finally, a brief comparison was conducted to reveal whether there was big difference between the images of the two groups, shown in Fig. 4.4. More typical tourists than sport tourists referred beautiful sceneries, the green natural environment, relaxing atmosphere, sea-views, cultural attractions, colourful availabilities and good shopping facilities, the same as in the complaints on crowded. While, more sport tourists enjoyed lively, sportive atmosphere and set a higher value on friendliness, cleanness and security of Gothenburg. This comparison revealed differences existing between typical tourists and sport tourists. They have different interests and different levels of requirements. Typical tourists pay more attention to leisure tourism environments and various attractions. Shopping is also important for them. They disgusted crowds or other tense factors. Sports tourists, contrarily, more focused on sports related aspects, such as sportive atmosphere. The high evaluations to city environments valued by sport tourists probably resulted in their less cares and relatively low requirements.

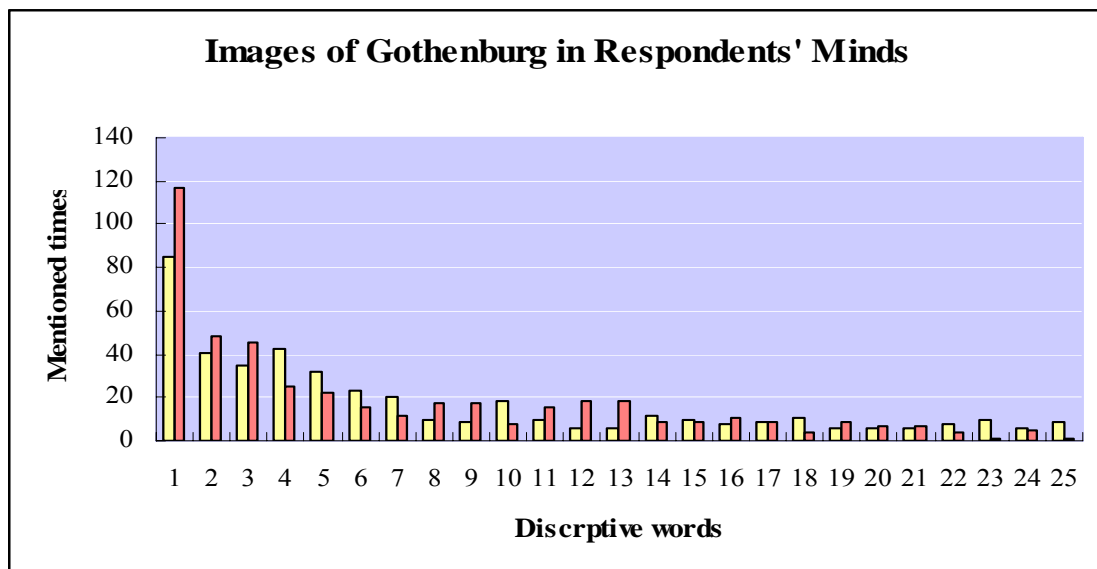


Fig. 4.4 Comparing images held by two groups
 Note: The figures on the Horizontal line indicate the 25 descriptive phases to Gothenburg offered by respondents, as listed in Table 4.5; the yellow bar stands for typical tourist and the red one for sport tourist.

Negative Impression

As stated in the beginning, the worst impressions on Gothenburg evaluated by visitors are the bad weather during the EM and a swarm of people due to this event. 18 respondents complained about too much rain though they were quite satisfied with other aspects. It not only brought much inconvenience and uncomfortable temperature, but also destroyed their mood to spend holidays, i.e. four visitors felt hot in the sunny days and two felt cold when raining. Another 13 visitors felt “too crowded” during EM for having traffic jams or had to wait in long queues for many services. As for many other social problems resulted by crowds of people, like decreased public security, will be discussed more detailed in visitors’ complaints. Besides, three visitors were disgusted by the architecture in Gothenburg for most buildings they saw as being ugly and boring. And two respondents evaluated the city as “dirty” and 8 respondents felt accommodation was too expensive for them.

According to Susskind (2002), we should focus on negative image for it will dampen visitors’ intentions to revisit but increase the negative word-of-mouth to their acquaintances.

4.3.2 Attractive aspects of Gothenburg in visitors’ minds

Among the open-ended questions, the third and fourth ones involved close-ended alternative question-forms, which concerned visitors’ intentions in revisiting and recommending Gothenburg, because we have strong interests in their future behaviours, but are unable to conduct a post-event survey limited by objective conditions. Further inquiries into their motivation to revisit and recommend were followed by a “Writing about what attracts you most in Gothenburg” question, for we wished to get more specific attractions in visitors’ minds. The reason of this design is that we believed these three questions were of the same underlying essence- investigate what things are attractive enough /impress visitors through their selves’ experience. Consequently, the analysis of them will be combined under this title.

4.3.2.1 Tourist Attractions

Each individual visitor was asked to describe the most attractive aspects of Gothenburg in the fourth open-ended question. It is possible that its unfavourable position, behind two alternative questions, makes it seem a bit repetitive and more troublesome. The response rate decreased a more than in the former question (73.4%), 271 (121 typical tourists & 150 sport tourists) respondents put forward the 400 most attractive items in Gothenburg. Among them, 99 respondents offered the second attractions and 30 respondents further proposed the third attractions to them.

However, we are satisfied with the answers despite the low-response rate because the majorities gave their answers in very specific ways, rather in vague terms. In order to verify the assumption that the two groups of visitors have different interests and requirements, which was put forward in the beginning of this study, we listed 25 attractions mentioned by both groups in Table 4.6 to facilitate comparison. Other attractions referred by any one group will be described briefly after that.

Table 4.6 Attractions in Gothenburg mentioned by both types of tourists

Attractions	Mentioned times (T)	Mentioned times (S)	Total	
			Times	Percent
EM & sports	6	51	57	14.3%
Friendly/helpful/polite citizens	12	24	36	9%
Sea/Coast-view & Archipelago	7	16	23	5.8%
Nice atmosphere (Relaxing/ town-feeling/quiet/modern etc.)	17	4	21	5.3%
Shopping & Avenue	15	4	19	4.8%
Parks/Gardens & lots of public green space (Botanical\ Luna)	13	6	19	4.8%
EM festival & relevant performances (bands or famous artists playing / Symphonic Concert / folk music)	4	14	18	4.5%
Liseberg	7	10	17	4.3%
The whole city (everything) & its various attractions	9	5	14	3.5%
Cultural & historic sites (museums\opera\monuments)	11	3	14	3.5%
Harbour/ships/fish church	9	4	13	3.3%
Swedish/Scandinavian culture or Atmosphere (lifestyle)	8	4	12	3%
Beautiful Swedish girls & handsome boys	7	5	12	3%
EM atmosphere & sportive city (well-organized/supportive/respect athletes)	1	10	11	2.8%
Night life/ entertainment	4	6	10	2.5%
Natural scenery	4	5	9	2.2%
Ullevi	2	6	8	2%
Safety	2	5	7	1.8%
Colourful & lively (lots of things can do)	4	2	6	1.5%
Friends/relatives	4	2	6	1.5%
Compact city (within walking distance)	1	3	4	1%
Easily Walk/ride bicycle around	2	2	4	1%
Summer climate/ good weather	2	2	4	1%
International / tolerant	2	1	3	0.7%
Good geographic location	1	1	2	0.5%
Other items mentioned by either groups				
		51		12.8%
Total mentioned items		400		100%

Notes:

1. Typical Tourists: (T), Sport Tourists: (S)
2. The right column (%) indicates the number of times the phase was mentioned in relation to the total number of responses (400); accordingly the right column shows the mentioned time of answers that included the word/category in question. The left column shows the attractions raised by both groups of respondents.

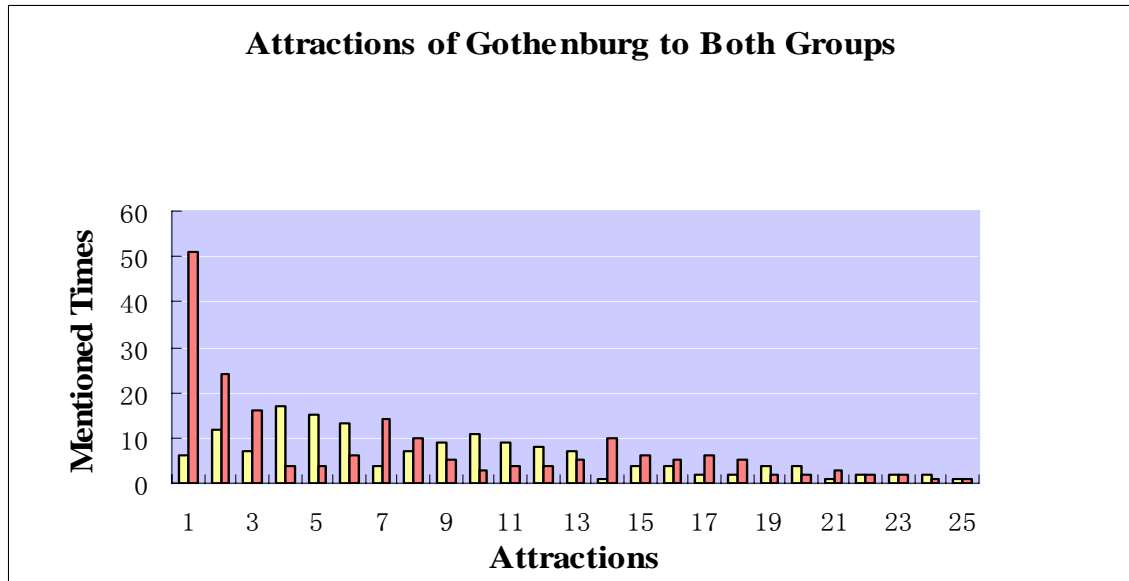


Fig. 4.5 Comparison between two groups on attractions of Gothenburg

Note: the figures on the horizontal line indicate the 25 attractions in Gothenburg mentioned by both groups; the yellow column stands for typical tourist and the red one for sport tourist.

From Table 4.6, we can see it shows a different look than Table 4.5, for there existed great differences in the mentioned times by two types of tourists to most attractions recognized by them. Therefore, we drew a bar chart- Fig.4.5 to clarify these differences. Different interests and attentions were clearly exposed by a simple comparison. The most attractive objects for sport tourists are things related to EM and sports, including the EM matches, the Ullevi stadium, and the city festival/celebration for EM and relevant performances. Except that, friendliness of Gothenburg communities, sea-view and Liseberg are also fascinating for sport tourists. On the contrary, they showed less interest in cultural tourism attractions, relaxations, shopping facilities and the city surroundings when comparing with typical tourists. This result is consistent with sport tourists' main visiting motivation and purpose- the EM, in which they spent most time and energy. It is hard for them to experience the city's tourism thoroughly within the limited stays, especially for the tourist attractions with cultural connotations. Normally, only those aspects they have to be involved in become their main ways to experience the host city, such as accommodation, food and beverage and entertainments. Subsequently, we conclude that it is the absence of knowledge and experience due to their low interests and evaluations. It is possible to

provoke their interests and cares, as destination marketers facilitate them in knowing more about Gothenburg before and after they arrived.

As for the typical tourists interviewed by us, the most impressive attraction is the atmosphere of Gothenburg city, which its relaxing, quiet town-feeling and welcoming in their descriptions. Furthermore, they possessed the common features of tourists, paid nearly equal attentions to natural and cultural tourism attractions and cared more about shopping and social environment of the destination. It is obvious that typical tourists were more familiar with the tourist attractions of Gothenburg because they stated more specific names of interests and places.

Other attractions only mentioned by one group

There were several specific attractions pointed out directly by respondents, such as the boat tour, skiing, Haga, international academic circumstance, the Lip-stick building, Nordstan, Göteplatsen and seafood shops. Except that, other attractions only mentioned by one of the two groups, can be grouped into three categories as following: **(1) Infrastructures:** Sport tourists attached more importance on sports facilities and the restaurants or cafés, where they had a good rest after matches than the leisure tourists, who preferred different shops and nice shopping environment. One typical tourist appreciated the proper road signs very much because he liked to drive himself, but most sport tourists only enjoyed the efficient city transports for they relied more on public transportation. **(2) Natural Attractions:** There were only 3 sport tourists referred lakes and channels specifically, while more typical tourists said they appreciated the overall natural environments of Gothenburg, such as the high quality air, beautiful countryside, suburbs, and forests with lovely animals. In their eyes, the whole of Sweden is full of natural beauty and was an attractive country. **(3) Cultural Attractions:** There were eight typical tourists who liked the old architecture, such as the castles and churches, and five were drawn by art and science museums and galleries. Apart from, a well-developed society is also a great attraction for tourists. Visiting those famous international companies stationed in Gothenburg, like Volvo museum & plants, is also an important motivation to travel.

From above, typical tourists pay much more attention to various tourist attractions than sport tourists, who mainly concentrated on sport events. This conclusion was

identical with the one drawn in the first part of this chapter. However, Gothenburg was regarded as an appropriate event host by tourists as well. It is inevitable for tourists to experience the great event atmosphere when they toured around, so a new interest of devoting into events was stimulated. This proves that it is completely possible and necessary to build up an “event destination” image in tourists’ minds. If more tourists know and enjoy the events held in Gothenburg, they will definitely much prefer this city as a tourism destination, even if they have visited before.

4.3.2.2 Revisiting fascinations

Aicañiz (2005, p.292) believed the influence of the image of a tourism destination was “not limited to the stage of choosing the destination, but also affects the behaviour of tourists in general”. The image thus becomes a basic facet to analyse tourists’ behaviour before, during and after the holiday experience. And, the variables - “intention to return to the destination” and “willingness to recommend it” have been two indicators mostly used by measuring consumers’ post-purchase behaviour. Thus, they were adopted in this case study in order to jointly test the set of relationships among image, perceived quality, satisfaction and future intentions as we have no probability to conduct a post-event/travelling survey of their actual consumer behaviours. This is proved again by the conclusion of Woodside et al. (2004): the consequence of tourists’ visits involves the perceived quality of the visiting experience, satisfaction with activities experienced, intentions to return and word-of-mouth communications.

Table 4.7 showed the question concerns the respondents’ intentions to revisit Gothenburg only for travelling, but not for other purposes, has received a full response rate and a high positive-answer rate (321), occupying 87% of total respondents. The high revisiting rate gave a lot of confidence to staff of Gothenburg’s tourism because it affirms Gothenburg’s charm. Still, the reasons refusing to revisit cannot be ignored though they are minority.

Table 4.7 Response rate to the revisit (3rd question)

	Yes		No		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Typical Tourist	168	91.8%	15	8.2%	183
Sport Tourist	153	82.3%	33	17.7%	186
Total	321	87%	48	13%	369

Inducements to revisit in the future

There were 321 respondents who intended to revisit Gothenburg. Among them, 47 mentioned the reasons the same as the image of Gothenburg described by three phases in the former question, stimulated them to return. 274 respondents stated different reasons, and 109 had more than one cause. Therefore, 421 inducing items were submitted by them, which shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Inducements to revisit

Revisiting reasons		Typical Tourist	Sport Tourist	Total			
				Mentioned times	Percent		
Have formed A good impression to it	Have spent a good time here and left a good impression (friendly/safe/homely /diverse /interesting /comprehensive) or love it	50	34	84	248	53%	
	A nice tourism destination with pure natural environments and great atmosphere (esp. in summer)	49	59	108			
	Most fit for short vacations (not more than one week)	2	7	9			
	Same as 3 phases described	28	19	47			
See more Next time	Limited time/ energy this trip for concentrating on working/ watching matches	24	33	57		12%	
Tourism Attractions	Natural/ picturesque	boat touring /camping & fishing along the coast & beautiful sea-view	11	6	17	51	11%
	Cultural/ Historical		Göteborgsvarvet	1	0		
	Good entertainments	Liseberg (esp. for children)	5	7	12		
		Nightlife	2	0	2		
	Good shopping		7	4	11		
	Pretty Swedish girls		1	1	2		
Perfect public facilities (e.g. the theatres & transportation conditions)		3	3	6			
Like/love Sweden	* appreciate the Scandinavian culture, history & lifestyle (quiet and relaxing)	15	6	21		5%	
Convenient travelling	* English used commonly * Close/ convenient transportation	11	8	19		4%	
See differences next time	* experience the common life in the city, not during the EM *different seasons have different sceneries (the winter/Christmas market) *changes of the city	5	5	10		2%	
Other Motivations	Visiting friends & relatives/ Recalling good memories here	25	14	39	62	13%	
	Attending interested events (musical/sports, e.g. Ice Hockey)	6	7	13			
	For business	1	1	2			
	Sailing	1	2	3			
	Shopping	0	1	1			
	train running	0	1	1			
	Working (esp. summer jobs)	0	2	2			
Learning Swedish language	1	0	1				
Total	468					100%	

Note: The right column (%) indicates the number of times the phase was mentioned in relation to the total number of responses (468); accordingly the right column shows the mentioned time of answers that included the word/category in question. The left column shows all the revisiting reasons raised by respondents.

When people foreseeing their revisiting behaviours in the future, past experience or existed impressions are definitely the key factors influencing their decisions. In this case, 58 percent of responses showed the main reason of revisiting was that Gothenburg has impressed them with a positive image through past experience. They began to enjoy some aspects of the city, even “fell in love” with it and with Sweden. The next 14 percent of responses told us they felt this city is worthy of staying longer to discover more attractions or they had interests in exploring its different looks at different times. And, 11 percent responses were attracted to revisit by specific tourist attractions, all appeared before in the “attraction” part. Repetitive appearance of tourism attractions demonstrated their importance to tourists. The remaining four percent of tourists would revisit as Gothenburg is an ideal tourism destination that can be reached conveniently. Additionally, there are 19 percent of respondents who gave other motivations to revisit honestly rather than leisure travel, though we emphasized “just for travelling” in the question. But these “other” revisiting purposes revealed quite a useful truth - for typical tourists, visiting friends and relatives are another main revisiting motivation, while, for sport tourists, attending other events is another main motivation. This fits with the characteristics of the two types of tourists, as previously described. Furthermore, attending events was claimed as the second biggest motivator by tourists showing a possibility to build up an “event destination” image in typical tourists’ minds.

When comparing two types of tourists’ revisiting reasons, differences revealed in Fig.4.6. More typical tourists formed a good impression to Gothenburg through this trip and “fell in love” with it or with Sweden, and the things can attract them to return were coast-views and archipelago, good shopping and visiting friends/relatives. But more sport tourists intended to return with the aim to see more next time, since they had concentrated too much on EM this time, and hoped to know the city thoroughly or experience other aspects. Some of them have realized Gothenburg is an appropriate short vacations destination with great summer atmosphere and many tourism

attractions. But limited by energy and time during this trip, they did not experience it very well. So they hoped they can enjoy this city again from a typical tourists' viewpoints.

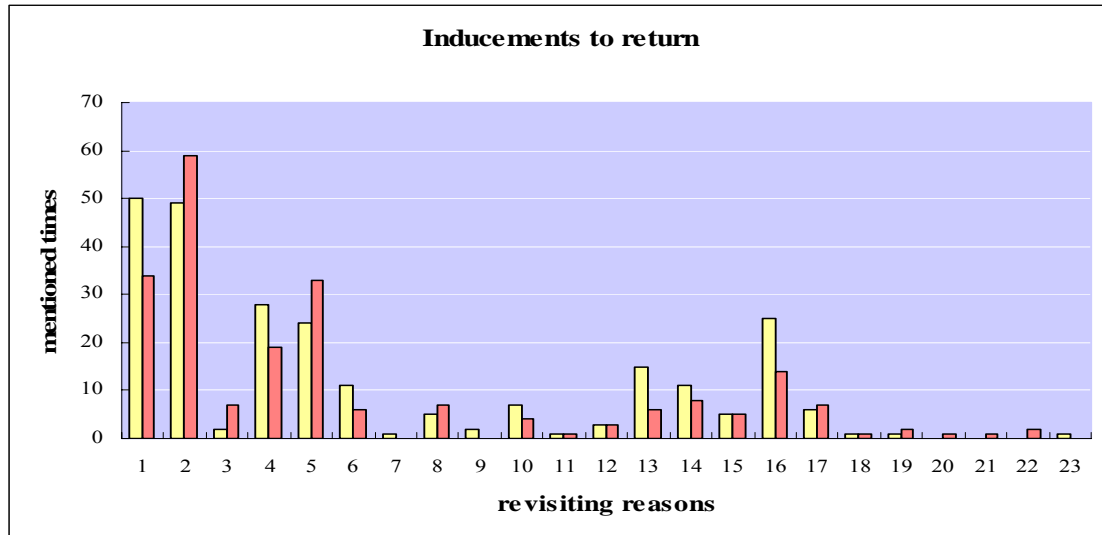


Fig. 4.6 Comparison revisiting motivations between the two groups

Notes: the figures on horizontal line indicate 23 revisiting reasons listed in Table 4.8; the yellow bar stands for typical tourist and the red one for sport tourist.

Reasons of refusing to revisit

There are 48 respondents who refused to revisit Gothenburg for travelling, and 46 stated their reasons, apart from two sport tourists who were not sure. They mentioned they did not want to come again, but the future is unforeseeable, lots of external factors may force them to do so. This kind of answer proved a high degree of honesty of our survey responses.

Eight categories can be summarized from those 46 refusing causes:

- *Have no interests in sightseeing, come here just for sports and will not revisit unless it holds other important sport events. (13)*
- *Would like to experience new places or other countries; hope can experience different places; lots of other places to visit (11)*
- *Have been here and seen all the things, have known much about it, no need to revisit the same place ; too many times, feel boring now. (9)*
- *It is too far and difficult to come here, e.g. no direct flight from home country (5)*

- *Don't like it so much---- just a common city / small town, many other cities can be chosen. Gothenburg has no obvious characteristics and anything very special, home town is better / like Portugal/ Italy these tropical countries much more (3)*
- *Prefer countryside/ natural sites, rather than cities (2)*
- *Too old to travel one place twice, old people have to save time to experience different places (2)*
- *Too Expensive, limited money*

Above lists show that eight respondents were unable to revisit, rather than unwilling to. They were limited by many objective conditions like the long distance, unaffordable travel costs and spare times. For the left refusing respondents, about 24 percent (11 out of 46) respondents felt Gothenburg was just a common European city, not distinctive and attractive enough to call them back. They preferred new places. And nine respondents believed they had fully experienced and known a lot about Gothenburg, so it was not worth revisiting. The city was not fresh for them anymore. Only five respondents will not come back because they do not like it. They preferred other types of tourism destinations, for example those similar with their home countries, tropical beaches or natural countryside, rather than urban environment. Additionally, it is worth emphasizing that among the 29 sport tourists who definitely have no interests to revisit, 13 declared they come here this time only for EM and insisted only sport events can appeal to them to revisit. This reflected nearly the half sport tourists did not experience the city properly as they cared nothing but matches. Thus, it is difficult for Gothenburg to become an attractive destination for them.

For those who did not like Gothenburg as a tourism destination, which they decided through congenital factors such as climate and geology, then tourism marketers can hardly do anything about this situation. Fortunately, they are only in the minority. For most tourists, unduplicated characteristics and changeability of a city they have visited were two main magic fascinations to travel again, which is proved by the main revisiting reasons presented previously in this study. So, large amounts of efforts should be paid to attract more visitors to return. Specific tactics will be suggested in the last chapter.

4.3.2.3 Stimulations for word-of-mouth

Susskind (2002) made a special study on word-of-mouth patterns of restaurants' customers in 2002. The results can apply to other hospitality and tourism settings very well through many researchers' verification. As Susskind (2002, p.82) stated, "Consumers are likely to tell some of their acquaintances about their service experiences (...) Positive word-of-mouth communication is reported to emerge from satisfying service encounters, while negative communication generally emerges from dissatisfying encounters (...) Word-of-mouth communication, which relates both to positive and negative evaluations of service encounters, has been shown to influence other people's purchase behaviour." In this case, the data on respondents' intention to do word-of-mouth is collected by question: "Will you recommend Gothenburg to your acquaintances after you return?", therefore, it only involves "positive" word-of-mouth communication. This question tested respondents' satisfaction again after testing their revisit intentions for "satisfaction level plays a big role in positive word-of-mouth" (Susskind, 2002, p.76).

Table 4.9 Response rate to the 4th open-ended question

	Yes		No		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Typical Tourist	177	97%	6	3%	183
Sport Tourist	181	97.3%	5	2.7%	186
Total	358	97%	11	3%	369

I. Recommending Reasons

Table 4.9 shows a much higher recommendation rate at 97% (358 out of 369) than the percentage of revisit. It is not only because of above-average satisfaction level that majority possessed, but also because the word-of-mouth communication will cost them nearly nothing compared to revisits, and adds to their pride in an extensive knowledge and experience at the same time. Among them, 91 recognized it is just the image of Gothenburg impressed through this actual trip experience impels them to recommend it to friends and relatives. And 55 respondents gave the same reasons with revisiting in the future. That's to say, there are 146 respondents, which represents 41 percent of responded visitors, who have formed a clearer impression of Gothenburg

city after answering the former two questions. Image's function in choosing tourism destination was again proved. Accordingly, the remaining 223 respondents gave us 344 specific causes for recommending after returning home. A frequency of mentioned items is shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Stimulations to recommending

Recommending Reasons		Typical Tourist	Sport Tourist	Total		
				Mentioned times	Percent	
City's Image	Pleasant holiday destination (Nice/lovely, 6 pointed out it is esp. fit for short vacations)		24	32	56	205 59.6%
	Beautiful & clean environment		26	15	41	
	Atmosphere (happy/quiet/ town-like /sportive/welcoming/ relaxing/comfortable)		16	19	35	
	Diverse/Colourful/Lively		11	21	32	
	Swedish characteristic (different & fresh for foreigners)		6	5	11	
	Well-located (with convenient transportation)		2	8	10	
	Big & Modern		3	4	7	
	Good Climate (cool summer)		4	2	6	
	Safe		0	5	5	
	Sports destination		1	1	2	
Tourist Attractions	Natural/ Picturesque	Various sceneries	6	9	15	45 13%
		Sea-view	4	3	7	
		Archipelago	0	1	1	
		big lakes to relax	1	0	1	
		boat tour	0	2	2	
	Cultural/ Historical	Architectures; Universities; Music performance etc	5	3	8	
		Good Entertainment	Liseberg	3	3	
Nightlife	1		4	5		
Local citizens	Friendly/helpful/kind		19	17	36	41 11.9%
	Good-looking		2	2	4	
	Well-spoken English		1	0	1	
Share my pleasant experiences	I have spent an enjoyable time in Gothenburg		12	9	21	6.1%
I like/love it	attractive/interesting for me, hope can share with friends		15	4	19	5.5 %
Perfect Infrastructures	Nice road (both for bicycle & self-driving)		2	0	2	13 3.8 %
	Good Shopping		3	5	8	
	Good Restaurants		0	3	3	
Total	344					100%

Notes: The right column (%) indicates the number of times the phase was mentioned in relation to the total number of specific responses (344); accordingly the right column shows the mentioned time of answers that included the word/category in question. The left column lists all the recommending reasons raised by respondents.

We categorized those recommending motivations according to Ditcher's (1966) conclusion, which claimed that motivation to talk about products or services fall into four main categories: product-involvement, self-involvement, other-involvement, and message-involvement. The good image they possessed of this city is the product-involvement to tourist, which occupied the biggest proportion in all responses. The answers as "I have spent a good time here", "I like or love Gothenburg/ Sweden" should belonged to the second kind and those friends or relatives who could experience/ share their pleasures in Gothenburg by themselves can be grouped into the third kind, which means the needs to "give" something to the other people, to "share" one's happiness. In this instance, the recommendation "takes the place of a 'gift', just as a thoughtful gift often expresses a tacit 'recommendation' (Ditcher, 1966).

Further analysis was then made to these specific recommending stimulations, especially the differences between the two types of tourist. Shown by Fig. 4.7, a proper short-vacation destination, picturesque city with high-quality environment, kind and hospitable local residents, enjoyable atmosphere over the city, colourful life with diverse offerings were pointed out again as the most attractive attributes of Gothenburg, they are the five main stimulations to do positive word-of-mouth. Moreover, there are more typical tourists stirred by beautiful environments and sceneries, sharing good experiences and self-involvement motivation. While, more sport tourists were enthused by its fitness for short vacation, its lively atmosphere, colourful offerings, high safety, exciting nightlife, convenient geographic location and boat trips to sea-island sceneries. The reason of recommending these attractions is that they impressed them deeply and successfully attracted them. Different types of tourists had individual preferences to recommendation, showing their different interests and awareness to Gothenburg. The assumption of this research was proved again-"there existing differences indeed between typical tourists and sport tourists' tourism perceptions." Therefore, segment-marketing is an indispensable task for Gothenburg's tourism development.

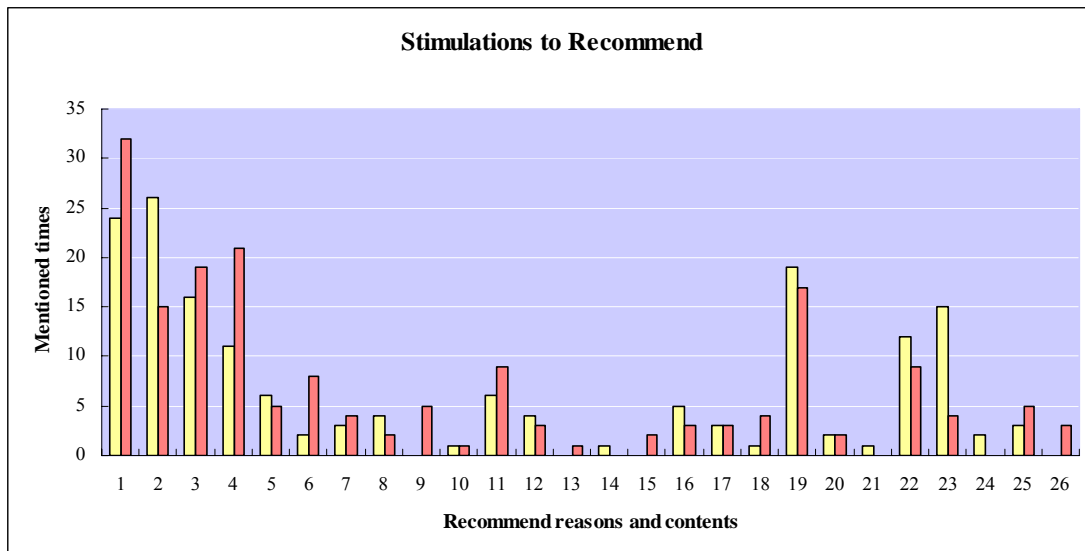


Fig. 4.7 Comparison on recommending reasons and contents between two groups

Notes: the figures on the horizontal line indicate 26 positive word-of-mouth's stimulations; the yellow bar stands for typical tourist and the red one for sport tourist.

The same conclusion as made in former parts can be drawn if we study generally- a distinct built-up image of a tourism destination can better motivates tourists to have positive word-of-mouth, which will affect potential tourist market considerably. In this case, 81 percent responses showed they were stimulated by Gothenburg's good image and attractive things left in their minds. As for the specific objects referred by them, described partly in comparisons above, are mainly the attractions for them. Hence, we can combine these objects with the answers of the former question. A conclusive description will be done in the summary of results.

While a further study can be conducted to find the relationship between revisit or not and recommend or not. Through carefully comparing, we know that the majorities will revisit and recommend; six respondents would neither revisit nor recommend because the city is too common to attract them; another five respondents wanted to revisit but would not recommend it, the main reason is that they knew little about Gothenburg for their trip was too short or just concentrated on other aspects; the last big group stated they would not revisit but would like to recommend it. This comparison tell us regardless of whether they intend to revisit, those having a positive impression to the destination, engaged in more positive word-of-mouth than those who have not.

II. Causes for refusing recommending

In this case, there are still 11 respondents refused to recommend it. Their reasons are listed as following: (“T” for typical tourists; “S” for sport tourists)

- T6: *common*
- T62: *small and uninteresting, many other cities are more attractive*
- T68: *crowded city with ugly buildings*
- T81: *not beautiful*
- T93: *common*
- T124: *Sweden has other better places than Gothenburg*
- S9: *lots of places are more worthy visiting*
- S61: *prevent crowds, leave a quiet nice vacation destination for myself*
- S101: *my friends all like tropical countries, not cold Northern Europe.*
- S107: *EM is more worthy than the city itself*
- S108: *unsuitable for touring*

From above, we can see, except one selfish consideration and one dislike, eight respondents refusing to recommend had average or even negative impressions to Gothenburg as a travel destination. Thereafter, such conclusion can be tenable: if a tourism destination fails to impress visitors with a positive image, it will be an extravagant hope to expect them to do a positive word-of-mouth. Moreover, there are some studies that have reported that “dissatisfied customers do, in fact, engage in more word-of-mouth communication than do satisfied customers” (Susskind, 2002). Though the above respondents said they would not recommend Gothenburg to their acquaintances, but it does not mean they will not tell them about their negative impression. “Word-of-mouth communication simply involves people sharing their assessment of their experiences” (Susskind, 2002), therefore, it is imaginable how great affects the negative evaluations will be on the potential visitors. Eliminating negative images, including those indistinguishable ones, naturally becomes a difficult challenge for destination marketers.

4.3.3 Visitors' general views on Gothenburg as a tourism destination

This part is composed of both analysis to the first and the last open-ended questions, concerning respondents' complaints and improvement suggestions respectively. They were put together because possessing the same objective- improving Gothenburg as a tourism destination, in all relevant aspects. The responses received proved it- most complainers talked about their positive wishes and requirements at the same time, and many respondents offering suggestions spoke about their dissatisfaction as well.

4.3.3.1 Visitors' complaints

Just like the Montenegro Household Survey (2005, p.1) demonstrated, "the primary key for development of the tourism sector, within any country, is the ability to quickly customize the tourist offer to correspond to changes in the tourists' demand." And, "an insufficient offer or tourist dissatisfaction may have serious consequences for the development of tourism in the long run." It is undoubtedly crucial first make clear what our tourist markets' complaints and requirements firstly.

The response rate to the first open-ended question, regarding visitors' complaints on those image-attributes listed in IPA inquiries, was rather low (172 out of 369 respondents, which occupied 47 percent) for respondents felt disappointed to some trivial aspects, but above-average satisfied with the overall performance usually inclined to ignore and avoid troublesome to answering this open-ended question. We recognized this phenomenon after two days' interviews. In order to improve the answer rate, each respondent interviewed later on was asked particularly why they gave some attributes' performance a below-medium value. Because these low evaluations might be the defects of tourism performance, which are worthy to investigate the real problems behind them. Or they were only caused by respondents' absence of knowledge and experience, because of limited time or no interests. For example, some tourists stayed in relatives or friends' homes, so had no idea about Gothenburg's accommodations. And some of them had no interests whatsoever in some items such as nightlife, so they refused to experience it. Under this condition,

interviewers' further inquiry becomes more necessary. It can help us to exclude those low-evaluations resulted from absent knowledge for these respondents would not say 'feel dissatisfied' with any attributes.

In sum, 197 respondents (101 typical tourists & 96 sport tourists), occupying 53.4 percent of total respondents did not feel dissatisfied with any aspects of Gothenburg. Some of them said 'not yet' for they had not experienced the city very well. Accordingly, 172 respondents offered their complaints about the Gothenburg's performance in tourism and hospitality. And 51 respondents (24 typical tourists & 27 sport tourists), 30 percent of complained respondents had more than one complaint for their experience in Gothenburg. Futhermore, 12 respondents (7 typical tourists & 5 sport tourists) of these spoke about third problems they felt dissatisfied with and one tourist even gave his fourth complaints. In the sum, 253 complaining items were found from 236 answers by categorizing work, which listed as 12 groups in Table 4.11. Each group represents one aspect of Gothenburg's tourism experience.

Table 4.11 Complaints by respondents

Complaints	Total Mentioned times	Percent (%)	Mentioned times by Typical Tourists	Mentioned times by Sport tourists
Price (too expensive)	77	30.4%	39	38
Food & Beverage	33	13%	20	13
Accommodation	28	11%	11	17
Infrastructures	26	10.3%	13	13
City environment	22	8.7%	9	13
Weather (rainy)	19	7.5%	9	10
EM & Ullevi stadium	14	5.5%	2	12
Tourist Information	9	3.6%	6	3
Tourist Attractions	8	3.2%	3	5
language	7	2.8%	2	5
shopping	6	2.4%	4	2
Local citizens	4	1.6%	3	1
Total complaints:	253	100%	121	132

Notes: The middle column (%) indicates the number of times the phase was mentioned in relation to the total number of complaints (253); the left column shows all the complaining aspects in Gothenburg.

As shown in Table 4.11, visitors rated price level as the most dissatisfactory aspect towards Gothenburg. Nearly half of responses thought the overall price level was too high, everything is expensive for them. Only one believed it was the EM event increased prices, others all required Gothenburg to decrease price-level, especially for tourists. The remaining half complained about price scattered in food & restaurants, accommodations, drinks, flights, EM tickets, parking and clothing separately. Simply put, lots of dissatisfactions occurred in infrastructures and hospitality facilities of Gothenburg.

When comparing complaints between two types of tourists, as shown in Fig. 4.8 more typical tourists disliked Gothenburg's food & beverage than sport tourists, and they complained more about tourist information, shopping facilities and local residents. While, many more sport tourists criticized accommodation, city environment and tourist attractions, EM and the Ullevi stadium. It is understandable for sport tourists as they spent their most time in the stadium or those sites densely gathered festival programs, which are all crowded places, that hardly offer them a neat-looking and leisure feelings. As to some seemingly contradictory phenomena with the conclusions drawn from the previous part, for instance, typical tourists spoke more of food quality than sport tourists, but their complaints are also greater. We can prove they are consistent in fact if we investigate where the specific complaints located. Most complaints on food and beverage of typical tourists were aroused by beverages, which was ignored in closed question. More explanations like this can be made from a detailed study into the complaints, which is required. When referring to the answers of the last open question- improving suggestions to Gothenburg as a tourism destination, because these various complaints are actually the proposals to improve Gothenburg's tourism and hospitality, had appeared in a disguised form. And the complainers usually spoke their expectations, requirements, even improving-measures directly when they complained.

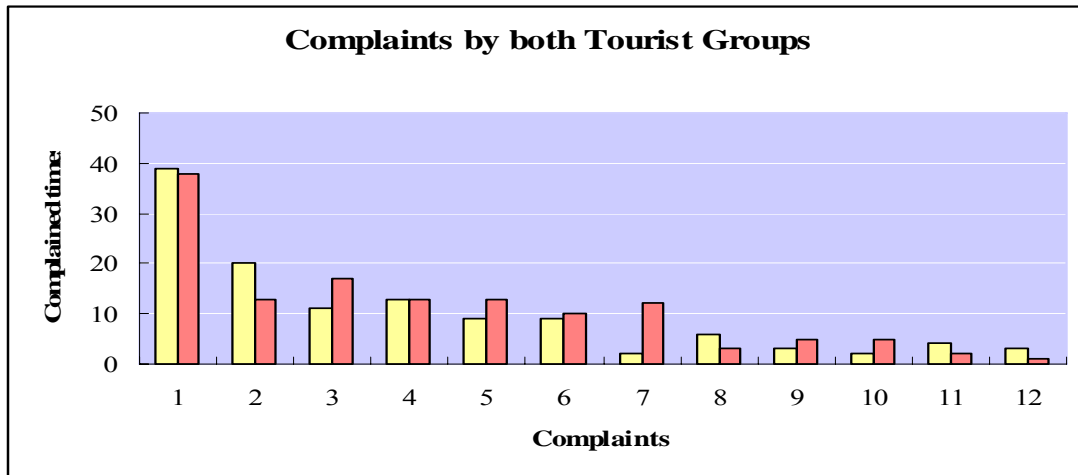


Fig. 4.8 Comparison between two groups' complains

Notes: the figures on the horizontal line indicate complaints listed in Table 4.11; the yellow bar stands for typical tourist and the red one for sport tourist.

4.3.3.2 Visitors' Suggestions on improving the image of Gothenburg

The last open-ended question, concerning the measures of improving the image of Gothenburg as a tourism destination, was definitely the most difficult one. But it received a pretty high response rate at 73% due to five tourists had no idea at all or didn't care because the city couldn't rouse their interests again after one visit. The interviewers' deliberate efforts of the 94 respondents (52 typical tourists & 42 sport tourists) felt quite satisfied with Gothenburg's performance in tourism and hospitality. While they liked Gothenburg so much and spoke highly of every aspect of the city. So we utilized "Keep on" to unify similar answers- "continue the good work", "they have done a good job", "can't be better", for these respondents sincerely thought there was no need and impossible for Gothenburg to improve further. As a result, there are 270 respondents (126 typical tourists & 144 sport tourists) gave out specific suggestions, concerning various measures to improve the image of Gothenburg. Among them, 91 respondents indeed offered more than one suggestion. In the sum, 603 proposals were finally received from our respondents, listed in Table 4.12. This statistical result will guide us to put forward recommendations of improving Gothenburg's image as a tourism destination in the last conclusive chapter.

Table 4.12 Suggestions to improve the tourism destination image of Gothenburg

Suggestions		Typical Tourist	Sport Tourist	Total		
				Mentioned Numbers	Percent	
Improving infrastructures & hospitality facilities	Accommodation	24	25	49	251 69%	
	Food & Beverage / Restaurants	23	25	48		
	Public facilities and services	30	9	39		
	Language services	21	17	38		
	Tourist Information	20	17	37		
	Transportation	7	22	29		
	Shopping	7	4	11		
More advertising & Promotions (esp. abroad)	Advertising Campaign (by various media)	18	18	36	137 38%	
	Specific Promotion Focuses & marketing strategies	32	27	59		
	Promoting purposes	Build up a distinctive image	13	18		42
		Keep up its existed positive image	1	2		
		Change its existed negative image	4	4		
Increasing unique tourist attractions	Hosting more (grand) events	9	23	32	78 21%	
	More programs/activities in normal times (for children/ in harbour)	1	7	8		
	Diversifying entertainments (more leisure spaces& nightlife)	10	7	17		
	Tourist scenic spots & historical sites	8	13	21		
Decreasing Price level		30	23	53	15%	
Bettering city environment (social & natural)		17	29	46	13%	
Better-organizing sport events		5	17	22	6%	
Local communities		5	11	16	4%	
Total		603			166%	

By comparing suggestions between two tourist groups, we can discover from Fig. 4.9, typical tourists have higher requirements on public facilities and services, shopping facilities, but lower prices; and they offered us more specific marketing strategies. Sport tourists' advices focused more on transportation, events organizing and other attractive programs or activities; and they held higher standards for city environment and the local residents. The results can be interpreted very well by different interests and natures of the two types of tourist, which will be presented in later discussions.

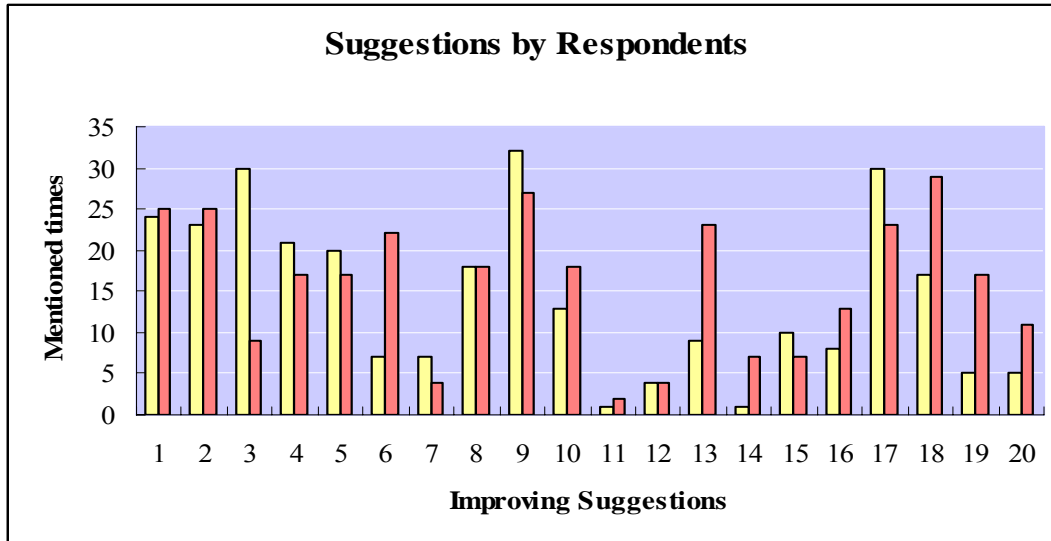


Fig. 4.9 Comparison between two groups' suggestions

Note: the figures on the horizontal line indicate improving suggestions listed in Table 4.12; the yellow bar stands for typical tourist and the red one for sport tourist.

In the fact that each suggestion generated from our honest respondents was really valuable, because they transmitted tourism consumers' true perceptions and requirements. For this reason, we listed them one by one under each of the labels drawn from brief categorizations, complied with the subjects they were involved in. Moreover, the proposals can be identified from complaints, as mentioned before, were also incorporated into following descriptions. The mentioned times of them was calculated into statistics as well because few repetitive items appeared in one response, i.e. people talked about their positive requirements or wishes when they complained would seldom write them again to answer the last question. Usually, they would like to offer new proposals from another viewpoint.

I. Improving infrastructures & hospitality facilities:

There are 251 respondents who complained and requested Gothenburg city to improve its infrastructures and hospitality facilities, including transportation, public infrastructures and services, accommodations, food and beverage, shopping facilities and tourist information. Though respondents rated tourist information and support (16), and infrastructures (8) as a quite good performance, other attributes' performances in this category were also evaluated as medium in Table 4.2, respondents' explicit complaints and suggestions are the strongest reasons to improve it, rather than just maintaining. The Tables (4.13 to 4.18) in the following presentation

are all categorized from the answers for the last two open-ended questions. Compared with the conclusions from IPA, whether there is a necessity to improve these image attributes will be discussed.

- **Improving Transportation Facilities: (18T; 28S)**

Though both typical tourists and sport tourists agreed Gothenburg could just keep up its performance in transportation, as revealed before, there are still many respondents who complained about it, especially about parking. Gothenburg has to value this advice on improvement, and try to overcome the deficiencies, rather than just keeping them there. This will definitely improve tourists' satisfaction.

Table 4.13 Improving Transportation facilities

	T	S	Total
Improve parking services & guard (puzzling fines/ unhelpful receptionist/ no security insurance; no instructions when accidents really happen)	5	3	8
Facilitate parking (more parking spaces / prolong business hours improving paying card for many kinds of cards can't be used to pay for parking)	5	2	7
Add bus/tram runs and routes (especially to suburbs & during the nights)		6	6
More direct/convenient flights	2	2	4
Less road signs but more functional (excessive inappropriate signs confused drivers)	1	2	3
Facilitate booking or buying train tickets/ bus cards		3	3
Improve the city airport (un-equipped/should build up carousel for luggage & set up more attractions for it is so boring)		3	3
Resolve traffic jams during events	1	2	3
Update the old trams (more comfortable)		2	2
Better constructed roads (unsmooth / constructing brings lots of inconveniences for tourists)	1	1	2
Decrease trams (for it makes difficult to drive)	1	1	2
Free transportation fee to pass through the river		1	1
Improve the harbour, more berths for tourists who came by boat	1		1
Verified transportations from airport to city	1		1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

From Table 4.13, typical tourists complained more about parking for they liked to drive by themselves when travelling. And parking was proved to be an inherent problem in Gothenburg through the in-depth interview of those who complained. Most of them have experienced unhappiness or inconvenience during their visits to Gothenburg this time or previously. Insufficient parking space, insecurity and low-quality services are the main difficulties Gothenburg should try to overcome. The city airport is another improving factor required by many respondents.

In the total, sport tourists complained about transportation apparently exceeding typical tourists. This contradicts the higher performance mean score rated by sport tourists. After looking through their complaints, which are mostly related with EM matches, we can conclude that transportation problems are mainly caused by crowds for this grand event. If it is in normally so then, both tourists might feel more satisfied with it. Thereafter, the improving efforts should be focused on event-durations. Adding public transportation runs and routes, facilitating new-comers' uses to various tickets, and ensuring perfect road conditions and maintaining public traffic in good order are the necessary requirements of a well-organized event. Adding direct flights to Gothenburg from other tourist sources could undoubtedly increase the number of tourists visiting Gothenburg. But it is a difficult strategy for the tourism department alone, intensive co-operations between two destinations and other economic departments are needed.

- **Improving Accommodations: (24T; 25S)**

The IPA grid has told us sport tourists possessed totally different opinions on "Accommodation" attribute. They put it in "Keep up the work" quadrant, just opposite with typical tourists, who put it into "Low Priority" cell. The cause, relates to the different natures of these two types of tourists, and has been explained before. This is accordance with the result showed by Table 4.14:

Table 4.14 Improving Accommodations

	T	S	Total
Re-locate and improve the camping sites (should be far away the highway & add signs to find it from the city/ more equipped and comfortable more kind staff/ cheaper and delicious food)	7	4	11
More diverse accommodations (esp. during the event, like bed & breakfast or holiday house renting)	7	3	10
More worth of money- bigger and cosy rooms/ (expensive but bad conditions for hotels)	2	3	5
More cheaper good hostels in the downtown (cheap hostels are too far , while nearer ones are unaffordable for students) or better camping sites	3	2	5
Improve the surroundings (more quiet/safer/)		5	5
More detailed information about hostels and camping sites on the internet (available-room list, facilities and contacting telephones) / easier online booking or diversify reservation means	2	3	5
Improving facility & service quality of hotels (particularly those 5 stars)		4	4
Standardizing accommodations' cleanliness	2		2
24 hours Check-in for hotel	1		1
Set up smoking area in hotels		1	1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

We can see sport tourists pay more attention to accommodation and have higher requirements. In their eyes, hotels and other accommodation facilities in Gothenburg just met their needs; they are dissatisfied with it. Therefore, they complained a lot, as listed above. And, according to McIntosh and Siggs (2005), there has been increased attention given to the experiential consumption of tourism, but lacked attention to the experiential nature of accommodation products. Paying attention to tourists' experiences with accommodation is essential for determining guest satisfaction and the personal benefits that guests derive from their stay. Hence, there is still lots of work that should be done by Gothenburg in improving its accommodation offerings. The main efforts should be inputted to provide more worthy accommodations to tourists- more considerate services, including standardized and customized; a good quality environment, which should be ensured even during grand events, when crowds swarm in; and convenient booking and approaching ways. At the same time, price should be kept at the level that affordable for common tourists. Furthermore, the focus

of improvement seems to be on camping sites and luxury hotels, which are one of the most utilized facilities and a most profitable part respectively.

- **Improving Food & Beverage/ Restaurants: (23T; 25S)**

Food & Beverage was the second biggest complained aspect, which is consistent with the result of IPA, indicated food quality locating in “Concentrate here” quadrant, especially for sport tourists.

Table 4.15 Restaurants/ Food & Beverage

	T	S	Total
More variety of restaurants (e.g. vegetarians) & more diverse, delicious food (e.g. fish / seafood/ special dishes for children)	6	15	21
More typical Swedish restaurants	3	3	6
Pubs should prolong operation hours/ lower age-limit for drinking	6		6
Prolong operation hours till night	2	3	5
Stronger beers	3		3
More nice-equipped/ decorated restaurants (esp. in the countryside, don't like take-away or fast-food)	2		2
More Internet Café for young people		2	2
Provide English menus	1	1	2
Set up smoking area in restaurants		1	1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

From above, monotonous, distasteful and lacking Swedish features are the main defects of Gothenburg’s food offerings in visitors’ opinions. And, no strong beer and too expensive drinks were most frequently complained about by them. Additionally, restaurants in Gothenburg did not meet visitors’ needs at all. Their short business hours, lacking Swedish characteristics, no special offerings for children and unequipped looking, especially for those located in countryside, are all shortcomings most referred to. Lastly, there are many complaints about Gothenburg’s pubs and bars, mainly for their too short operation hours. To meet complainers’ requirements, pubs should run all night, or prolong business hours till mid - night at least. Moreover,

they should lower the age-limit for drinking. Investigated the nationality of these complainers, we can see they come from Italy, Spain, Poland and Germany respectively, the countries in which people are famous for being extrovert and love nightlife. So, if the pubs in Gothenburg want to attract more international customers, they have to adjust operating hours according to foreign customers' common practice brought from their home countries. In this case, it is indispensable for pubs to prolong business hours for this grand event.

- **Improving Shopping Facilities: (7T; 4S)**

As described by IPA grids before, “shopping facilities” was reviewed low importance by all visitors. But typical tourists graded much higher than sport tourists for Gothenburg’s performance in shopping.

Table 4.16 Shopping facilities

	T	S	Total
Shops should prolong operation hours (better till 9 pm.)	3	1	4
More shops, esp. outside of city centre	2	1	3
More professional shops (e.g. American style)	2		2
Provide more efficient services		2	2

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

Table 4.16 also shows typical tourists cared more for this attribute than sport tourists. The rather low performance ranked by sport tourists mainly resulted from their absent knowledge or intensive experience. As previously discussed, shopping is not an expected destination attribute for most tourists to Gothenburg. But we cannot ignore it because it is still a pretty attractive attribute for some repetitive tourists, who mainly come from neighbouring districts and were quite familiar with this second biggest city of Sweden, a commercial and industrial harbour city. From this investigation, we can decide just to keep the normal development trend of the retail business itself, rather than inputting excessive resources to make it an attraction for international tourists.

- **Improving Public services or supports: (19T; 3S)**

In closed-ended question, people ranked “infrastructure” mainly based on their perceptions about transportation. The amount of other public facilities in the city was evasively included in this item. So, it is necessary to investigate tourists’ real evaluations to various public facilities and beneficial services, which are listed in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Public facility and services

	T	S	Total
More Bilingual signs for accommodations/ tourism attractions & in information centre	7		7
More free toilets	5	1	6
More sports space & facilities	2	1	3
More ATM machines	2		2
More benches	1		1
Provide small free umbrellas when suddenly raining	1		1
Send free beautiful postcards to Children	1		1
More signs and introductions for old buildings		1	1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

From the table, our respondents indeed offered amounts of very detailed suggestions, which proved they have experienced the city carefully. Among them, typical tourists were much more than sport tourists mainly because their primary purpose is leisure vacation, which offered them lots of chances to experience each detail of destination’s offerings, and discover deficiencies. Language barrier and toilets are the most complained about aspects in Gothenburg’s public facilities, such as road signs and other information. When referring to public services and support, added value is the most proper item describing its functions. Better public services and supports are not essentials for tourism, but they can bring added value for tourists and exceed their expectations or requirements, which easily result in high satisfaction level. For that

reason, if Gothenburg can add more bilingual signs and instructions, cancel charging to toilets, its public facilities and services will make great progress.

- **Tourist Information (41T; 34S)**

In IPA grids, this is a quite important and well-performed image attribute for Gothenburg, as rated by both tourist groups. But in open responses, there are still 75 respondents (20% of totals) come up with suggestions or further wishes to it. From the table below, we know what Gothenburg should do in this aspect is not just “Keep up the work”, but make progress in lots of areas.

Table 4.18 Improving Tourist Information

	T	S	Total
More detailed online information on transportation (boat-trip e.g.) & public traffic system (how to buy bus tickets in airport and different tickets' functions)	4	4	8
More tourist information available, esp. on the internet (insufficient or it is too Focused on EM)	3	4	7
Better designing tourism maps or brochures to be more effective/useful (highlight important attractions e.g.)	4	2	6
Telephone answerers in Tourism Information Centre know few about parking & EM tickets selling / the receptionists unable to offer satisfactory answers. (very angry for their inability to answer questions & gave wrong information)	3	3	6
More tourism information offices/stands when walking around city	2	1	3
More information about the city's culture & surroundings	1	1	2
Design a better internet site for the city, easier to use and links to more attractions' webs to increase accessibility	2		2
More news/up-dated information about what happens here, not only the map & promotions offered by hotel		2	2
More helps to arrange city trips for foreigners, start from Gothenburg	1		1
More multi-language tourism information/brochures (English\French\Italian-Russian\Germany\Polish were required)	13	5	18
More English instructions in public "smaller" areas (e.g. festival program list & restaurants' menus)	3	5	8
More multi-language interpretations/instructions for tourist attractions (esp. the museums, like Universeum)	3	2	5
More English newspapers/ announcers	1	3	4
More English instructions/information for traffic system (at train\bus stations & road signs)	1	2	3

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

As displayed by Table 4.18, the suggestions on tourist information mainly based on complaints about the quantity and quality of available tourist information provided to tourists through website or by information centres' performances. More detailed online information and better-designed tourism websites, as well as more knowledgeable receptionists were regarded as the most urgent task for Gothenburg to improve its information quality. The quantity of more functional and detailed tourism information was also asked to be increased. And, another prominent problem relates

to language. There are 38 requirements to resolve the language barrier. Absence of English or multi-language directions on various public sites has obviously become an obstacle to develop self-travels.

II. More Advertisement / Promotions

There are 137 respondents advised Gothenburg should input more in foreign advertisements and promotions to improve its image as a tourism destination. Firstly, the 36 general suggestions on various media means they suggested were listed in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 General Promoting suggestions and preferable media (18T; 18S)

	T	S	Total
Advertising campaign to get more abroad media attentions than Stockholm by all kinds of media	12	15	27
More TV/video advertisements	3	1	4
More advertising through travel organization / agents	1		1
More advertising through tourism magazines & newspaper	2		2
More advertisements about Gothenburg on various local media		1	1
Attract more Stockholm people		1	1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

Furthermore, more constructive promoting suggestions were given by 59 respondents, in a very explicit manner. For instance, the core values of Gothenburg in their minds were pointed out to be focused by promotions. Additionally, the variety of marketing strategies like cooperation, packaging tourism products, bundling price and trade show/exhibition were brought up, as illustrated by Table 4.20.

Table 4.20 Specific Promoting focuses and marketing strategies (32T; 27S)

	T	S	Total
More promotions on specialties it has possessed to transcend the Shadow of Stockholm (focused on another Swedish style totally different with Stockholm)	4	10	14
Promotions focused on its great atmosphere (relaxing/ friendly)	12	1	13
More promotions on its high-quality natures (esp. the sea-view, coastline, archipelago & harbour as its features)	9	3	12
Positioning on a “events destination”	3	2	5
More promoted magnificent natural phenomena (e.g. the 'whole day & whole night' & the Northern light)	1	1	2
packaging tourism products (city+ archipelago & natural surroundings / Hotel + Boat tour)		2	2
Bundle the match tickets with other tourists attractions		1	1
More tourism trade shows/ introducing conventions abroad for attractions' exposure	1	2	3
More cooperation/ communication with tourism boards of other cities/ countries (e.g. France)	1	1	2
More Public Relations		2	2
Setting up a particular theme for Gothenburg	1		1
More destination shops		1	1
Don't limited to any one target market, utilizing various things to attract everyone		1	1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

III. Increasing unique Tourist Attractions

Among the 78 respondents requested to increase characteristic tourist attractions, the amount of sport tourists are nearly double of typical tourists. While, the sport tourists who advocated holding more events are nearly triple to the amount of typical tourists with the same opinion. This can be attributed to sport tourists' lacking knowledge on Gothenburg's tourist attractions and strong interests in events. All specific advices on tourist attractions will be shown in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21 More Tourist Attractions in Gothenburg (28T; 50S)

	T	S	Total
Explore more (grand) sports/ musical events (esp. cultural ones)	9	23	32
Develop more distinctive/Swedish characteristic attractions and make the city more beautiful (Build up more colourful Swedish style buildings as the houses in Astrid's novels / build a zoo to close Swedish animals)	5	9	14
More colourful entertainments & nightlife , not just focused on Alcohol (prolong business hours/broaden the drinking age-limit)	6	4	10
Better cultural attractions like the museums & theatres	3	3	6
More unique/ traditional festivals & programs in the ordinary times (folk-song/dance performances)	1	4	5
Diverse tourism choices (Mountain-climbing/ better sand beaches for a 'real' holiday)	2	3	5
Explore more activities around the harbour & more ships available to watch		2	2
Free evening entertainments should become yearly / periodically (not only during special events)	1		1
Increase the winning rate for games in Liseberg	1		1
More activities for Children in downtown (only one theme park is not enough)		1	1
Tourist sites should provide more tailored services		1	1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

From above table, we can see that the most attractive things Gothenburg could and should develop in tourists' minds are various events and Swedish characteristics. As concluded in Chapter 4.3.2.1, the most impressive attractions to both tourist groups are not only the natural sceneries, but also the Swedish lifestyle and social/cultural atmosphere. Especially for the typical tourists, they showed stronger interests in Gothenburg and Sweden's culture, social system and historic sites, which can be proved by IPA grids. Typical tourists located "Culture" attribute on the border of "Concentrate here" and "Low priority" quadrants, which showed that they paid considerable attention to it and felt dissatisfied with its performance. If Gothenburg can improve its cultural offerings, tourists will attach more interests and importance to it; if it fails to do this, tourists will close their eyes to this attribute. In increasing the charm of a tourism destination, culture is an indispensable attribute according to many tourism research literatures, thus it could not be overlooked. Marketers should search for the most distinctive cultural characters and their expressions, such as traditional

festivals, songs and dance, customs and so on. Then combine them with the first most suggested attraction- events, packing into a special tourism product to its tourists.

In addition, Table 4.21 also tells us sport tourists have more demands to increase tourist attractions in Gothenburg. Their main interests are focused on sports and events, but also displayed in natural sites. As described by IPA, “natural attractions” was located by sport tourists into a different position- the border of “Keep up” and “possible overkill” quadrants with other tourists, which gives the impression that nothing needs to be done. However, more specific suggestions on Gothenburg’s nature tourism by sport tourists, such as diversifying travelling choices- mountain-climbing, beaches and boat tours. As previously mentioned, more sport tourists recognized that natural scenery was quite attractive to them and they would like to recommend natural attractions of Gothenburg to their friends or relatives, though they did not pay much attention to it because this time they came here mainly for the EM. All these instances demonstrated that there is plenty of room for Gothenburg to display its natural charm to sport tourists. The key is prolonging their stays after sport events.

Finally, “night life and entertainments” is the third most needed improvement in attractions for all tourists. The IPA grids told us this is a “Low priority” attribute and will not be a selling point for Gothenburg; marketers have no need to put extra resources into it. But according to respondents’ advice, diversifying nightlife - do not just focus on pubs and buying alcohol is a beneficial suggestion for improving Gothenburg’s image. We say this because we received many complaints regarding the problem of drunkenness, which greatly harmed the image of the city and its citizens. And, colourful nightlife/ entertainments are necessary during a grand event- when tourists swarm in. Bettering it can benefit local residents in normal ways as well.

IV. Lowering the prices to a reasonable/affordable level for tourists:

High price/cost level is the most complained attribute for Gothenburg by both tourist groups. Gothenburg was a rather expensive city in their minds. This is in accordance with the low-performance ratings in IPA. Beside the demand of decreasing price level overall, more than half of the complainers pointed out that only some items exceeded their affordability, listed as below.

Table 4.22 Expensive items (30T; 23 S)

	T	S	Total
Overall Price/ Cost level	12	11	23
Accommodation (esp. camping sites)	7	1	8
Drinks & Food	2	4	6
Flights	4	1	5
Entrance fee & match tickets of EM	2	1	3
Parking		2	2
Shopping		2	2
Amusements in Liseberg	1		1
Buses		1	1
Souvenirs	1		1
Trains	1		1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

V. Improving the City's Environments:

Clean and green Gothenburg has deeply impressed all visitors, as analyzed in chapter 4.3.1. IPA grids also showed the city should keep up its nice environments. The complaints or suggestions on it, shown as below, mainly arose from EM. The grand event brought crowds into the city, which inevitably affected its neat and peaceful surroundings. In view of this, future work should be devoted to increasing cleaning-frequency and adopting more advanced equipments or efficient preserving measures during events periods.

Table 4.23 Improving City Environment (17T; 29S)

	T	S	Total
Cleaner	9	15	24
More quiet surroundings (even during the events)	4	5	9
Safer (e.g. check ID more when so much foreigners entered)	3	3	6
Solve the drinking problem (increase the age-limits for drinking)	1	3	4
Municipal keep up the good political policies (which aim to better-build up the city)		1	1
Join Euro. currency		2	2

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

VI. Improving Local Community

As Aicañiz (2005) stated, “the host community has been the subject of several studies in the tourism sector, since it forms part of the product which tourists will enjoy during their stay in the destination.” The local community in a tourist destination not only “contributes substantially to the formation of a destination’s image”, moreover, “their support for the tourist industry will affect tourists’ perception of the destination and consequently their buying behaviour.” Therefore, the host community is a quite vital element worthy to be considered in the competitiveness of a destination. The local community of Gothenburg has left a pretty good impression on visitors, as described in the 4.2.1. Friendliness of Gothenburg citizens has been an essential attraction to outsiders, proved by IPA and Göteborg & Co’s positioning. And it is also an indispensable component of Gothenburg’s atmosphere and its image, which was regarded by both types of tourists as a main stimulation to revisit and conduct positive word-of-mouth. Still, there are 11 respondents advised Gothenburg’s citizen to improve themselves further, shown in Table 4.24.

Table 4.24 Improving Local community (5T; 11S)

	T	S	Total
More open-minded & enthusiastic	5	6	11
Improve the civilization level, esp. among youths (more like reading, become more polite and obey public merits, such as stop spitting on streets)		3	3
Speak more English (language barrier will weaken visitors’ desires to communicate with locals)		2	2

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

VII. Lessons from EM organizations

Among 16 image attributes, “Sport facilities” is the most distinctive since big differences existed between two tourist groups’ opinions. Sport tourists attached high importance to it and highly praise Gothenburg’s offerings. Contrarily, typical tourist did not care about it at all. Their absence of experience and knowledge resulted in low evaluations. Therefore, the mean score of all visitors’ rating located this attribute into “Over skill” quadrant. But we think Gothenburg cannot overlook it or stop investing in it, because it is actually the main attraction to sport tourists, a vital market segment for Gothenburg’s tourism.

Statistics revealed there are 17 sport tourists who criticized the EM - the objective of their trip. The matches are their focus, and the Ullevi stadium and other competition venues are their haunts. So they undoubtedly know these quite well. Event organizers should value their comments if they want to improve event-organizing abilities.

Table 4.25 EM organizing deficiencies (5T; 17S)

	T	S	Total
More international (more English signs, announcers & reports/ Swedish should cheer more for foreign athletics)	2	5	7
Facilitate tickets-booking & buying	3	2	5
Improve the facilities of Ullevi stadium (terrible toilets/ broaden the corridor between seat-rows/ add flexible roof to keep off the rain)		5	5
Improve organizing ability for sport events (e.g. starting time of matches should be consistent with the tickets)		2	2
More big screens scatter in the city		1	1
Better treatments to event crew (some public transportations only for athletes/ teams)		1	1
Better announcers (they can’t keep up with the games’ pace)		1	1

Notes: T: Typical Tourists, S: Sport Tourists

From Table 4.25, we realize that the main complaints resulted in language. In the absence of English announcements and news lacked international focus and seriously affected the success of the event. Foreign spectators faced difficulties in receiving competition information, they also complained about facilities in the stadium, especially about toilets and this made EM tourists feel extremely uncomfortable and

inconvenience. The entrance fees were not only too expensive, as shown in Table 4.22, but it was also difficult to book, which several foreign spectators complained about. Future events' organizers had better lessons draw from these failures.

VIII. Weather

There are nine typical tourists and ten sport tourists who complained about the weather for it continued raining in the last day of EM. As described in Chapter 4.3.1, the bad weather during this period resulted in the most negative impression to Gothenburg. Too much rain brought all visitors much inconveniences, especially for EM athletes, because all matches, including those carried out in the stadium, are all open-air. They and their fans got wet in the rain. Tourists enjoying the festival programs in different sites suffered the same thing. Moreover, the absence of sunshine striped their cherished summer feeling.

This complaint was obviously beyond human controlling capabilities for we cannot produce good weather for tourists. But most fortunate is that, IPA told us tourists did not

care much about this attribute. More positive advertisement on its sunny and cosy climate can easily change the bad impressions formed by once experience. And, there are still many preventive measures we can adopt to improve the situation and avoid bad impressions' forming. Just like some respondents requested, public facilities and considerate services such as free umbrella and raincoats could be provided by Gothenburg when suffering from sudden rain. And the authors believe more sophisticated architectural techniques can definitely overcome the difficulties brought by bad weather. For example, add a mobile roof to the stadium.

4.4 Summary of the results

As the presentation of the results from closed-ended question and open-ended question respectively are rather comprehensive and independent, it is necessary to summarize them for facilitating readers to understand the distinctive images, both positive and negative, of Gothenburg city. This summary based on the attributes with different perceptions among the two groups, analyzed by IPA method. As well as, the

relevant conclusions from open-ended questions to each attribute will be linked, and a further inference in general is believed to be indispensable. It will also be interesting to make clear for readers what attributes in the images of Gothenburg that are most appealing to our respondents and their specific views. Their complaints and feasible improvement suggestions are of particular interests to authors, before providing recommendations to Gothenburg city that will be explored in the next chapter.

5 Gothenburg as a tourism destination

As Nelson (2005) mentioned destination image is considered to be critical in the decision-making process of tourists. And place promotion is the “deliberate use of publicity and marketing for the purpose of communicating selective and specific images of a place to a target audience with the intention of influencing attitudes” Nelson (2005, p.132). Many researchers agreed that place not only has a physical setting and a location but also a sense of identity. In today’s consumption-oriented society, place has become both a context for consumption and a consumable product itself. Thus a destination’s identity is advertised to attract ‘place consumers’ in representations that are not reflections of reality but interpretations of it. Particularly when there is little difference between places, promoters are left to create difference and a unique sense of identity (Nelson 2005). The success of the image is in its link between the motivations, goals or preferences of potential tourists and the destination. Moreover, the images should convey a particular type of experience expected by tourists (Jenkins, 1999).

5.1 Position Gothenburg in international tourism market as the “Swedish Lifestyle Destination”

The need for an effective destination image positioning strategy is recognized by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) as one of the most significant marketing challenges. Increased competition among tourist destinations gave rise to a wide range of destination marketing strategies. Usually, they will lay emphasis on one distinctive attraction- either scenic or cultural, or special events to attract specific target markets. While, the results presented in chapter four showed Gothenburg’s attractive images are scattered and comprehensive: (1) Lots of respondents attracted by its friendly citizens, safe, peaceful and beautiful environments and relaxing atmosphere, which are all related with Swedes’ daily life and social system; (2) Swedish characteristics revealed obviously through architectures, cultural stuff and tradition performances; (3) “a small city within a big city”, which means tourists can enjoy modern/convenient city life within wild natures, it appropriately summarized our study results. Follow up

marketing effort should be focused on unifying above image elements into distinctive image and branding it visibly by logos or trademarks.

A special strategy adopted by South Australia, which was based on the attraction of the lifestyle offered within the state by attempting to achieve a position as a lifestyle tourism destination (Gross, 2005). Lifestyle tourism is a newly emerging concept in the marketing of tourism destinations. In order to define the meaning of this new concept from an industry perspective and to suggest settings representing lifestyle tourism, Gross and Brown (2006) conducted personal interviews and questionnaires with tourism industry professionals in South Australia from November 2004 through March 2005. Their study suggested lifestyle should better serve as a “foundation/umbrella issue that can provide a platform upon which more specific and tangible features can be marketed” (Gross and Brown, 2006, p.699). In their case, the South Australia lifestyle can be enjoyed while pursuing tourism interests in food, wine, nature, heritage, and culture. This may be operationalized through separate streams of advertising, one to serve as “image advertising” with lifestyle themes, and the other to serve in a more targeted role directed at tourism market niches (Gross and Brown, 2006).

The similar tourism interests and image attributes achieved from our study also needs such an “umbrella” device to market Gothenburg’s destination image under a unified and consistent brand. Subsequently, we decided to position Gothenburg as the “Swedish lifestyle destination” and brand it as “the capital of Swedish lifestyle”.

The “Capital of Swedish Lifestyle” competing with the Capital of Sweden

Stockholm has received extensive media attention on the international tourism markets. Many foreigners may be familiar with Stockholm, inversely nothing known about Gothenburg. As many respondents in our study complained, Gothenburg must expose itself more on the international market. Thus, in certain extent, Gothenburg is competing with Stockholm for media exposures. But this competition is unfair because Stockholm is the capital and the biggest city of Sweden. If Gothenburg want to exceed it in tourism industry, building up a distinctive image and designing a striking brand are the first and foremost issues. It is wise to position it as a totally different tourist destination, rather than challenging Stockholm’s advantages, such as

international atmosphere, profound history and cultures, and the famous image as “Northern Venice”. Even if Gothenburg cannot compare with it in size, strategic status and rich tourism resources, it is still possible to achieve an independent distinguishing image in international tourism market, as long as it grasps its special spirit and valuable characteristics. For instance, the geographic location gives Gothenburg a good image as a compact city, which facilitates tourists to experience tourism offerings within walking distance and in a short period of time. This positive impression given by our respondents as opposed to Stockholm, which is composed by groups of small islands. Except that, Gothenburg should emphasise its superiorities compared with Stockholm. As many respondents from Stockholm recognized, Gothenburg residents are friendlier and the life here is more relaxing and enjoyable. This inspired Gothenburg tourism marketers to grasp the ‘friendliness’, rural-feeling and relaxing lifestyle as emotional tools, to build up its new lifestyle destination image. And finally, the promotion could be easier and more successful if the outer suburbs and rural areas are involved in, as Uysal et al. (2000) suggested.

5.1.1 Core Values for Branding Gothenburg in abroad markets

Based on a probable study, we recommend Gothenburg’s new brand should position itself more favourably on the international market. The groundwork provided by this research will assist the tourism marketing organizations, like Göteborg & Co, in their future strategies in designing Gothenburg’s destination image and branding to foreign tourists. The suggestions obtained from respondents aid in discovering tourists’ perceived core values of Gothenburg, which composed the underlining implications of its new brand.

As presented in Chapter 4, we conclude from both IPA and the analysis to unstructured answers that the core values for positioning Gothenburg in international tourism market are following: friendliness, clean and green, great leisure atmosphere, safe, eventful, coastline and Swedish/Scandinavian cultures. After reviewing Göteborg & Co’s strategic reports, some of them have been focused by the city; while the others that stemmed from our study results have been overlooked by Gothenburg tourism marketers. Therefore, these will be emphasised in our study. In the following

parts, we will compare our recommending strategies with what Gothenburg city has done.

5.1.2 Partly explored positive images of Gothenburg

The fact that “an image, whether positive or negative may continue long after the factors that moulded in have changed” emphasizes the need for tourism destinations to develop and maintain a positive yet accurate image (O'leary and Deegan, 2005, p.254). Bradley et al. (2002) also suggested a strong positive image should act as an encouragement for the city. Friendly, clean and green are two images impressed valued by visitors. Although existing tourism materials include these two aspects as promotional tools, they are not branded and promoted extensively by Gothenburg's marketers. Therefore, Gothenburg should keep up and strengthen its positive images by branding them, as they are both vital emblems of Swedish lifestyle- friendly leisure atmosphere and pure natural beauty environment.

Friendly

Both typical and sport tourists in this study have evidenced very strong rating to the friendliness of Gothenburg citizens. This has also impressed our respondents most deeply among other aspects, and was regarded as the second attraction and the primary component of Gothenburg's enjoyable atmosphere. These indicate tourists appeared to perceive this element as one of the most critical image creators of Gothenburg as a tourism destination. And according to Ross (1993), in a study of backpackers to North Australia, resident friendliness was found to be most potent when related to the level of enjoyment of visitors, positive destination evaluations, plans to revisit in future and willingness to recommend the destination to friends and relatives. So we suggested Gothenburg's tourism marketers should continue to use this element as a main image creator and brand it as a promotional tool to overseas visitors, though they highlighted it successfully to attract tourists in their promotion materials.

Additionally, in order to sustain and maintain the friendly image of Gothenburg, local residents' views and comments should not be ignored. Ross (1993) concluded that

local residents need to perceive that they have some control over their own environment and have a critical input into the planning and development of their area. Especially for the friendliness, which can only be achieved from local residents; local community's consciousness will greatly develop this attribute. So destination marketers of Gothenburg need to ensure that concerns of the local residents are adequately encompassed. The tourism development process should be open and transparent, so that local residents are more likely to support tourism policies. By gaining support from the local community, Gothenburg's marketers will be more successful and find it easier in projecting and branding Gothenburg as a friendly city.

Clean and Green

From the results of our study, most tourists agreed Gothenburg was a clean and green city, though they had some complaints about the cleanliness due to the EM crowds. And according to City of Göteborg (2005), they undertook different projects to maintain the cleanliness of Gothenburg, showing Gothenburg has attached importance to this image attribute. For example, during the period from May to September, four young people have during daytime cleaned along streets and in park areas in the middle of central Gothenburg. This project with the main purpose showing that the City of Göteborg took initiatives in cleaning the town. And this can be treated as indicator of success in carrying out those cleaning projects. But we suggested the cleanliness projects and concepts should be more visible to tourists in showing Gothenburg actually did do something to protect and maintain the cleanliness of environment. Since visitors perceived cleanliness as an important image attribute when considering Gothenburg as a tourism destination. Tourism organizations in Gothenburg should raise this agenda to the City of Göteborg, explaining how important the cleanliness of the city is toward tourism, and how cleanliness can be one of the selling points of Gothenburg in formulating tourism policies. Appropriate suggestions should be made by Gothenburg marketers to protect the environment, so that tourists will continue to perceive Gothenburg as a clean and tidy city.

Apart from maintaining a clean environment, tourism organizations should further project Gothenburg as a green city to attract tourists. "Enjoy the wild nature within the urban", "lots of green space/parks in the city" or "a town scattered in natures", as well as its outer space, particularly those beautiful islands and countryside are the most

mentioned attractions by both tourist groups. Therefore, marketers of Gothenburg should introduce eco-tours with professional guides in educating and promoting the nature of Gothenburg to tourists. In establishing specific eco-routes, such as bird watching, berries/ mushroom picking and hiking in green areas, niche market can be developed and provide more offerings to tourists apart from city tours. Tourists can experience another valuable rural lifestyle of Gothenburg apart from the modern city life.

5.1.3 Unexplored positive images of Gothenburg

The overall analysis indicated that Gothenburg can develop its image as a friendly, safe and natural beauty tourism destination- an image which is fairly established. Its two positive images, “Friendliness” and “Clean & Green” are being used as the main plank in its promotional messages. Moreover, other attributes that have been confirmed or emerged as being positive can be used to improve its image. As Bradley et al. (2002) suggested, the city should build up and strengthen positive images if it lacks distinctive or strong image, or insufficient awareness amongst its target markets. Since several vital attractive aspects in Gothenburg were overlooked by tourism marketers, lots of work should be done before Gothenburg can position itself as the “Swedish lifestyle destination” to the international markets. A well-planned image promotion campaign in these areas will be useful. Three-eight percent of respondents claimed Gothenburg should advertise more to foreign markets, exposing to more people and form a fair image. As they said, their homeland citizens know little or even nothing about Gothenburg because the extensive tourism information they received about Sweden is mainly focused on Stockholm. After studying these respondents’ nationalities, we see that Gothenburg is hidden under the shadow of Stockholm on the international tourism market. This phenomenon not only exists in far-away continent, like U.S. and Canada, but also in many European countries as Spain, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, France, Netherland, Ireland, England and Germany. Even in its close neighbour Norway, insufficient knowledge of Gothenburg is common. So, we conclude to emphasise advertisements on unexplored positive images to abroad markets. It is indeed the most important and requisite strategy for Gothenburg’s tourism development.

Safe

Sweden has been famous for the lowest crime rate in the world for many years and Gothenburg, as a town-like city, keeps quite good social order (Göteborg Convention Bureau, 2006). However, there is a growing perception of the world as a more risky place to live and travel (Fischhoff et al. 2001). Visitors became more cautious about personal safety during their travel.

The City of Göteborg's central crime prevention council formulated different strategies in maintaining safety in Gothenburg. They initiated deliberations to invite citizens to give their views, ideas and proposals to promote comfort, well-being and security in Gothenburg. Also safety inspection tours with involvement of different stakeholders were carried out to inspect both the physical and psychological environment. Social problems and improvements have been raised for further discussions (The City of Göteborg's central crime prevention council, 2005). The efforts of the council have been recognized by most of the visitors to Gothenburg. From the results of our study, most visitors rated safety as high in importance and performance as referred Gothenburg as tourism destination. But this distinctive safety image is not without argumentation, some respondents complained that unsafe factors still existed in many areas, the worst situation occurred in parking places. So City of Göteborg's central crime prevention council should carry out functional measures to attack crimes, particularly for vehicle theft and burglary have to be adopted and strengthened, especially during events.

In order to project and sustain the safety image, Gothenburg marketers should take initiatives in promoting this distinctive image to visitors, especially to those markets which valued this attribute. According to Reisinger and Mavondo (2005), marketers should tailor their advertising messages according to the cultural background of tourists. This is consistent with the notion that the degree of uncertainty avoidance varies across cultures (Kim and Gudykunst 1998). Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) further suggested that members of the high-uncertainty cultures should be targeted with messages of stability, order and security. In our case, we suggested Gothenburg identify the needs and uncertainty avoidance of their target markets, so that tailor-made tourism services can be delivered to them. For example, in order to market and attract tourists with high uncertainty avoidance level, Gothenburg should provide

them with more tourist information to reduce their anxiety level. Package guide tours which provide comfort and professional tour guide services could be offered to this type of tourists. Australia and New Zealand have been successfully in positioning themselves as safe destinations for tourists who are anxious about traveling internationally. Gothenburg can learn experiences from their successes. One of the effective measures is transmitting the messages highlighted “safety and tranquillity” through advertising campaign (Reisinger and Mavondo 2005).

Nature and Coastline

Gothenburg has been famous for the industries-shipping and trade since 18th century. And it has a mix of hi tech industries with Volvo Cars being the largest employer and a number of smaller computer software electronic vendors nowadays (Wikipedia, 2006). Bradley et al. (2002) conducted a study to some English cities with strong industrial images in the past. His results showed they have all undergone extensive regeneration, and build up strong, rejuvenated images under the quick development of tourism industry. Therefore, it is necessary to for Gothenburg to change old image in order to develop tourism. Fortunately, Gothenburg possesses congenital resources advantages - the pure nature environment and rich diverse landscapes, including deep woods, pure lakes, blue open sea and pristine countryside, which are all located within or just outside of the downtown. Even in the city centre the surroundings hint at the proximity of nature, with the “clear scents of sea-breeze and woodland air” (Göteborg Conference Bureau, 2006, p.17). Many parks and gardens are free public space shared by tourists and locals. And a boat trip in the Gothenburg archipelago is the perfect way to full enjoy all the characteristics of the city. In order to meet our respondents’ requirements, Gothenburg marketers should make the most out of Gothenburg’s attraction, by promoting the rocky west coast. The stunning Gothenburg archipelago should be regarded as the mainstay when marketers promoting the city’s natural scenery, because they are easily arrived by public transportation and offer both the plain charm of old fishing village, but also high-class restaurants and amazing venues for a banquet or ball. Other water- lakes and canal all can be used to develop vocational activities, such as fishing and canoeing. As Göteborg Conference Bureau (2006) stated, being a maritime city, Gothenburg has many sea-related activities on offer: from restaurants with a sea view to speed-boating to the archipelago. Furthermore, guided by the lifestyle destination marketing strategy, we can create

relevant attractions. For example, renting an island for a pleasant vacation during the cool summer.

5.2 Negative/misunderstanding images

Nielsen (2001) believed if the destination has come under the negative media gaze, a distorted image may be built up. And Bradley et al. (2002) pointed that a strong negative image will act as a deterrent for city's image-building. Responses of this study showed several negative impressions to Gothenburg do indeed exist, especially among foreigners. The bad images were mainly resulted by lack of knowledge or long-term prejudicial misunderstandings, which derived from lack informalities. Thereafter, these negative distorted images should be the focuses of administration by Gothenburg marketers. The main method is still advertisements through various media.

1. Expensive and non-English Speaking image

As concluded before, a too high price and cost level is the most complained about attribute for Gothenburg as a tourism destination. Both two types of tourists located it among the worst performed attributes. Whereas, it is impossible to decrease prices directly as our respondents requested because this is a macro-economic attribute, decided by complex factor-system related to whole country's economy and politics. So, what a destination marketer can do is utilize the mass media to transmit a more impartial message to its target markets: Gothenburg is not as expensive as always conceived. The same strategy was adopted in Switzerland. As Moran (1997) reported, Swiss tourism officials launched a program to counter the image of Switzerland as expensive and position it as a scenic, prestigious and secure destination for leisure travellers.

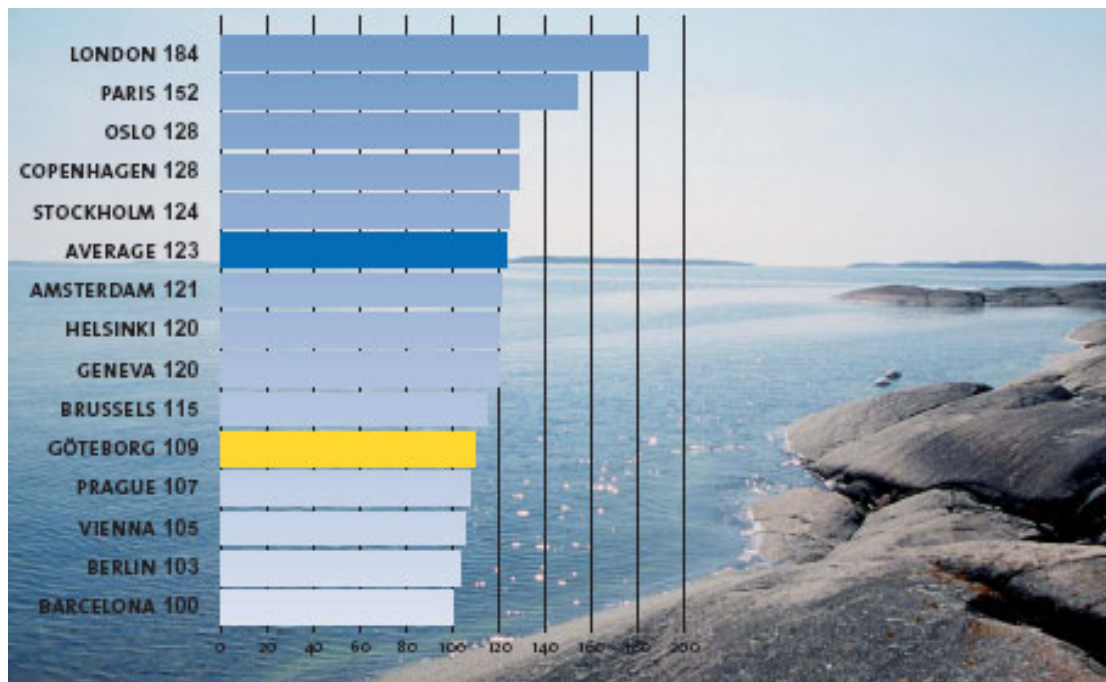


Fig. 5.1 Price Index – a Comparison in 14 European cities
(Source: Metamatrix Development & Consulting AB.)

Fig. 5.1 presented a comparison study of the price level for convention visitors in 14 European cities in 2004. The study was conducted and produced by Metramatrix Development & Consulting AB and commissioned by the Swedish Tourist Authority. The method was based on the collection of prices for a number of goods and services, typical of an event visitors' consumption, such as hotel, restaurant, transport, shopping and other/city sightseeing. The result of the study shows in a price comparison Gothenburg is quite well positioned; the costs of holding an event in Gothenburg are 14% below the average index level and a merely 9% above the cheapest city, which provides adequate evidence to overthrow the expensive image of Gothenburg (Swedish Tourist Authority 2004).

2. *“Dark & Cold all year round”*

According to Göteborg Conference Bureau, “cold and warm” is a whole lot more accurate description to Sweden's climate. It is indeed very cold in the winter. But just as much as it has true of winter, the city also has warm summer, blooming spring and colorful autumn at the same time. Each season has its own beauty. And economic sector (2001) reported that Sweden's tourism season is largely confined to the summer months. Although winter skiing holidays are popular among Swedes, they have also become more attractive internationally, for instance, the first direct charter flights

between Swedish ski resorts and the UK were launched in 1997. However, 80% of the guests were Swedes, followed by other Nordic nationals (6%). This demonstrated that Gothenburg's future promotions should focus more on its nice climate, especially during the beautiful spring and summer. The lots of sunny weather and pretty long sunshine summer's day are un-known for lots of French, as one French respondent said. Therefore, the cosy and pleasant climate and the "unset" sun in summer will be the best weapon to repudiate the unilateral impression to Gothenburg's climate.

3. "Peripheral" image

Distance is attractive, sounds contradictory but it is true, because Sweden is only distant enough to be charmingly different. As well-known, the main motivation of tourists leaving their normal residents is to seek difference. Gothenburg is far away enough to make it exotic. Yet it is easily accessible which enables swift, convenient traveling. (Göteborg Conference Bureau, 2006)

5.3 Marketing Strategies for Gothenburg

5.3.1 Advertisement Campaign

As Caldwell and Freire (2004) stated, the media has an important role in the construction of a destination's image. In his opinion, the media coverage of events (cultural, sports et al.) and the diffusion of news (normally with some social impact) can create by itself a meaning for a destination; and the international exposure can affect perceptions of destinations through the media.

In order to build up its new brand image as "the capital of Swedish lifestyle", Gothenburg should adopt a wide variety of media formats- divided by Nielsen (2001) into four categories- print media, like newspapers, magazines, brochures, journals, direct mails, newsletters et al.; electronic media, including radio, TV and internet; the outdoor media like billboards and sports panels; and other specialty forms, for example, the free postcards, just as our respondents required in this study, or ads on bus shelters and other public facilities. Nielsen believed different formats and

applications of various media will bring different results, so it is vital for marketing and communication process to choose and apply appropriate media.

The results of our study showed that the advertisement campaign of Gothenburg should focus on foreign tourist markets. This is the only means to build up a distinctive tourism destination image in the international tourism market for Gothenburg nowadays. Zillinger, M. (2006) drew such a conclusion from his study on guidebooks: the tourists come from more distant home countries are more strongly affected by guidebooks. It is also suitable to be applied to other media formats. For this reason, Gothenburg marketers should pay enough attention to the promotional contents and give prominence to the core values of its image and brand when they design promotion materials. As tourist experience has constantly become more individualistic, the importance of promotion materials/ information, as a key representation of a destination is increasing in recent years (Nelson, 2005).

Among various media formats, internet is becoming the most utilized and powerful information-searching tool, according to Nielsen (2001). Lehto et al. (2006) conducted a specific study on online information search behaviour of tourists to facilitate tourism organisations' better understanding of online information needs and search preferences. The results have practical implications for the content, length and presentation of tourism websites that service travellers. He also acclaimed the internet-induced information revolution has brought unprecedented opportunities and challenges for organisations to communicate with consumers and successfully deliver marketing messages to targeted audiences. So, improving Gothenburg's tourism website to be more efficient and functional could aid a lot for its image building and branding strategies. Apart from traditional media advertisements, trade show is a special and useful promotion tool for tourism industry (Garza, 1999).

5.3.2 Events Destination

Caldwell and Freire (2004) thought regions and cities attract media attention mainly due to cultural and sporting events during their images construction. Agreed by Williams (2005, p.66) that mega events are very important for the host destination for

“the whole world will be watching and it is a great opportunity to increase the awareness” of destination around the world. Holding more kinds of events is also the request of our respondents, and meet with the objective of Göteborg & Co- build it into an event destination. Subsequently, Gothenburg’s tourism authorities should strengthen their cooperation with various events organizers- artistic, sportive, political and other industrial’s to capitalize on city’s exposure.

In our case, different event marketing strategies should be adopted to attract two types of tourists. For sport tourists, except for promoting sport events to them, Gothenburg should try to broaden their knowledge of the city and let them experience the tourism charming by considerate treatments. Most important is fulfilling their expectations and interests in travel issues, thus only investing the city’s resources into attractive aspects for them, with the aim of calling sport tourist back as a typical tourist. Just like Smith (2006, p.98) stated, “through sport events a large number of potential repeat visitors become acquainted with a tourism area. If they are treated well and pleased, they will not only advertise with word of mouth, but will also likely visit the area on other occasions.” For typical tourists, Gothenburg should build up an “event destination” image in their minds, transforming colourful events into tourist attractions. Then they may care more about what happens in the city, and visit it again and again not only for common travelling purposes, but to attend events they interested in. The revisiting rate will undoubtedly increase.

All in all, the ultimate objectives is building up and strengthening the image of a “tourism destination” in event visitors’ minds, while an “event destination” image for typical tourists. Especially for those random travellers who have ambiguous travelling motivations, if they can be attracted by one kind of re-occurring event, they might become a stable revisiting market for Gothenburg.

The last issue worth mentioning is that several respondents in our survey particularly pointed out that Gothenburg should develop more special sport events and activities, which coordinate with Scandinavian specialties, such as super natural environment and traditions. For example, rowing boat competition, kayaking and more water sports because it located along the beautiful west coast. The advice from our respondents proved such a statement: events seem to have been “regarded favourably at a cultural

level, generating widespread positive meanings even when individual preferences vary” (Smith, 2006). And this has positive implications for cities deploying events as re-imaging or branding tools.

5.3.3 Strengthen Co-operations

Finucan (2002, p.11) claimed the city branding process “brings together broad range of stakeholders to assess a destination’s tangible and intangible benefits, identify opportunities, and build support for a vision statement”, and, like a plan, the brand will provide a framework for all stakeholders in their future decision making. Moreover, in order to manage the destination in a holistic way and ensure the long-term development of the general destination product, the destination marketing bodies should act in the role of steward working in partnership with other stakeholders, such as local hotel and tourist associations and other key sites in the city, and coordinating their services or products to keep consistency with the brand promoted by mass media (Hankinson, 2001). For this case, Göteborg & Co collaborate with various relevant parties such as municipality, the Göteborg Restaurant Association, transportation companies and cultural interests, with the aim of developing the city’s tourism. Reported by Göteborg & Co (2005), Stena Line, the Swedish Exhibition and Congress Centre, GotEvent, the Liseberg, Göteborg Opera and City Theatre and so on, are partners of Göteborg & Co. Subsequently, as suggested by Hankinson (2001), Göteborg & Co should take initiative in encouraging partners to use the city’s visual triggers of brand, such as logo, slogan or names, either as a “form of endorsement” to create a visual identity or build recognition through consistency in communications or as an “umbrella symbol” to unify diverse relevant commercial activities, such as hospitality and entertainments, as part of the tourist product offerings under the same identity.

Furthermore, the stakeholder alliances can cross geographic boundaries if necessary. “Look for communities with features similar to yours, and don’t worry about crossing country lines” (Finucan, 2002, p.13). That means Gothenburg can brand across states if it can package places with similar features and attractions, and sell them with a theme. For example, the nearby islands belonging to Denmark can be included when

Gothenburg market its archipelagos. In addition, just like a French respondent advised, Gothenburg should develop deep and wide co operations with the tourism boards or other organizations of its various foreign markets. Then tourism images of Gothenburg might be possibly delivered to abroad markets, segmenting by different cultural contexts, previous perceptions and expectations to this destination.

5.3.3.1 Strategies in improving Gothenburg’s image as the “Capital of Swedish Lifestyle”

As described before, branding tourism destination requires a very high-level of cooperation. While in reality, collaborations among different industries is quite troublesome for they may not regard tourists as their target market. Thus, over-promising and under-delivering, which results in disappointment, even dissatisfaction, becomes a common phenomenon. According to Hankinson (2001), there was always a risk that the tourists’ experience would differ from their expectations generated by communications, particularly when the quality of the experience depended on several service providers. And, the dissatisfied tourism consumers “won’t be back and they’ll tell others”.

In such a situation, the issue of control becomes “central distinguishing feature of location marketing”, and it should be “applied both to visitors’ actual experience of the destination itself as well as the journey to the destination” (Hankinson, 2001, p.140). Without exception, responsibility for the actual services experienced in Gothenburg also often lie with private sector providers, such as hotels, restaurants, entertainments, tourist attractions and shopping facilities. Thus, key elements of the marketing mix such as product quality and price should base on coordination with different organizations. In the following, three image attributes are drawn from our results, which directly affect both typical tourists and sport tourists to achieve an overall satisfactory experience during their stay in Gothenburg.

Food & Beverage

According to Hjalager and Antonioli (2000), the role of food can be treated as the determinants of tourism image. They suggested that the inclusion of food in tourist

marketing and management have increased considerably over the past decades. Foods become a theme of additional tourist activities in regions and enterprises whose core products are something else. Antonioli (1995) further concluded that in materialistic concept “food is culture”, eating typical dishes and drinking local wine is a way to contact with local residents. In our case, in order to create an authentic Swedish style environment for outsiders, food and beverage is undoubtedly an essential factor to embody Sweden’s distinctive culture. As Quan and Wang (2004) pointed that food consumption in tourism can turn to be peak tourist experiences. And food and beverage can be itself an attraction in a destination and motivation to tourism.

Since both typical and sport tourists rated quality of food as important image attribute of Gothenburg, in which typical tourists rated it in the “keep up the work” quadrant and sport tourists rated it in “concentrate here” quadrant. In order to sustain and further promote its performance; Gothenburg should formulate specific marketing strategies in promoting quality of food. As Gothenburg claimed itself as “The capital of taste” in the tourism promotion materials, tourists may have high expectation about the quality of food in Gothenburg. But from our results, many tourists complained that foods here were expensive and lacked variety. And sport tourists were especially unsatisfied with the performance of food quality. A gap existed between the projected image from Gothenburg marketers and perceived image from the visitors. In order to improve the quality of food and provide more information about the food offerings in Gothenburg, we come up with following suggestions. Firstly, organization of food festivals, many cities had proof of being successful in organizing food festivals or other food-related events, such as Oktoberfest in Munich and Food Expo in Hong Kong. They provide opportunities for visitors to taste a variety of food, with a greater range of choices. At the same time, they can serve educational and learning experiences for visitors. Gothenburg is a place which attracted talented chefs and several of them won the national distinction, “Chef of the Year” (Göteborg & Co, 2006f). Gothenburg marketers can invite those chefs to demonstrate their cooking techniques and share their cooking experiences with the visitors in the Gothenburg food festivals. Therefore, food festivals can be developed as authentic tourist attraction and to sustain Gothenburg’s image as “The capital of taste”, and then strengthen its new brand- “The capital of Swedish Lifestyle.” Given that sport tourists are more concern about their health and would like stay in good physical shape. Good

quality of healthy food would be their high priority. A special restaurant list with healthier choices could be listed in Gothenburg tourist guidebooks and website to widen the choices of visitors. Special tour packages which emphasize healthy food and balanced diet can be promoted to sport tourists or specific visitors, for example, Gothenburg marketers can cooperate with vegetarian restaurants to package the trip or give discount to sport tourists with presenting the tickets of sport events. While, typical tourists cared more about children's appetites. Cheaper but more nutritious food is their desire. As family tourists are one of Gothenburg's main target market, and will keep its importance in our new image-building strategy. Food and beverage must be improved to meet and exceed their expectations with the aim of attracting more vacation tourists- normally are family groups.

Accommodations

As we received many complaints concerning Gothenburg's accommodation conditions, we believe there is a lot of work that need to be done to improve it although typical tourists rated this of low importance. To achieve our goal of branding Gothenburg as a lifestyle destination, accommodation, as a vital component of experience economy, requires that marketers must pay particular attention to its hardware (facilities, locations and surroundings) and software (services) development. For specific improving measures we refer to our investigation results, which displayed are given in Chapter four.

According to O'Neill (2004), one thing worth mentioning is that tourists increasing wish for authentic glimpses of other cultures, private houses abroad is becoming particularly attractive. Rentals can trump comparably appointed hotels because they offer a more intimate peek at local life. This is a newly thriving business in all popular destinations in Europe. Gothenburg is believed by the authors to be another proper tourist destination developing private-house renting as it is famous for natural beauty, especially the archipelago and green environment. And also, Gothenburg is, just like many respondents pointed out during interviews, an extremely appropriate destination for a short-term leisure vacation.

Public facilities & Tourists' Services (Tourist Information, signs / Toilets)

In order to sustain Gothenburg's tourism image, tourist information and services should not be ignored. Some visitors suggested that tourist information (e.g. travel brochures, maps, signs) should be in more languages and be visible to tourists. Gothenburg marketers should take appropriate actions to tailor the needs of different visitors. Signs and maps should be bilingual which include English instead of only Swedish to be clear and more easy to use. Travel brochures can be printed in different languages, especially in the languages of Gothenburg's target tourist markets, in the way that visitors understand about Gothenburg's tourism offerings.

Lack of toilets is another common problem raised by visitors; they complained that they were difficult to find and too dirty. Gothenburg marketers should focus on this problem and find out remedies. Since toilets are one of the basic tourists' facilities for any tourism destination, if Gothenburg fail to provide enough for tourists, it will adversely affect Gothenburg's image.

After presenting strategies to improve Gothenburg's image, we conclude that each stakeholder within the tourism destination marketing alliance should make efforts in collaborating and resolving Gothenburg's image and brand. As a result, ensuring destination brand delivers promises to visitors. Additionally, although the brand image has been developed, the branding effort should be continued, as Finucan (2002, p.12) suggested: "One of the things we're trying to pound home is that just because people know about us doesn't mean they don't need to be reminded."

5.3.4 Utilizing Word of mouth

Nielsen (2001) thought word-of-mouth is a more "natural" means of mass communication. And according to Bigne et al. (2001), one's own experience, or that of friends, acquaintances or family is very important in forming an image; all efforts with the purpose of improving that experience will result in an improved image. Gothenburg marketers could make use of these concepts by developing a tourist database. Since many visitors will use the services provided by the tourism office and information centers, their demographic characteristics could be collected to build up a

customer database. The database can show the travel patterns, different interests and attractions to different visitors, as well as their complaints or suggestions, and the feedback for improvements. This makes it possible for Gothenburg marketers to send up-to-date tourism information or news tailored to individual tourist's needs after they return to their home country. Such tourism news can facilitate tourists' word-of-mouth. It makes it easier for visitors give recommendations about the tourism offerings in Gothenburg, if their friends and relatives considering travel among different tourism destinations. Also, visitors may think of Gothenburg as a treasure and welcome their return in the future.

5.4 Specific Segment Recommendations

The following recommendations will be base on the findings of this study and be specific to the two types of tourist-main market-segments explored by our research. Seeing that the study results have revealed that different perceptions do indeed exist between typical tourists and sport tourists towards Gothenburg's image attributes, Gothenburg tourism organizations and marketers are believed to have to develop specific marketing and promotion strategies to tailor the needs and interests of both types of tourists. These results are also confirmed by different researchers that tourists are not homogeneous and thus different marketing strategies need to be applied according to tourist clusters and categories (Chon et al. 1991; Chu and Choi, 2000; Kim and Morrison, 2002).

5.4.1 For Typical Tourist: Cultural & Historic Sites

Since typical tourists viewed different customs and culture as important image attributes and attraction of Gothenburg, but the performance fell below their expectations, thus failing to stimulate their return and recommendations. Most typical tourists reflected that they did not experience distinctive customs and culture in Gothenburg. Prior research indicated culture plays as an important role in motivating international tourists to undertake travel (Hanquin and Lam, 1999; Kim and Chalip, 2004; McGehee et al. 1996). Oh et al. (1995) concluded that the largest proportion of tourists in the Australian leisure travel market seek an opportunity to increase

knowledge by experiencing a different culture. The Gothenburg tourism organization should develop specific marketing strategies to educate and promote the distinctive culture and customs of Gothenburg. Although Gothenburg City Museum provided permanent exhibitions and collections which related to the customs and culture of Gothenburg, it lacked interactive displays or demonstrations to arouse the interests of visitors. Tourists may feel bored and not entertained in understanding and experiencing the culture and customs of Gothenburg. And, also without interaction, typical foreign tourists may have a wrong impression and misunderstanding towards the culture and customs of Gothenburg, especially when most introductions are only Swedish. So, we suggest Gothenburg marketers, should develop museums in a more interactive and entertaining way in assisting typical tourists to experiences the real life and customs of Gothenburg. Skansen in Stockholm can be a good example or reference for Gothenburg to demonstrate distinctive customs and culture. With staff who dress in Swedish custom to reflect an aspect of Swedish culture and provide authentic experiences for typical tourists. Through the interactive process, typical tourists can better understand and be impressed by the culture and traditions of Gothenburg. This together with the adding of bilingual signs and instructions is a primary task for many cultural interests, including old buildings and statues, which was a request of our respondents.

Furthermore, more vivid detailed tourism information should be provided to visitors, and tourism resource developers should be better at utilizing different information to increase the implications of cultural and historic attractions, and creating new charm for them. For instance, Gustav II Adolf, a great king in Swedish history, is particularly celebrated in Gothenburg because he is the founder of this Sweden's second city. Legend has it that in 1621 Gustav II Adolf stood on the hill which now looks down over Ullevi and pointed below him, saying, "Där skall staden ligga" ("There, shall the city lie"). These words have since become an important part of Gothenburg's history – the resulting city, built largely by Dutch workers appointed by the King, remained Swedish and grew increasingly important over the following centuries. As one of Gothenburg's most famous landmarks, the statue of the king, which was placed in Gustav Adolfs Torg in 1854, has an interesting story, complex and as troubled as the king's life, but few people know of it due to insufficient exposure. Related with the city's history, a traditional festival form- "eating him in cake form" has been passed

on for more than 100 years. Still, except for the residents, nobody knows about it. Actually, this special form of cake- depicting a silhouette of the king and came to be known as Gustav Adolfs bakelse, now usually rendered in chocolate or marzipan, and the tradition for Gothenburg bakeries to sell on the 6th of November every year. (The Local, 2006, Nov 3)

Finally, colourful performance related to the celebration of festivals can be another tourist attraction and further promoted the cultural image of Gothenburg. For example, St Lucia, mid-summer festival and “Tomte-världsrekordförsöket” (Santa Claus dressing celebration), are some of the typical celebration activities and culture shared by the local residents in Gothenburg. These activities and performance can be packaged and further promote to typical tourists. More information about the activities and celebrations should be provided in Gothenburg tourism website and travelling brochures, which offer opportunities for tourists to participate, so that they can understand the cultural life of locals and offer them with authentic tourist experiences.

5.4.2 For Sport Tourist: sport event & Activities

Chalip and Leyns (2002) concluded that destination marketers that attempt to attract the patronage of event tourists can substantially increase the revenues they obtain. Since most of the sport tourist visited Gothenburg with the purpose of attending the EM, they are passively participating in tourist activities in Gothenburg, and most of them set low priority for tourist attractions. Bramwell (1997) mentioned it is challenging to incorporate events strategically into host destination’s overall mix of tourism products and services. It is important for Gothenburg marketers to provide non-event tourism opportunities that persuade event visitors to stay beyond the period of the event. As suggested by Hwang and Fesenmaier (2003), destinations with complementary attractions can improve the success of their marketing by bundling themselves into a travel package. We suggest Gothenburg marketers organize sport-related celebration parties for a few days after the closing of mega-sport events. Gothenburg marketers can cooperate with the organizers of mega-sport events in holding the parties. Sharing sessions can be provided for athletes to share their own

training experiences and provide demonstrations of specific sport techniques. Hopefully this will attract sport spectators and sport lovers to extend their stay in Gothenburg to participate in parties. It also provides opportunities for sport tourists with common interest to share their own experiences and can be further guided by the professional athletes. This recommendation is supported by Green and Chalip (1998) that augmentations designed to help participants celebrate the subculture they share with other participants will be particularly attractive.

Furthermore, our results showed that sport tourists were more concerned about the accommodation facilities compared with typical tourists. Gothenburg marketers should provide accommodation or tourist packages which tailor their needs and wants. Hotels or resorts with well-equipped fitness centres would be a good choice to market to sport tourists. Also spa and golf resorts would be another good choice to suit the health consciousness of sport tourists, especially mature sport tourists with high purchasing power. Thereby hopefully improving the image of Gothenburg as an event city with well-developed tourism products and infrastructure.

Subsequently, the sport events can be bundled and packaged with special sport tours to extend sport tourists' stays in Gothenburg. Since sport tourists from our results viewed sport facilities and activities as both high in importance and performance, it indicated that Gothenburg tourism marketers should maintain the performance of sport activities both in terms of quality and kinds. It can further promote and sustain its image as a "sport event destination" by developing sport packages to target sport tourists. Sport tours can package the common tour with sport activities. For instance, Gothenburg is famous for its archipelago, the sport package could bundle the event entrance tickets with a sailing trip to the archipelago. Additionally, the event tickets can be packaged with all kinds of activities, including both sportive and leisure ones such as cycling or adventures, for the road condition and topography in Gothenburg were highly praised by many visitors. Thus diverse choices can be delivered to sport tourists and arouse their interests to be involved, which will improve their experience greatly, as Gross and Brown (2006) suggested. Besides which, packaging and bundling the entrance tickets can provide additional revenue and generate extra bed nights for Gothenburg.

5.5 Suggestions to Further Research

As Echtner and Ritchie (1993) stated, the results of an image study are more interesting in relative terms, meaning that the results are compared to something. In this research, for example, findings from a number of earlier image studies dealing with Gothenburg were reviewed, in order to find tailor-made marketing solutions to the foreign market. Similar studies could be conducted in various other target markets as well. As specified in the literature section, research on Gothenburg-image in general is scarce; it is even sparser for Gothenburg-images regarding the sport events. There might also be value in conducting the same study but on a larger scale, which would give the destination marketers more reliable results to base their decisions on. And, inquiries on comparisons among Nordic destinations to respondents may provide the marketers with precious information when it comes to the city's positioning strategy and unique attributes. Depending on the resources, investigations could focus on either all Scandinavian second cities or other Swedish cities.

Furthermore, it would also be interesting to conduct image research on different foreign markets. Since different foreign countries might have different perceptions to Sweden or Gothenburg, just like Kim and Morrision (2005) argued, foreign tourists are not homogenous and thus differentiated marketing strategies need to be applied according to nationality, both in terms of promotions and in product development. Different core values should be positioned in the same image brand-“the capital of Swedish lifestyle” when it is promoted to different countries. A unique promotion key should also be explored. For example, British people can more easily receive the “peaceful and friendly” image of Gothenburg if “the baleful Mistletoe” and underlying legends which mentioned by Shakespeare were displayed to England in the promotion materials. To Chinese tourists, “friendliness”, “historic and cultural”, as well as a “pure natural coastline vacation destination” should become promotion highlights because the long trade history and friendly relationship between the two countries, especially after the Swedish ship Göteborg which visited China last year.

This study left the question regarding the influences of EM on Gothenburg's destination image, and therefore possible future research should focus on the subject. For the EM period, was focused on in this study. No pre- or pro- event material was

included the follow-up research can continue to use the Importance-Performance Analysis to monitor changes in leading image attributes before and after the trip. As Kim and Morrision (2005) suggested, an internationally significant event can change the image of a tourism destination in a short time period. Thus, the monitor could help practitioners justify their strategies of service delivery and product development. Additionally, future research should explore relationships between the core image attributes and behavioral issues of different types of tourists, such as their travel motivation, word-of-mouth, and attitude to different promotional bodies. Several researchers (Gartner 1993; Balogu and Brinberg 1997) have strongly suggested that these issues would affect the process of tourist image formation. In addition, their attitudes and evaluations to segment marketing strategies and tailored promotional offerings are also important indicators for the success of image-building and branding.

Finally, there is a great necessity to further the research on “lifestyle tourist destination”- a pretty new concept as discussed before. How to develop tourism destination under such a brand; and what effects it will bring to destination’s image, both positive and negative et al. are all worthy study topics. Particularly, whether it is an appropriate marketing strategy for Gothenburg should be monitored. If it fails, new image-building work has to be conducted again.

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Appendix: Questionnaires

Hi! Thank you very much for your participation in this questionnaire!

We are two master students studying in Tourism and Hospitality Management at the School of Business, Economics and Law in Gothenburg University. We are doing a master thesis about the image of Gothenburg as tourist destination in the mind of tourists. Your preferences and opinions are vital to our study, and you will of course be anonymous.

The results will be presented at the School of Business, Economics and Law in January 2007.

Please read the following questions, answer each of them according to the requirement and fill in the appropriate boxes that represent your opinions. We sincerely appreciate your work!

Part I: Visitor Profile:

- 1. Gender: Female Male
- 2. Age: Less than 20; 20-29; 30-39;

 40-49; 50-59; 60 or more
- 3. Country of Residence: _____
- (Optional E-mail : _____)
- 4. Education Level: Junior High school Senior High school

 University students University graduate Post graduate school
- 5. Have you visited Gothenburg? Never; Yes, Number of visits: _____
- 6. Purpose of this Trip: Attending EM; Vacation;

 Visiting friends/relatives; Business; Others: _____
- 7. How long will you stay here? 1 day; 2-3days; 4-5 days;

 6-7days; More than 7 days

Part II Closed-ended Questions

A. Please indicate the importance of the following aspects of your Gothenburg visit by using the following scale of 1= not important to 5= very important.

	Not Important			Very Important	
Accommodation Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Clean & green city	1	2	3	4	5
Climate	1	2	3	4	5
Costs / price level	1	2	3	4	5
Different customs / culture	1	2	3	4	5
Friendliness of local people	1	2	3	4	5
Historic sites / museums	1	2	3	4	5
Local infrastructure					
/ transportation	1	2	3	4	5
Nightlife / entertainment	1	2	3	4	5
Personal safety	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of food	1	2	3	4	5
Restful / relaxing atmosphere	1	2	3	4	5
Scenery / natural attractions	1	2	3	4	5
Sports facilities / activities	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Tourist information					
and support	1	2	3	4	5

B. Please indicate the actual performance of the following aspects of your Gothenburg visit by using the following scale of 1 = very poor performance to 5 = very good performance

	Very poor performance			Very good performance	
Accommodation Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Clean & green city	1	2	3	4	5
Climate	1	2	3	4	5
Costs / price level	1	2	3	4	5
Different customs / culture	1	2	3	4	5
Friendliness of local people	1	2	3	4	5
Historic sites / museums	1	2	3	4	5
Local infrastructure					
/ transportation	1	2	3	4	5
Nightlife / entertainment	1	2	3	4	5
Personal safety	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of food	1	2	3	4	5
Restful / relaxing atmosphere	1	2	3	4	5
Scenery / natural attractions	1	2	3	4	5
Sports facilities / activities	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Tourist information					
and support	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Performance	1	2	3	4	5

Part III Open-ended Questions:

1. If you dissatisfied with any aspects listed above, please tell us your reasons and expectation.

2. Please use three phases to describe Gothenburg?

3. Would you like to revisit Gothenburg just for traveling?

Yes Reason: _____

No Reason: _____

4. Will you recommend Gothenburg to your relatives and friends after you return?

Yes Reason: _____

No Reason: _____

5. Please list those aspects attracted you most:

6. In what ways do you think Gothenburg can further improve its image as tourist destination?

-----End of questionnaire-----

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Thank you for cooperation !!

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