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Tackling the Seasonality Problem in the North: The Destination Seasonal Image of Lapland from the Viewpoint of Japanese People

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Abstract of the Thesis:

The empirical phenomenon investigated in this thesis was the destination seasonal image of Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people. Finnish Lapland faces extensively the problem of tourism seasonality. For example, the physical and social structures designed for the winter peak season are underutilised during the rest of the year (Rantala et al., 2019). There were no previous literatures specifically focusing on Lapland as a whole region and the seasonal difference of the destination image from the viewpoint of Japanese people. The theoretical framework utilised in this study was the destination image theory introduced by Gartner (1994). The thesis investigated how Japanese people recognised Lapland as a travel destination from the viewpoint of cognitive, affective, and conative destination image. The aim of this research was to explore the seasonal destination image of Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people. To gain an understanding of this phenomenon, three research questions were investigated in this research.

- RQ1: What kind of cognitive, affective and conative destination image do Japanese people have towards Lapland depending on the seasons?
- RQ2: What kind of perceptions do they have towards activities in Lapland depending on the seasons?
- RQ3: What factors might discourage Japanese people from visiting Lapland?

The questionnaire was distributed to Japanese people and 155 responses were collected. The results were categorised into three destination images. The results showed that the Japanese people had the positive affective and conative destination image both for the summer and winter. Especially the people who had known Lapland before the questionnaire distribution and the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had more positive affective and conative destination image towards summer Lapland, so they would be one of the appropriate targets for the summer tourism development to achieve year-around tourism in Lapland without seasonality.

Keywords

Lapland, destination image, year-around tourism, seasonality, Japanese tourists

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and the Purpose of the Study

Tourism is currently a major trend in the world and even after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is growing without knowing the suspension. Around 1.4 billion people travelled internationally in 2024, which recovered to 99 percent of pre-pandemic levels (World Tourism Organization, 2025). Also, tourism gives significant economic impact, and the size of the tourism industry reached around 9.9 trillion U.S. dollars which accounts for 9.1 percent of the total global GDP (Statista, 2024). Tourism brings joy and happiness for the tourists, but also brings the negative aspects, and one of them is the problem of tourism seasonality.

The seasonality in tourism is one of the biggest problems in the current tourism industry. Destinations having the high fluctuations in seasonality often have the problems of overcrowding, high prices, inadequate infrastructures during peak seasons, and a lack of services and job opportunities in shoulder and low seasons (World Tourism Organization, n.d.). The seasonality in tourism brings economic, socio-cultural, and ecological impacts to the destination, and Cannas (2012) explained these three impacts. Economic impacts expand from the unbalanced business, shortages of accommodation, employment system in the destination in peak seasons, to underutilised facilities in the off-peak seasons. Socio-cultural impacts affect both the host community and tourists. They suffer from the traffic congestion, the use of commercial services, and significant increases in the prices and crimes, which leads to negatively influencing quality of life and resulting in resentment in the destination. Ecological impacts refer to the physical erosion of footpaths and natural resources, litter problems, disturbance of wildlife, and congestion of rural lanes, which exceeds the ecological capacity in the destination (Cannas, 2012).

Lapland in Finland is currently facing this seasonality problem on a large scale. Lapland has the peak season on winter because of the activities such as northern lights, snow and Santa related activities, and especially in December, almost one million tourists visit Lapland. For example, the number of the bed night in paid accommodation in Lapland in December 2023, the peak Christmas season, was 820,000, compared to 390,000 in July, the highest summer season, and 129,000 in May, the lowest season (Visitory, 2024). The

significant tourism seasonality in Lapland causes impacts economically, socio-culturally, and ecologically.

Global warming accelerates the potential of the destination in the North extensively. According to Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) (2014), one of the positive impacts from climate change is that new geographical regions such as Northern Europe, Scandinavia and Alaska might become more attractive destinations because of the temperature rise, and the tourism trend will shift from south to north. Also, Yle News (2023) published an article about the tourism potential of the cool summer in Lapland mentioning that the several tourism companies in Lapland consider attracting summer visitors as extreme high temperatures become common during summer. A term "coolcation", opting for destinations having moderate temperatures and packing a light sweater instead of a sun hat, becomes popular and Expedia announced flight searches from January to June 2024 increased 705 percent to Lapland (Najafi, 2024). This will give a boost for developing the destination in the North and Lapland during summer. Thus, Lapland presents significant opportunities for the expansion of summer tourism.

Lapland as a tourism destination faces the tourism seasonality problem, but Japanese tourists would be an appropriate target for the development of summer tourism in Lapland, making the destination more sustainable. This is because Japanese tourists are one of the main tourism markets in Finland for both summer and winter seasons, but most of them do not visit Lapland during summer, though large number of Japanese people visit Lapland during winter. Before the pandemic in 2019, 225,200 Japanese tourists came to Finland, which was 10th in the world and 3rd after excluding Europe, following China and the United States (Visit Finland, 2019). During the winter season, 40 percent of the Japanese tourists coming to Finland visited Lapland compared to the summer season, which was only 8 percent of them, even though the number of tourists was more in summer (Visit Finland, 2016). In addition, Finland has targeted Japan as one of the international markets along with Germany, Great Britain, and China. (Yoon, 2023). Thus, considering the fact that only 8 percent of Japanese people coming to Finland visited Lapland in summer, and Finland targeted Japan as one of the main markets, the Japanese tourists and its market potential towards Lapland should be investigated.

In summary, Lapland is the destination located in the North, having high fluctuation of the number of tourists depending on the seasons, which causes the economic, socio-cultural, and ecological impacts to the destination. In addition, the global warming accelerates the potential of the northern destination more and Lapland would be one of the potential destinations for the tourists seeking for cooler destinations. Finland targeted Japan as one of the main markets along with Germany, Grear Britain, and China, and the current situation is that Japanese tourists are coming more during summer than winter to Finland, but not to Lapland. Hence, this research focuses on the destination seasonal image of Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people for the future tourism development in Lapland.

1.2 Destination Image of Finland from the Viewpoint of Japanese People

The destination image of Finland from the viewpoint of Japanese people has been studied before by several researchers. Matilainen and Santalahti (2018) researched the destination image of Finland through the eyes of the Japanese by interviewing Japanese people living in Finland. They found that they chose to come to Finland because of the good reputation such as the good education system, the great English fluency and the safe environment. Generally, their impression towards Finland as a tourist destination and Finnish culture and people were positive, which lead them to recommend visiting Finland to their friends and to help them revisit Finland in the future. Negative aspects of staying in Finland were also mentioned such as the bureaucracy, winter darkness, job seeking, friends as a foreigner, and the difficulty of the Finnish language. The most “Finnish things” commonly mentioned as the image of Finland were sauna, Moomin, forests and nature. When they were asked to create trips for Japanese friends or family, they mentioned the Helsinki area first, followed by Lapland and other parts of Finland, and also, they would like to have the combination of other countries such as Sweden, Norway, and Estonia. However, needs for improvement were mentioned such as the English and Japanese tourist information, which brought the difficulty to comprehend rural areas (Matilainen & Santalahti, 2018). Thus, Finland has the good and positive reputation to be selected as a tourist destination, and also Lapland would have a substantial potential for the Japanese tourists as Sauna, forests and nature are regarded as one of the most “Finnish” things even though there are some problems remaining in a tourist’s environment for Japanese people in Finland.

Suvanto et al. (2017) researched about the Japanese tourists in Finland together with Estonia and Latvia. They found out that Japanese tourists tend to spend a lot of money but stay for a short period because of the short holidays like three nights, mainly travelling in the summer or early autumn, except for Lapland visited mainly in winter for all age groups and have the possibility to shift the season into autumn because of the northern lights. Helsinki was identified as the popular region in terms of culture during summer and also the old towns in Tallinn and Riga. Japanese tourists were found to appreciate quality, originality, and good services including Japanese web pages and marketing materials. Since over 90 percent of the tourists came from big cities, they found nature and rural areas as exotic. Travel guides and social contacts were regarded as important sources of information for middle-aged or elderly tourists, compared to younger generations appreciating the information from the Internet, blogs and social media. 71 percent of Japanese tourists came to Finland for the first time, and they would not expect to repeat the experience. Finland along with Estonia, and Latvia were rarely regarded as the main destinations for travel, but they visited several Nordic or Baltic countries on the same trip, as Japanese tourists tend to perceive these countries within a larger framework such as Europe, Northern Europe, and Scandinavia, which constructed the similar motivations for travel, including design, safety, novelty and cultural experiences (Suvanto et al., 2017). Thus, Lapland is regarded mainly as the winter destination, even though Japanese people view nature and rural areas exotic, also Lapland would be selected in the competition not only inside the country but also within Northern Europe or Scandinavia, or even within the whole Europe.

Varamäki (2004) also researched the image of Finland from the viewpoint of Japanese people arriving in Helsinki. It was revealed that the image was very nature-oriented, matched with the previous studies, such as forests, lakes, night less nights, northern lights, winter, water, and snow, and fjord was mentioned even though the Finland does not have one, which implied that their image of Finland is rather whole Nordic countries than just Finland. Their image was different from the ones in Europeans, especially in “imaginary attributes” such as Moomins, Santa Claus, night less nights, and northern lights, which appeals to your imagination (Varamäki, 2004). Thus, Finland is again viewed as having a lot of nature, and especially Lapland is filled with nature along with Santa Claus and night less nights, which might be potential tourist attractions during summer in Lapland.

The previous research above was mainly focusing on Finland as a country, but the research specifically for Lapland was also done by Maharjan (2016). She researched the main purposes of visiting Rovaniemi for Japanese tourists. It was concluded that the main purposes to visit Rovaniemi for Japanese tourists were to meet Santa Claus, to enjoy Lappish nature, and to observe northern lights. Also, 49 percent of Japanese tourists stayed in Rovaniemi for 2-3 days, and 29.4 percent answered 4-5 days. 57 percent of the respondents mentioned meeting Santa Claus was the most memorable, followed by northern lights hunting, meeting with locals, berry picking, traditional Finnish Sauna, reindeer and husky farm visits, and meeting Sami people (Maharjan, 2016), which implies that the activities during summer in Lapland has the potential to attract more Japanese tourists even though it is not popular as winter seasons yet. Thus, the nature in Lapland and other activities in Lapland during summer might have potential to attract Japanese tourists, helping the destination become more sustainable by reducing the seasonal gap.

These literatures above revealed the Japanese tourists' image to Finland or Rovaniemi, but there were no literatures about the image of Lapland as a region even though there is a substantial market for Japanese people in Lapland. In addition, these research above was done for the Japanese tourists who came to Finland or Lapland, so Japanese people living in Japan has not been researched yet. The image of Lapland depending on the seasons could not also be found, as most of the research focused on and took it as the whole year destination in previous literatures, even though the activities are different during summer and winter, which leads to different impressions towards destination depending on the seasons. Therefore, this research focuses on the destination seasonal images from the viewpoint of Japanese people living in Japan, who would be one of the key markets for the future tourism development in Lapland helping the destination achieve year-around tourism without tourism seasonality.

1.3 Main Theory

This research focuses on the destination image of Lapland, so the destination image theory is utilised. The destination image has been studied to help destinations promote and develop appropriately to the target tourists. The concept of destination image was firstly introduced to the tourism field by Hunt (1971), making it a significant research area (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008), which lead to the important role in tourism and related

research, and it has been widely studied (Stylidis, 2022). One of the definitions of destination image was proposed by Crompton (1979), who considered destination image as the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination, which was widely used in the early days of destination image research (Wang et al., 2023), but since the definition of the destination image is largely subjective, ambiguous, immaterial, and there are many elements and attributes, it became complicated to define and reach consensus among the researchers (Lopes, 2011).

Gartner (1994) introduced the cognitive-affective-conative model of destination image, which is the main theory utilised in this research. This model is based on the research made by Boulding (1956) explaining that an image is composed of what one knows and thinks about an object (cognitive), how one feels about it (affective), and how one acts using this information (conative) (Agapito et al., 2013). Gartner's model explains the destination image through three components: cognitive image, affective image, and conative image. The cognitive image relates to tourists' perceptions of a destination's features, such as attractions, environment, public services, and infrastructure. The affective image reflects tourists' emotional response to a destination, shaped by their attitudes and values such as the destination is fun, relaxed, or exciting. The conative image refers to tourists' intention or likelihood of visiting the destination, which can be seen as their travel inclination (Wang et al., 2023).

1.4. The Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to explore the seasonal image and the perception of Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people. In order to gain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, three research questions are investigated.

- RQ1: What kind of cognitive, affective and conative destination image do Japanese people have towards Lapland depending on the seasons?
- RQ2: What kind of perceptions do they have towards activities in Lapland depending on the seasons?
- RQ3: What factors might discourage Japanese people from visiting Lapland?

By answering these three questions, this research tries to understand the destination image from cognitive, affective, and conative perspectives, the perceptions towards activities held in Lapland and the possible obstacles stopping them from visiting Lapland.

1.5. Methodology

This research mainly focuses on the destination image assessment and perceptions, so this research is based on quantitative methodology as most of the destination image research has been done quantitatively (Pike, 2007). Questionnaires were distributed to the Japanese people online with the convenience sampling which is one of the non-probability samplings as it is easy accessibility and availability to the respondents at a given time (Etikan et al., 2016).

The questionnaire was divided into six sections so that it could reveal the cognitive, affective, and conative destination image, perceptions towards activities in Lapland for summer and winter seasons, and demographic information such as genders, ages, education level, past travel experiences, and previous knowledge about Lapland.

The collected data was firstly moved to Microsoft Excel, then to the statistical program SPSS. The data analysis was done firstly as a whole respondents, then analysed depending on key variables such as the previous knowledge about Lapland, previous travel experiences to Lapland, and also genders.

1.6. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis has nine chapters. After this introduction chapter, chapter 2 explains tourism in Lapland and Japanese tourists including the basic information about Lapland, activities available in Lapland, and information about Japanese tourists coming to Finland. Chapter 3 introduces previous studies on seasonality and tourism focusing on the problems of tourism seasonality, and the tourism seasonality problem currently facing in Lapland. Chapter 4 mentions that destination image theory as a theoretical framework especially focusing on the cognitive-affective-conative model by Gartner (1994). Chapter 5 explains the methodology about what the method of this research was and how the data was collected including the design of the questionnaire and the research ethics. Chapter 6 shares the

results of the questionnaire, and chapter 7 discusses the relations between the three destination images and key variables such as previous knowledge and past travel experiences, along with the relations between perceptions towards activities in Lapland and key variables. Chapter 8 concludes this thesis, and Chapter 9 discusses the limitation and areas for improvement, followed by list of appendix and references.

2. Tourism in Lapland and Japanese Tourists

2.1. Basic Information about Lapland

This research focuses on Finnish Lapland where it is seen as one of the destinations having the biggest seasonal gaps in the tourism industry in the North. Lapland in general is the region in the northernmost part of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Russia, and the word "Lapp" used to refer to Sami people who are the indigenous and living in the region from ancient times. Also, Lapland is located within the Arctic circle whose region is filled with beautiful unspoiled nature (Tours to Lapland, 2024). The population in Finnish Lapland is around 180,000, which is almost equal to the number of reindeer. Lapland is famous for Santa Claus, and has 21 municipalities varying from the capital Rovaniemi, where 62,000 people live, to Pelkosenniemi where around 1,000 people live. Also, there are many national parks and wilderness in this region and people are sparsely populated with the overall density of 1.98 persons per square kilometres, which is the lowest in Europe (Lapland Above Ordinary, n.d.).

In addition, Lapland is regarded as the most accessible Arctic region digitally and physically, where people can easily access by either 1 hour and 15 minutes' flight, comfortable night train, and their own car from the capital Helsinki (Lapin Liitto, n.d.). The main economy in this region is industry that exports almost four billion euros and tourism that total annual tourism demand reached around one billion euros, of which international tourists contribute half of them. Also, the residents of Lapland benefited from the tourism indirectly, such as thousands of people working in tourism-related jobs as either permanent or temporary employees and the availability of services (Lapin Liitto, n.d.)

Four seasons are not enough to explain the seasons in Lapland. There are eight seasons starting from the frosty winter, crusty snow, departure of ice, midnight sun, harvest season, colourful Autumn, first snow, and Christmas, which brings the mentality imitating nature and influences things we do, what we feel and how we think (City of Rovaniemi, n.d.)

The main tourists' season in Lapland is from February to May, which is the time portrayed in the holiday brochures as having the best skiing weather with the combination of such as

the blue sky, snow-covered forests, and northern lights typically represented in postcards, pictures and advertisement (Rantala et al., 2011). The summer and autumn seasons from June to October are not considered attractive because of the varying weather conditions including rain and sleet, and also because of the mosquitoes, but the midnight sun or night less night creates a distinctive atmosphere in summer seasons. The Christmas seasons are from November to January, characterized as the period of polar night and cold temperature (Rantala et al., 2011).

2.2. Activities Available in Lapland

Activities available in Lapland differ depending on seasons. Lapland Above Ordinary (n.d.) divided the seasons in Lapland into two seasons: summer and winter. The summer season starts from May to October, and the winter season starts from November to April.

Winter is the most popular season in Lapland also known world-wide, and especially December brings almost one million tourists to Lapland. One of the most popular activities in Lapland during the winter season is to enjoy an utterly magical winter, famous for the northern lights (Aurora Borealis), to experience ski, snowboard, or sled at winter resorts from late October to May or June, to blaze through Arctic nature with snowmobile or comfy sleigh carried by reindeer, to hop aboard a mighty icebreaker with the thundering sound breaking the thick ice of Gulf of Bothnia, to experience the magic of Christmas in Santa's hometown where you can meet Father Christmas in person and enjoy husky or reindeer ride, or stay in an glass hut Arctic accommodation, to sleep and drink and dine in castles of snow and ice in a snow hotel (Visit Finland, n.d.).

The activities in the summer season in Lapland, on the other hand, are just as magical as the winter season. Tourists can enjoy the rich regional flora and fauna from smallest native globe flowers to reindeer found in the wild, immerse yourself in the Sami way of life by visiting museums, nature centre, exhibitions and events, have a summer sauna for relaxation, cleansing, and meditation, get to know the culture of Lapland and the locals by visiting museums to learn the history and culture of Lapland such as northern nature, cutlery and arts, and experience the midnight sun out in nature which is unique natural phenomenon above the Arctic circle from mid-May until mid-August (Visit Finland, n.d.).

2.3. Japanese Tourists Coming to Finland

The number of Japanese tourists was 13 million people in 2024 (Japan National Tourism Organization, 2025), which is growing after the COVID-19 pandemic, but still not the same standard as in 2019 when the number reached over 20 million outbound tourists (JTB Tourism Research and Consulting Co, 2025). Jalan Research Centre, JRC (2019) researched the purpose of Japanese overseas tourists, and they found that they are more interested in refreshment such as wanting to relax, to escape from daily life and to relieve stress than other countries when they travel. Also, they were more interested in food and the option "I want to try tasty food" became the second most selected purpose for Japanese tourists. The most popular destination was Hawaii, followed by the United States, South Korea, Taiwan, Guam, France, Hong Kong and Macau, Italy, Singapore and Australia, which were the top 10 destinations for Japanese tourists (Jalan Research Centre, JRC, 2019). Even though the ranking had many short distance destinations from Japan, European destinations such as France and Italy were also selected in the top 10.

There are plenty of Japanese tourists also coming to Finland every year, and in 2019 just before the COVID-19 pandemic, 225,200 Japanese tourists came to Finland, which was 10th in the world and 3rd after excluding Europe, following China and the United States (Visit Finland, 2019), and also the number of overnight stay in Finland is highest in every month among the other Nordic countries (Visit Finland, 2019)

During the winter season, a total of 89,300 Japanese overnights were registered in Finland, and 51 percent of them were in Helsinki compared to 40 percent in Lapland. During the summer season, a total of 125,000 overnights were registered in whole Finland, which was 29 percent more than winter season. Even though 81 percent of them were in Helsinki, only 8 percent visited Lapland (Business Finland, 2019). The number of Japanese tourists coming to Finland is more during summer, but the number of people coming to Lapland is much less in summer. In addition, Visit Finland has targeted Japan as one of the international markets along with Germany, Great Britain, and China. (Yoon, 2023). Thus, there is a substantial potential for the development of the Japanese market during summer in Lapland.

3. Previous Studies on Seasonality and Tourism

3.1. Problem of the Tourism Seasonality

The seasonality in tourism is one of the biggest problems in the current tourism industry, and it affects more or less all types of tourism either mildly or severely, but it is not easy to control or modify (Alshuqaiqi & Omar, 2019). Destinations having the high fluctuations in seasonality often have the problems of overcrowding, high prices, inadequate infrastructures during peak seasons, and a lack of services and job opportunities in shoulder and low seasons (World Tourism Organization, n.d.). For example, Venice in Italy is one of the representative cities of overtourism visited by 20 million travellers in a city of around 50,000 residents. Travel and Culture Salon (n.d.) mentioned the problems related to seasonality and overtourism in Venice such as the impact on infrastructure, environmental and marine ecosystem damage, cultural erosion, economic disparities, rising living costs and depopulation, day-trippers and short visit, and loss of authentic experiences. Because of these problems, Venice has implemented 5-euro tourist fees on peak seasons to manage visitor numbers and fund maintenance efforts (Travel and Culture Salon, n.d.).

The seasonality in tourism fluctuates because of a variety of elements such as weather conditions, holidays, and vacations (Cooper et al., 2005). Alshuqaiqi and Omar (2019) categorised causes of the seasonality into two types which are natural causes and institutional one. Natural causes refer to climatic and environmental temperatures such as air temperatures, humidity, water temperatures, and wind, which affects the growth and maturity of a variety of plant species and terrestrial and marine animals. These are often featured as tourist attractions and affect the destination choice such as urban areas and coastal or peripheral regions. Activities in the destination are also affected by the climatic situations, for example some like to go to the beach, and others prefer ski activities. Thus, the tourist regions have different sources and potential depending on the destinations and outdoor facilities have more chances to experience seasonality problems in tourism business. Institutional causes refer to the religious activities and calendar events observed in different ways and at different times such as Christmas, Easter, Ramadhan, and school holidays such as the Muslims travelling to Mecca and the students travelling on summer vacation (Alshuqaiqi & Omar, 2019).

The seasonality in tourism impacts economically, socio-culturally, and ecologically. Cannas (2012) explained these three impacts. Economic impacts refer to the problems in the off-peak season like the loss of profits because of the inefficient use of resources and facilities. Murphy (1985) mentioned that businesses and communities have to attain sufficient revenues from the peak seasons in order to manage business successfully. Also, when it comes to the accommodation services, the shortages of the hotel rooms would happen in the peak seasons, compared to the facilities underutilised in the off-peak seasons. In addition, the seasonality problem affects the employment systems in a destination as it is difficult to recruit full time workers, which affects the maintenance of the product and quality standards (Cannas, 2012).

Socio-cultural impacts affect both the host community and tourists. In a peak season, locals might suffer from the traffic congestion, the use of commercial services, significant increases in the prices for services and goods, and the increase of crime, leading to the lower quality of life, which might result in the resentment from the local community to all tourism activities. In order to keep the acceptable life for locals, extra facilities and extra services are required in terms of police, sanitary, health and park personnel. However, tourism seasonality can also be seen positively. For some communities, the off seasons help the community release stress and preserve its identity because traditions in a community might be disrupted during the peak seasons (Cannas, 2012).

Ecological impacts are seen in a destination especially in a peak season from the physical erosion of footpaths and other natural resources, litter problems, disturbance of wildlife, and congestion of rural lanes, which might exceed the ecological carrying capacity in a destination. However, there are other discussions that high peak usage might be better off in the long run as the dead seasons give the chance to recover compared to the use evenly throughout the year (Cannas, 2012).

3.2. Tourism Seasonality Problem in Lapland

There are several problems in the tourism industry in Lapland such as the exploitation of foreign workers (Browne, 2023) and the threat of overtourism in the Santa Claus village (Brooks, 2024). In addition, there was no snow in the beginning of the winter in Lapland in 2024 (Yle News, 2024). As snow can help to define ‘proper’ winter and snow-covered

landscapes are commonly associated with encounters with Santa Claus, climate conditions are also very important for tourism (Rantala et al., 2011). The tourism seasonality problems in Lapland are mainly based on the winter seasons. However, alongside the winter tourism problems, the potential of Lapland as a summer tourism destination has also been paid attention recently, such as seeing Lapland's cool summer as a new asset for the tourism industry (Yle News, 2023).

One of the biggest problems currently seen in Lapland is the problem of tourism seasonality, and tourism in the Arctic is often characterised by high seasonality, and the climate change affects the tourism seasonality in the Arctic deeply (Rantala et al., 2019). For example, in Lapland, the number of the bed night in paid accommodation in December 2023, the peak Christmas season, was 820,000, compared to 390,000 in July, the highest summer season, and 129,000 in May, the lowest season (Visitory, 2024). Thus, there were around 7-8 times more tourists in December than May. Also, in terms of accessibility, the number of flights during winter season is increasing yearly and it expands the 30 direct flights to the Rovaniemi airport from European countries, U.K. and even from Turkey (Visit Rovaniemi, n.d.).

Lundén et al. (2023) researched the tourism seasonality problem referring to the case of Ylläs. Many tourism actors answered that the summer tourism development is constrained by the lack of interests of the larger winter season actors in Ylläs, who held the greatest influence on destination decision making. Also, the media was criticised because they showed Ylläs as “skiing centre” not as “tourist centre”, which also reproduces the winter image of the destination. Their success of the winter tourism brought on the contrary, a burden for re-branding and developing new tourism in Ylläs.

The number of tourists coming to Lapland during winter is growing and is much more than the tourists coming in summer, so problems have appeared in Lapland such as the underutilisation of the physical and social structures designed for the winter peak season during the rest of the year (Rantala et al., 2019). In addition, climate change causes shorter winter season, which affects enormously in the destination depending on snow or ice (Rantala et al., 2019). In order for Lapland as a destination not to suffer from the climate change, overtourism and the unsustainability from the tourism seasonality, the research about the potential of summer tourism in Lapland is essential.

4. Theoretical Framework

4.1. Destination Image Theory

The destination image has been paid attention since early 1970s after Hunt (1971), Mayo (1973), and Gunn (1972) introduced the concept to the tourism fields, making it a significant research area, and it became one of the most prevalent fields in tourism research (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). However, the definition of the destination image has been discussed and there is neither consensus nor fixed definition. Hunt (1971) defined it firstly as the impressions that a person or persons hold about a state in which they do not reside. The definition made by Lawson and Baud Bovy (1977) is that the expression of all objective knowledge, prejudices, imagination and emotional thoughts of an individual or group about a particular location. Also, Crompton (1979) defined it as the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination. The definition presented by Valls (1992) is the set of perceptions from the viewpoint of consumers, compared to Bigné, Sánchez and Sánchez (2001) who define it as the subjective interpretation of reality by the tourists. Since the definition of the destination image is largely subjective, ambiguous, immaterial, and there are a large number of elements and attributes, it became complicated to define and reach consensus among the researchers (Lopes, 2011). Majority of them have been researched based on the attributes and structured methodology, but it was around the 1990s that the holistic component of the destination image was mentioned in the literature (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991).

The reasons why the destination image has been researched are that the destination image not only affects the choice of the destination, but also their level of satisfaction in their travel. As for the pre-travel influence, Beerli and Martins (2004) and Bonn et al. (2005) mentioned the power of the destination image which influences the decision-making process, and the tourists will visit the destination more if the tourists have a favourable image to that destination. O'Leary and Deegan (2003) referred to the influence of the destination images to the decision-making process, to their behaviour towards a destination, to the level of satisfaction, and to the recollection of the experience, which leads to the conclusion that the evaluation or selection process are done based on the perceived images, providing the link between motivations and destination selection. Martins (2015) also concluded that the destination with the recognisable images such as

world heritage sites or cities have, and positive perception made by tourists leads to more chances to be chosen as a travel destination.

Tocquer and Zins (2004) introduced the four stages of the image development. As the first step, which is the vague and unrealistic image, these are made by the spread of advertisement, education, and word-of-mouth, and this image is deemed before travel. The second step is the distortion of the image. In this step, the tourists decide to go on an actual trip, choosing the time, destination, and tourism product while the image of the vacation is changed, clarified and expanded. Once the plan has been finalised the image becomes clearer. The third step is the improved image happening during the vacation itself. When they experience and consume the tourism product directly, the image is improved by the revision of the incorrect or distorted elements and by strengthening the correct elements. The fourth and last step is the resulting image, which refers to the memory of the vacation and the feeling of nostalgia, regret or fantasy of the experiences. These new images will affect the future decisions about the same tourism product (Tocquer & Zins, 2004). Thus, the destination image is different depending on the stages.

The destination image is formed through several sources, for example, reference groups, media, and so on, so it is possible for any person to build an image of any destination without visiting there. Thus, the destination image is attributed to historical, political, economic, and social information, also the country of origin affects the image building of tourist destinations (Bonn et al., 2005). Lubbe (1998) proposed a framework which explaining how the primary image is constructed by utilising the push factor such as physiological, security, love and belonging, self-esteem, self-actualization, acquisition of knowledge, and pull factor such as static, dynamic, and current decision, which leads to the travel motivation and to the construction of the primary image of a destination. If the tourist has no previous experience in a destination, tourism motivations, demographic variables, and information about the destination affect their image (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999b; Beerli & Martin, 2004). As the information about the destination are based on magazines, celebrities, television and the internet, it affects the image that potential tourists have in the end (Gartner, 1989; Vasudavan & Standing, 1999, Wang & Fesenmaier, 2005; Govers, Go & Kumar, 2007). Govers and Go (2005) mentioned that the social networks would be essential as a source of inside information for

the potential tourists, which makes it possible to construct a stronger and lighter destination image (Govers & Go, 2003).

Gunn (1972) introduced the two images of a tourist destination based on the type of information to the tourists (Lopes, 2011). One of them is organic image which refers to the information tourists perceive unintentionally by representatives of tourism destination, such as via television, radio, book about geography or history, newspapers, magazines or by people living at a tourist destination. The other image is an induced image which is built by the promotions and communications of the tourist organizations in the destination (Lopes, 2011).

4.2 Application of the Destination Image Theory

The destination image has been researched by many researchers before, but there are several types of scope depending on the research. Pike (2007) reviewed the 120 previous literatures about the destination image published between 2001 and 2007. He found the most popular scope of destination image research is countries (38), followed by cities (27), provinces (20), resorts (8), states (8), rural areas (1), and other (5). Also, he reviewed the most popular type of participants which was the visitors (46), followed by consumers at home (30), practitioners (9), and travellers in transit (9). 73 studies used structured methodologies like rating scales compared to 34 studies used qualitative methodologies (Pike, 2007).

Many researchers (Moutinho, 1987; Gartner, 1993; Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Walmsley & Young, 1998; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a, 1999b; Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990; Lin, Duarte, Kerstetter, & Hou, 2007) agree that there are two main components or dimensions based on the consumer's rationality and emotionality contributing to the development of the destination image. Perceptual and cognitive image is the first components, and it is based on the idea that the attributes of its resources and attractions affect building the destination image. The second component is an affective image based on the feeling and emotions raised by tourist destinations, which strongly affects the motivations of tourists (Keller, 1993; Rial et al., 2000; Rial, García & Varela, 2008). Previous studies showed that the cognitive components affect enormously the affective components (Holbrook, 1978; Russell & Pratt, 1980; Anand, Holbrook, & Stephens, 1988; Stern & Krakover, 1993; Lin

et al., 2007; Ryan & Cave, 2007), and also the socio-demographic factors influence the cognitive and affective image (Beerli & Martín, 2004). Thus, the overall image of the destination is built by combining cognitive and affective components. (Mazursky & Jacoby, 1986, Stern & Krakover, 1993).

4.3. Cognitive-Affective-Conative Model of Destination Image

One of the common methods to research the destination image is to divide it into three components, which are cognitive, affective, and conative images introduced by Gartner (1994). This model went back to the research made by Boulding (1956), referring that an image is composed of what one knows and thinks about an object (cognitive), how one feels about it (affective), and how one acts using this information (conative) (Agapito et al., 2013). Gartner applied this image theory into tourism destinations. Agapito et al. (2013) mentioned that the cognitive component reflects an individual's beliefs and knowledge about the attributes of the destination, whereas the affective component pertains to emotional responses or feelings associated with the destination (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004a, 2004b; Gartner, 1993). The conative component involves behavioural intentions, such as intention to revisit, to spread positive word-of-mouth, and to recommend the destination to others (Bigné et al., 2001; Gartner, 1993; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Tasci et al., 2007; Baker & Crompton, 2000). In addition, these three components lead to form a global image considered to be greater than the sum of each part and this is also utilised by the consumer helping make the task of decision making simpler (Agapito et al., 2013).

These three components are also mentioned in the study by Wang et al. (2023). In this research, cognitive image is defined as tourists' perceptions of a destination's features, such as attractions, environment, public services, and infrastructure, compared to affective image defined as tourists' emotional response to a destination, shaped by their attitudes and values such as the destination is fun, relaxed, or exciting. Conative image is defined as tourists' intention or likelihood of visiting the destination, which can be seen as their travel inclination (Wang et al., 2023).

The research about destination image in Lagos done by Agapito et al. (2013), utilised this cognitive-affective-conative model. This study had two stages for the data collection by using unstructured and structured methods proposed by Jenkins (1999). In the first stage, the main characteristics of the destination was captured by using a construct elicitation technique through the open-ended questions in a survey, so that they can categorise and select the attributes. They interviewed 50 tourists in the destination by asking the images or characteristics coming to their mind when they think of Lagos as a holiday destination, and the atmosphere or mood that they would expect to experience when they visit Lagos. In the second stage, the relevant attributes of the destination were assessed by using a structured questionnaire (Jenkins, 1999), which was designed based on the information provided in the literature review and the data in the first stage. The attributes mentioned in more than 12 previous studies in the destination and the characteristics of more than 25 percent of the respondents mentioned in the first stage were assessed in their study. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. Part 1 assessed cognitive image with the 20 attributes which passed the first and second stage above to measure the agreement of the respondents to each attribute. 5-point Likert scale was introduced, raining from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which was suggested by Bigné et al. (2009). Part 2 assessed the affective image by using a 7-point semantic scale by using two emotional indicators, such as Unpleasant-Pleasant and Sleepy-Arousing, which was mentioned by Pratt (1981) to assess the individual affective response to physical environments. Even though it is possible to assess two secondaries bipolar dimensions, which are Gloomy-Exciting and Distressing-Relaxing, several studies (Beerli & Martin, 2004a, 2004b; Pike & Ryan, 2004) showed that the two main affective bipolar scales, which are Unpleasant-Pleasant and Sleepy-Arousing, are sufficient to assess the affective image. Part 3 measured the conative image by asking three questions about the intention to revisit, recommend and spread positive word-of-mouth. 5-point Liker scale was introduced from 1 (definitively no) to 5 (definitively yes). And Part 4 asked the respondents about the sociodemographic information.

There are several research about the relationships between each image and their travel intentions. Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) is one of the examples that researched the relations between cognitive, affective, overall image, which is defined as the individual's overall evaluative representation of the destination, and tourist behaviour by integrating 87 previous literatures about the destination image studies. They found that the overall and affective images have the greatest impact on behavioural intention, followed by cognitive

image. Thus, it showed that the higher affective image positively affects the tourist behavioural intention. Basaran (2016) also studied the relationships between cognitive, affective and conative image. It was revealed that cognitive components influence affective components which refer to their feelings towards the destination, and both cognitive and affective components can be used as a predicator of conative components which refer to tourists' behavioural intentions such as intention to revisit or recommend and spread positive word-of-mouth. Also, it was found out that affective components mediate the relationship between the cognitive and conative components. Thus, researching about the relationships between cognitive, affective, and conative destination image would help the destination understand the tourists' behaviours and future tourism development.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Method

In order to make the research meaningful, the appropriate research method should be selected. Quantitative research is usually used to examine and understand the tourism-related phenomena such as behaviour of tourists, traveller characteristics, and destination image assessment and perceptions, decision making and destination selection, demand analysis, performance measures, and general market assessment and segmentation (Uysal & Altin, 2017). Qualitative research is used in order to explore and search for meaning or to develop an understanding through empirical studies, generating “thick” descriptions (Geertz, 1973) or collecting material which may become subject to interpretation, which seeks to avoid making generalisations, grand claims, and reductions and is often characterised by a high level of reflectivity and sensitivity to power relations and ambiguity (Ren, 2016).

The main purpose of this research is to explore the seasonal destination image of Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people, so the base of this study is the destination image study. As mentioned in the previous literature, most of the research about the destination image was done quantitatively (Pike, 2007). Also, the quantitative methodologies are quite effective to measure the image which is common and attribute-based, but the importance the combination of structured and unstructured methodologies were also mentioned to fully understand the destination image (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Thus, this research also mainly utilised quantitative and structured methodologies, but qualitative and unstructured methodologies such as open-ended questions were also introduced.

5.2. Measuring Cognitive Destination Image

Cognitive image relates to tourists' perceptions of a destination's features, such as attractions, environment, public services, and infrastructure (Wang et al., 2023). The research of the cognitive image was done before, but there are no common dimensions used by researchers (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2005), and it is different depending on the researchers and destinations. Alcañiz et al. (2009) divided 24 attributes of the cognitive image into three components, which are functional, psychological and mixed components

(Table 1). Functional component is based on tangible or measurable things like scenery, accommodation or price levels, compared to psychological components which contain more abstract and intangible characteristics such as atmosphere or friendliness. Mixed components refer to the attributes in the middle part of the continuum. In this research, these three components of the cognitive image were utilised. In order to measure this, the Likert scale was introduced, and each attribute was measured by 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) as it was seen in previous studies (Agapito et al., 2013). Additionally, "I don't know" option was given to the respondents because respondents might not have enough knowledge about the destination to evaluate the attributes. "I don't know" answer is understood as an alternative option rather than the respondents being forced to evaluate the attributes. In spite of some drawbacks such as reduced statistical power and potential bias caused by different numbers of usable samples by attributes, "I don't know" option is understood to be useful and ethical, and it increases the data quality, reliability, and validity (Choi & Choe, 2024). Thus, "I don't know" option was given to the respondents along with the 1 to 5 evaluations in this research.

Table 1: Components of the cognitive image of the destination

Position	Items
F1: Functional	Availability of accommodation
	Interesting places to visit
	Natural attractions/scenery
	Climate
	Open air activities
	Local transport
	Shopping facilities
	Historic sites/museums
	Fairs, festivals, and exhibitions
	Night life/entertainment
	Different activities
F2: Mixed	Cleanliness and hygiene
	Urbanization
	Crowdedness
	Gastronomy
	Access
F3: Psychological	Quality Accommodation
	Quality Restaurants
	Friendliness/hospitality
	Tranquillity
	High quality beaches
	Value for money
	Quality services

Source: Adapted from Alcañiz et al. (2009).

Gartner (1993) proposed the model that cognitive, affective, and conative destination image are hierarchically interrelated, and the study made by Agapito (2013) validated the theory stating that the cognitive component on conative dimension was higher when mediated by the affective component, which showed the destination image process starting from cognitive, then affective, to conative image. As it was also shown in the previous studies (Basaran, 2016), the cognitive image affected the affective image, which lead to formulating the conative image. Other previous studies showed that the cognitive components affected enormously the affective components (Holdbrook, 1978, Russell & Pratt, 1980; Anand, Holbrook & Stephens, 1988, Stern & Krakover, 1993, Lin et al. 2007;

Ryan & Cave, 2007). Thus, understanding cognitive image is essential for understanding affective and conative destination image and the tourist behaviours.

5.3. Measuring Affective Destination Image

Affective image reflects tourists' emotional response to a destination, shaped by their attitudes and values such as the destination is fun, relaxed, or exciting (Wang et al., 2023). In order to measure the Affective image, Russell and Pratt's (1980) four-dimensional bipolar scales (figure 1) were introduced, in which eight terms are placed approximately 45 degrees apart in a circular order. They are Unpleasant-Pleasant, Gloomy-Exciting, Sleepy-Arousing, and Distressing-Relaxing. They researched 105 commonly used adjectives which were factor analysed later, and 21 representative adjectives were placed in a two-dimensional space, whose dimensions were composed of Unpleasant-Pleasant and Sleepy-Arousing. It is said that these two dimensions are sufficient to capture the emotional aspects, but not the perceptual-cognitive aspects. Thus, they introduced "Gloomy" which is the combination of unpleasant and sleepy, "Exciting" is the combination of pleasant and arousing, "Distressing" is the combination of unpleasant and arousing and "Relaxing" which is the combination of pleasant and sleepy. In order to measure affective image, 7-point bipolar scale was introduced, and the negative poles were assigned to smaller values, and positive poles were assigned to larger values, for example, 1=unpleasant and 7=pleasant.

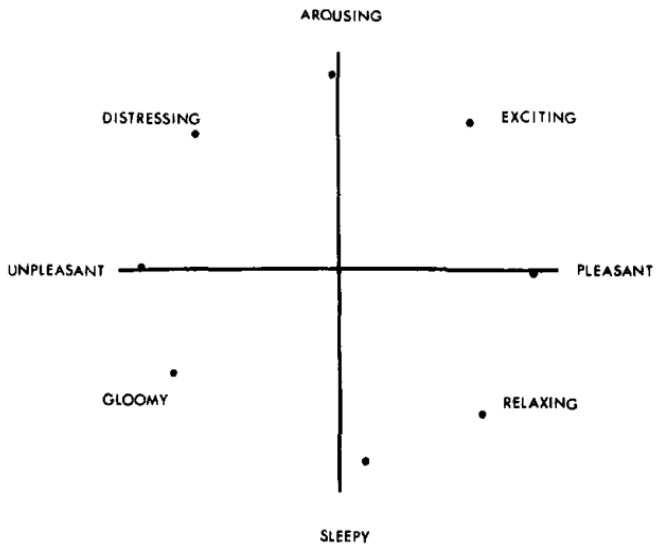

Figure 1. Circular ordering of eight affective descriptors (Russell & Pratt's,1980)

As it was shown in the previous studies made by Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020), they found that the overall and affective images have the greatest impact on behavioural intention, so they have higher conative image when the people have more positive affective image. Agapito (2013) also mentioned that the conative image is higher when the affective components mediate between cognitive and conative component. Thus, affective destination image directly and strongly influences on the tourist behaviours and also at the same time, it will create more positive destination image together with the cognitive destination image, so understanding affective image is also essential for understanding the tourist's behaviours.

5.4. Measuring Conative Destination Image

Conative image was defined as the tourists' intention or likelihood of visiting the destination, which can be seen as their travel inclination (Wang et al., 2023). Thus, based on Basaran (2016), the questionnaire included three items: (1) intention to recommend, (2) intention to spread positive word-of-mouth, (3) intention to visit or revisit. Additionally, this research also focused on the reasons to disturb them from visiting Lapland, so that it can detect the specific factors about what made them stop from visiting Lapland.

5.5. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was divided into six sections based on the Destination Image Theory from Gartner (1994). Before the respondents started the questionnaire, the brief explanation about this research was given to the respondents and consents from respondents were collected. In the section 1 of the questionnaire, the respondents' demographic information was collected such as genders, ages, education level, and past travel experiences. In section 2, perceptions of Lapland as a travel destination were explored through three open-ended questions mentioned by Agapito et al. (2013): "1. When you think of Lapland as a travel destination, what images and characteristics come to mind?", "2. How would you describe the atmosphere and mood you would expect to experience when visiting Lapland?", and "3. List any tourist attractions in Lapland that you consider distinctive or unique", to assess the overall impressions without biases, with the help of a map provided to support geographical understanding of the region utilised also in

the following sections. However, this section 2 was not researched in this thesis due to the author's inability to make effective use of the responses.

From the section 3 to section 6, cognitive-affective-conative destination image and perceptions towards activities in Lapland were measured. Section 3 measured the Cognitive image in Lapland to understand how Lapland is recognised by the respondents. This section gave the respondents 24 attributes seen in the previous research done by the Alcañiz et al. (2009). The options were "strongly disagree", "disagree", "neither", "agree", "strongly agree", and "I don't know". "I don't know" option was given as they might not have any image, and it would help the results be more accurate. The section 4 measured the perceptions towards main activities on summer and winter in Lapland with the help of pictures, so that they could imagine the activities in Lapland. This helped this research to understand the interests in each activity in Lapland, also helped the respondents to think about the affective image measured in the following section. In this research, five summer activities and six winter activities were selected according to the activities in Lapland recommended by Visit Finland website. The section 5 captured the Affective image of Lapland as a tourism destination in each summer and winter season by using the four-dimensional bipolar scales, which were Unpleasant-Pleasant, Gloomy-Exciting, Sleepy-Arousing, and Distressing-Relaxing. The respondents chose from the seven scales with the same way as the previous research by Basaran (2016). The section 6 measured the Conative image of Lapland in each summer and winter season such as the intention to recommend, to spread positive word-of-mouth, and to visit or revisit Lapland. In addition, the possible obstacles disturbing them coming to Lapland were asked with the open-ended question.

5.6. Data Collection

Questionnaires were distributed online as a google form to Japanese people over 18 years old. About the selection of the sample, non-probability techniques, especially convenience sampling were selected. The advantages of non-probability sampling are quick and convenient, inexpensive and reduce respondent burden compared to the disadvantages such as bias of the selection, undercover bias, and the difficulty of assessing the quality (Statistics Canada, n.d.). Convenience sampling is one of the sampling methods of non-probability sampling that involves selecting participants based on certain practical criteria

for the purpose of the study such as easy accessibility and availability at a given time, also called Haphazard Sampling or Accidental Sampling (Dörnyei, 2007). Convenience sampling is affordable and easy to reach for the subjects which is the main objectives of this sampling (Etikan et al., 2016), but the author should describe the possibility of the subjects who are excluded or overrepresented (Explorable.com, 2009). The collected data was firstly moved to Microsoft Excel, then to statistical software SPSS. The data analysis was done firstly as a whole respondents, then analysed depending on key variables such as the previous knowledge about Lapland, previous travel experiences to Lapland, and also genders.

5.7. Ethical Considerations

This research involved the human respondents, so the ethical considerations were essential. In this research, ethical consideration was based on the one published by Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK (2019). Firstly, the participation in this research should be voluntary and the participants have the right to refuse, so that they do not feel the participation is compulsory or afraid of negative consequences. Also, the researcher must acquire the consent from participants either orally, in writing, electronically or by other ways. Secondly, the participants can choose to abort at any time without getting any negative consequences. They can choose to withdraw either from the research or an individual phase of the research permanently or temporarily. Any reason to abort their participation in the research need not to be given to the researcher. Thirdly, the participants can withdraw their consent to participation at any time, which must be easy for them to conduct. Fourth, participants have the right to receive information about the content of the research, the processing of personal data and how the research will be conducted. When it is possible, the information should be given in a participants' language in writing or in electronic form. Also, enough time should be given to the participants to think about their decision whether or not to participate, and the researcher must answer any questions about the research. Fifth, the participants can receive an understandable and truthful view of the aims of the research along with any potential harm and risks. Also, an accurate account of the effects and potential benefits of the research should be given to the participants. Sixth and lastly, the participants have the right to be aware that they are participating in research. In addition to these, the data from the participants or their personal information should be

confidential and only the researcher can check them (Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK. 2019).

In the beginning of the questionnaire, the participants should agree with the letter of consent, which explained the treatment of the collected data, confidentiality, aims and objectives of this research, and the right to freely participate and refuse, to withdraw at any time, to withdraw the consent, to receive information, and to be aware that they are participating in research. Also, it included the approximate time to finish the questionnaire and contact information of the researcher.

6. Results

Data collection was started from 15th of March 2025 and ended on 23rd of March 2025. A total of 155 responses were collected, but two responses were excluded because of the technical error, so the total of 153 responses was analysed in this research. Also, some of the data values were adjusted because of the misunderstanding in the questionnaire. The demographic information about gender, age, education level, and past travel experiences were shown on Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic information of survey respondents.

		N	%
Gender	Male	53	34.6%
	Female	99	64.7%
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.7%
Age	18-24	79	51.6%
	25-34	60	39.2%
	35-44	2	1.3%
	45-54	6	3.9%
	55-64	5	3.3%
	More than 65	1	0.7%
Education level	High School	6	3.9%
	Junior College / Vocational School	9	5.9%
	Bachelor	115	75.2%
	Master or PHD	21	13.7%
	Prefer not to answer	2	1.3%
Travel Experience	None	26	17.0%
	1-3	42	27.5%
	4-6	28	18.3%
	7-10	23	15.0%
	More than 11	33	21.6%
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.7%

As for the gender, 53 respondents were male (34.6%) and 99 respondents were female (64.7%), and 1 respondent answered, “prefer not to answer” (0.7%). About the age group, 79 respondents (51.6%) were 18 to 24 years old, and 60 respondents (39.2%) were between 25 to 35 years old. A few respondents were from the age group of 35-44 (n=2), 44-54 (n=6), 55-64 (n=5) and more than 65 (n=1). Thus, more than 90 percent of the respondents were younger than 35 years old in this collected data. About education level, 6

respondents (3.9%) answered “high school”, and 9 respondents (5.9%) answered, “Junior college or Vocational school”. “University” was the most frequently chosen option selected by 115 respondents (75.2%), followed by “Master or PHD” selected by 21 respondents (13.7%), and 2 respondents answered, “prefer not to answer”. About the past travel experience, 26 respondents (17.0%) answered “never travel abroad”, and 42 respondents (27.5%) answered 1-3 times, 28 respondents (18.3%) answered 4-6 times, 23 respondents (15.0%) chose 7-10 times, and 33 respondents (21.6%) chose more than 11 times, and 1 respondent chose “prefer not to answer”

The Table 3 below showed the past travel experience to Lapland and previous knowledge about Lapland. 121 respondents (79.1%) had never been to Lapland, but 16 respondents (10.5%) answered that they had been to Lapland before and other 16 respondents (10.5%) answered they lived or had lived in Lapland. Thus, most of the respondents had never been to Lapland. About the past travel experience to Finland, 109 respondents (71.2%) had never been to Finland, and 22 respondents (14.4%) had been to Finland and 22 respondents (14.4%) live or have lived in Finland. About the travel experience to Europe, 74 respondents (48.4%) had never been to Europe and 53 respondents (34.6%) had been to Europe and 26 respondents (17.0%) lived or had lived in Europe. Thus, more than half of the respondents had been to or had lived in Europe, but the people who had been to or had lived in Finland (28.8%) or Lapland (21.0%) were much less. About the previous knowledge about Lapland, 99 respondents (64.7%) answered “no” and 54 respondents (35.3%) answered “yes”. The researcher asked about from where they knew about Lapland. The answers having several respondents were “related to study abroad or lived” (n=18), SNS/YouTube/Internet (n=7) Friends (n=5), Travel Magazine or book (n=4), Travel related (n=4), Japanese song (n=4), Travel Courses in School or University (n=3) and TV (n=2). Thus, Japanese people tend to get the information about Lapland through SNS/YouTube/Internet and friends, and sometimes even songs, in addition to the traditional way through education and TV or travel magazine and book. Also, these results matched with the previous studies by Suvanto et al. (2017) mentioning that younger generations appreciated the information from internet, blogs and social media and middle-aged or elderlies regarded travel guidebooks or social contacts as important information sources.

Table 3: Past Travel experience to Lapland and Previous knowledge about Lapland.

		N	%
Have you ever been to Lapland?	Yes	16	10.5%
	No	121	79.1%
	Live/Lived	16	10.5%
Have you ever been to Finland?	Yes	22	14.4%
	No	109	71.2%
	Live/Lived	22	14.4%
Have you even been to Europe?	Yes	53	34.6%
	No	74	48.4%
	Live/Lived	26	17.0%
Did you know Lapland before this questionnaire?	Yes	54	35.3%
	No	99	64.7%

6.1. Cognitive Destination Image of Lapland

In the section 3 of the questionnaire, the cognitive destination image of Lapland was researched by asking 24 statements about Lapland, and respondents chose one option from “I don’t know”, “Strongly disagree”, “Mostly disagree”, “Neutral”, “Mostly agree”, “Strongly agree”. Table 4 showed the results of the cognitive image, and 24 variables were listed in the descending order of the mean. The highest mean variable was Natural attraction/scenery with 4.60, so the Japanese people regarded Lapland as a destination having natural attraction and scenery. Also, tranquillity (4.43) and Cleanliness and Hygiene (3.96), Open air activities (3.93) and Different activities (3.88) were the top 5 variables, which also implied Japanese people regarded Lapland as the quiet and clean destination having a lot of open air and different activities. The lowest mean was Access (1.72), so Japanese people regarded Lapland as the place difficult to reach. Second lowest variable was Crowdedness (2.10) followed by Local transport (2.23), Shopping facilities (2.32), and Value for money (2.33). Thus, Japanese people regarded Lapland as the less crowded destination having poor local transport, shopping facilities, and the cost-performance.

Table 4: Cognitive Image of Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Natural attraction/scenery	139	4.60	.698
Tranquillity	136	4.43	.785
Cleanliness and hygiene	109	3.96	.971
Open air activities	120	3.93	1.051
Different activities	126	3.88	1.025
Interesting places to visit	130	3.63	1.162
Friendliness hospitality	116	3.53	1.075
Fairs, festivals and exhibition	118	3.39	1.125
Historic sites/museums	120	3.28	1.030
Quality services	108	3.22	1.097
Quality accommodation	101	3.21	1.152
Quality restaurants	106	3.15	1.119
Night life entertainment	112	3.07	1.235
High quality beaches	96	2.91	1.215
Gastronomy	120	2.89	1.201
Availability of accommodation	106	2.77	1.007
Climate	127	2.51	1.240
Sports facilities	104	2.43	1.022
Urbanization	118	2.43	1.058
Value for money	111	2.33	1.012
Shopping facilities	109	2.32	1.008
Local transport	102	2.23	1.033
Crowdedness	120	2.10	1.095
Access	121	1.72	.968

6.2. Perceptions towards Activities in Lapland

In the section 4 of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked their interests towards both summer and winter activities in Lapland mentioned in Visit Finland website, and they chose from the 1. Not interested at all, 2. Not very interested, 3. Neutral, 4. Interested, 5. Very interested. The five activities of the summer in Lapland were selected based on the recommendations from Visit Finland (n.d.). These activities were:

(1) Immerse yourself in the indigenous (Sámi) way of life such as visiting cultural centre, nature centre, and museums (Sami),

(2) Enjoy a summer Finnish sauna (Sauna),

(3) Get to know the culture of Lapland and local people by visiting the little villages or museums (Lappish people),

(4) Experience the midnight sun surrounded by nature (Midnight sun), and

(5) Enjoy local delicacies and wild foods (Wild food).

The six activities of the winter in Lapland were selected based on the recommendations from Visit Finland (n.d.). These activities were:

(1) Enjoy the mysterious scenery such as the Northern Lights (Northern lights),

(2) Enjoy skiing, snowboarding and sledding at the winter resorts of Lapland (Snow activity),

(3) Ride through the Arctic wilderness on a deer or snowmobile (Snow mobile),

(4) Board an icebreaker that breaks the ice in the frozen sea (Ice breaker),

(5) Experience the magic of Christmas in Santa's hometown (Santa Claus), and

(6) Sleep, drink and eat in snow and ice hotels (Snow hotel).

The results for the perceptions towards activities in summer and winter were listed on Table 5 below.

Table 5: Perceptions towards activities in Lapland

	Mean	Std. Deviation		Mean	Std. Deviation
Summer			Winter		
Midnight sun	4.65	.730	Northern lights	4.82	.597
Wild food	4.48	.882	Snow mobile	4.64	.740
Sauna	3.81	1.266	Santa Claus	4.48	1.039
Lappish people	3.71	1.224	Snow activity	4.44	.938
Sami	3.61	1.198	Snow hotel	4.24	1.134
			Ice breaker	4.16	1.103
Average	4.0510		Average	4.4630	

During summer, the activity that Japanese people felt most interested in among these five activities was “Midnight sun” with the mean of 4.65, and the second most was “Wild food” with the mean of 4.48. Thus, most of the respondents chose “very interested” or “interested” for these two activities. As Jalan Research Centre, JRC (2019) mentioned, the interest in food while travelling was also one of the essential aspects for Japanese tourists. Third interesting activity was “Sauna” (3.81), followed by “Lappish people” (3.71), and the least interesting activity was “Sami” (3.61). Thus, during summertime, two activities, “Midnight sun” and “Wild food” activities got more than 4.00, but the mean of the other

three activities were less than 4.00, and the means of all the activities during summer was 4.05.

During winter, the activity which Japanese people felt most interested in was “Northern lights” with the mean of 4.82. 136 respondents out of 153 respondents (88.9%) chose “very interested”. The second most chosen activity was “Snow mobile” with the mean of 4.64, followed by “Santa Claus” (4.48), “Snow activity” (4.44), “Snow hotel” (4.24), and the least interesting activity during winter was “Ice breaker” with the mean of 4.16. Thus, all of the activities on winter got the means more than 4.00, and the average mean of all the winter activities was 4.46.

When both summer and winter activities were combined, the activities they were interested in the most was “Northen lights” with the mean of 4.82, and the second most was “Midnight sun” with the mean of 4.65. The least interesting activities was “Sami” (3.61) followed by “Lappish people” (3.71), and “Sauna” (3.81), which were all in the summer activities mentioned in Visit Finland websites. Thus, when the summer and winter activities mentioned on Visit Finland websites were compared, they were more interested in winter activities (4.46) than summer ones (4.05).

Additionally, the respondents were asked to mention the activities that were not mentioned in this questionnaire, but they were interested in. The results were shown on Table 6 below.

Table 6: The interesting activities not mentioned by Visit Finland website.

Summer	N	Winter	N
Berry picking	6	Ice fishing	2
Canoe	4	Ice Swimming	2
Hiking	3	Husky	2
Mushroom picking	2	Camp	2
Fishing	2	BBQ	1
Midsummer festival	1	Avanto	1
Music festival	1	Campfire	1
Boat	1	Reindeer race	1
Lake	1	Sledge	1
Bike	1	Snowshoe	1
Water sport	1	Winter cuisine	1
Design	1	Fireplace at home	1
Hunting	1		

For the summer, 19 respondents answered this question, and the most mentioned activity was Berry picking (n=6), followed by Canoe (n=4), Hiking (n=3), Fishing and Mushroom picking (n=2). Picking activity such as berry and mushrooms, and lake activities such as canoe, fishing, boat, water sport, and nature activity such as hiking and biking were mentioned for the summer activities. This also matched with the research by Lundén et al. (2023) stating the importance of the development of the nature-based activities such as fishing and lake-based activities, mountain biking and trail development.

For the winter, 14 respondents answered several winter activities which was not on the Visit Finland website. The activities mentioned twice was Camping, Husky, Ice fishing, and Ice swimming. The activities mentioned once was BBQ, Avanto, Campfire, Reindeer race, Sledge, Snowshoe, Winter cuisine, and Fireplace.

6.3. Affective Destination Image of Lapland

In the section 5 of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked the affective image of Lapland depending on the summer and winter season using four bipolar dimensions: Unpleasant-Pleasant, Gloomy-Exciting, Sleepy-Arousing, and Distressing-Relaxing. They chose, for example, from the seven scales from 1. Unpleasant to 7. Pleasant. The results were shown on Table 7.

Table 7: Affective Image of Lapland

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Summer				
Unpleasant - Pleasant	3	7	5.73	1.137
Gloomy - Exciting	1	7	5.50	1.298
Sleepy - Arousing	2	7	5.09	1.359
Distressing - Relaxing	2	7	5.43	1.399
Average			5.43	
Winter				
Unpleasant - Pleasant	1	7	4.10	1.356
Gloomy - Exciting	1	7	4.82	1.740
Sleepy - Arousing	1	7	4.43	1.772
Distressing - Relaxing	1	7	4.47	1.410
Average			4.46	

In every four scales, the means of the summer were higher than winter. About the scale of Unpleasant – Pleasant, the mean of the summer was 5.73 compared to winter 4.10. The respondents felt much more pleasant on summer than winter. Gloomy -Exciting scale also showed 5.50 on summer compared to 4.82 on winter, which implied that the summer was more exciting for Japanese people. As for the scale of Sleepy - Arousing, the summer was 5.09 compared to winter 4.43, which implied that Japanese people felt more arousing on summer than winter. As for the last scale, Distressing-Relaxing, summer scored 5.43 compared to winter 4.47 which implied that the summer was more relaxing than winter for Japanese people.

The mean of all 4 bipolar scales for summer is 5.43 compared to winter 4.46. Thus, about the affective destination image of the Lapland, Japanese people scored much higher in summer than in winter. As it was mentioned in previous literature (Keller, 1993; Rial et al., 2000; Rial, García & Varela, 2008, Basaran 2016, Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020), the affective destination image strongly affects the motivations of tourists, so Japanese people would be appropriate target for the summer tourism development in Lapland.

6.4. Conative Destination Image of Lapland

The section 6 of the questionnaire, the conative destination image of Lapland was researched by asking the respondents the extent of agreement to three statements on each

summer and winter season, which were (1) I would recommend Lapland to my family and friends (Intention to recommend), (2) I would spread positive word-of-mouth about Lapland (Intention to spread positive word-of-mouth), and (3) I would like to (re)visit Lapland in the future (Intention to visit or revisit). The respondents chose from the option of 1. Strongly agree, 2. Mostly agree, 3. Neutral, 4. Mostly agree, 5. Strongly agree, and 6. I don't know. The result of the conative destination image of Lapland was listed on Table 8 below.

Table 8: Conative Image of Lapland

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Summer					
Recommendation	123	1	5	3.79	.986
Positive word-of-mouth	131	2	5	4.07	.796
Visit/Revisit Intention	137	1	5	4.04	.958
Average				3.96	
Winter					
Recommendation	128	1	5	3.98	.931
Positive Word-of-Mouth	132	1	5	4.09	.860
Visit/Revisit Intention	134	1	5	4.15	1.015
Average				4.07	

About the first statement "I would recommend Lapland to my family and friends", the mean for the summer was 3.79, and the mean for the winter was 3.98. They tended to recommend more on winter than summer. About the second statement "I would spread positive word-of-mouth about Lapland.", the mean of the summer was 4.07 compared to winter 4.09, which implied Japanese people spread almost equally for the summer and winter. About the last statement "I would like to (re)visit Lapland in the future.", the mean of the summer was 4.04, and the mean of the winter was 4.15. Thus, the respondents had slightly more visit or revisit intention to Lapland, but it was not a significant difference. In total, the summer mean was 3.96 compared to summer 4.07. Hence, even though there were slight difference between the summer and winter conative destination image, the Japanese people had almost similar conative image for both winter and summer, so this result also supports the potential that Japanese people might be one of the targets for developing summer tourism in Lapland.

7. Discussion

7.1. Cognitive Destination Image and Key Variables

Cognitive image refers to tourists' perceptions of a destination's features, such as attractions, environment, public services, and infrastructure (Wang et al., 2023), so it is about what one knows and thinks about an object (Boullding, 1956). Cognitive image affects enormously the affective image (Holdbrook, 1978, Russell & Pratt, 1980; Anand, Holbrook & Stephens, 1988, Stern & Krakover, 1993, Lin et al. 2007; Ryan & Cave, 2007), and cognitive image also can be used as a predicator of conative image (Basaran, 2016). Thus, understanding cognitive image is essential and it has the connection to understand affective and conative images.

The key variable was the people who had been to Lapland or had lived in Lapland (Group 1) and the people who had never been to Lapland (Group 2). The reason why this variable was selected was that there should be difference in terms of cognitive destination image between the people who actually visited the destination and the people who have never been there, as Tocquer and Zins (2004) mentioned that the image is different depending on the stages of travel. If there was a difference between them, the destination can understand what kind of information was reached or missing and what was not. These results were listed on Table 9, and the variables were listed on descending order of the group 1.

Table 9: Cognitive image and past travel experiences.

	Mean (1)	Std. Deviation	Mean (2)	Std. Deviation
Natural attraction / scenery	4.75	.440	4.56	.755
Tranquillity	4.59	.756	4.38	.791
Open air activities	4.22	.906	3.83	1.085
Cleanliness and hygiene	4.19	.965	3.87	.965
Different activities	3.91	1.058	3.87	1.018
Interesting places to visit	3.50	1.295	3.67	1.119
Friendliness hospitality	3.45	1.091	3.56	1.074
Quality restaurants	3.24	1.154	3.12	1.112
Historic sites museums	3.19	1.091	3.32	1.012
Quality services	3.13	1.118	3.26	1.093
Quality accommodation	3.04	1.261	3.26	1.122
Urbanization	2.78	1.128	2.30	1.007
Climate	2.78	1.289	2.42	1.217
Fairs festivals and exhibition	2.77	1.382	3.60	.941
Gastronomy	2.75	1.218	2.94	1.197
Availability of accommodation	2.67	1.049	2.80	.999
Shopping facilities	2.59	1.132	2.21	.937
Sports facilities	2.56	1.050	2.39	1.015
Night life entertainment	2.53	1.279	3.27	1.166
High quality beaches	2.43	1.165	3.04	1.202
Crowdedness	2.33	1.348	2.02	.994
Value for money	2.26	.855	2.36	1.070
Local transport	2.20	1.215	2.24	.957
Access	2.13	1.176	1.58	.848

There were not many differences for the order of the variables, and the highest variable was Natural attraction and scenery for both groups, and the second highest was Tranquillity. This matched with the previous studies that the image of Finland was very nature-oriented such as forests and lakes (Varamäki, 2004) and that one of the main purposes to visit Lapland was to enjoy Lappish nature (Maharjan, 2016). The means of these two variables were higher for group 1, showing that the person who had been to or had lived in Lapland had clearer cognitive image. Access was the lowest mean variable for both groups, so Japanese people think that the access is one of the most difficult aspects to reach Lapland. However, the mean of the group 1 (2.13) was much higher than group 2 (1.58), implying that Lapland was not so much harder to reach than they were expected.

The second lowest variable chosen by group 1 was poor local transport, and it showed that it should be improved for the future tourism development in Lapland. Third lowest variable chosen by group 1 was the cost-performances. It showed that Japanese people think that the cost performance to come to Lapland is not high, and this can be the result of Japanese people thinking Finland as the expensive country, and also the distances and currency rate between Euro and Japanese Yen would be affected a lot. The variables having significant differences between group 1 and group 2 were "fairs, festivals, and exhibition", "night life entertainment" "high quality beaches". Thus, Japanese people who had never been to Lapland had the image that tourists can enjoy fairs, festivals and exhibitions or night life entertainment, but the people who had been or had lived in Lapland had not strong cognitive image about that. Also, the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland did not have the image of high-quality beaches, but the people who had never been to Lapland had the higher beach image towards Lapland.

In conclusion, this chapter compared the cognitive destination image between group 1 (who had been to or had lived in Lapland) and group 2 (who had never been to Lapland). Both groups chose natural attraction and scenery as the top variable and tranquillity as the second, and the access as the lowest mean variable. However, the access seemed not so difficult as they were expected. Thus, the cognitive image of Lapland which reached Japanese people were the destination having natural attraction and scenery, and tranquillity. However, about the access, Lapland as a destination should promote to Japanese market that it is not so difficult to reach as they are expected. Also, some cognitive images reached to Japanese people were different from actual people travelling to Lapland such as fairs, festivals, and exhibition, or night life entertainment, or high-quality beaches, so they can utilise these differences, as it was mentioned that developing events was regarded as one of the essential ways to attract visitors during summer (Lundén et al., 2023), or promote more for telling the actual destination image.

7.2 Affective Destination Image and Key Variables

Affective image is the tourists' emotional response to a destination shaped by their attitudes and values such as the destination is fun, relaxed, or exciting (Wang et al., 2023). Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) showed that overall and affective images have the greatest impact on behavioural intention, and Basaran (2016) showed that the affective components

can be used as a predicator of conative components. Thus, deeper research about affective image is essential for understanding tourists' behavioural intentions. In this chapter, the selected key variables were the previous knowledge about Lapland, and the past travel experiences to Lapland.

7.2.1. Affective Destination Image and Previous knowledge about Lapland

The first variable was the previous knowledge about Lapland, which meant the group of people who had known Lapland before this questionnaire (group I) and the group of people who had not known Lapland before this questionnaire (group II). In the questionnaire, the actual activities in Lapland for both summer and winter seasons were introduced and the geographical information of Lapland was also mentioned with the help of map, so even though they had not known Lapland before questionnaire, they could describe the affective destination image about Lapland. The results were shown on Table 10.

Table 10: Affective image and previous knowledge about Lapland.

	Mean (I)	Std. Deviation (I)	Mean (II)	Std. Deviation (II)
Summer	N=54		N=99	
Unpleasant - Pleasant	6.11	1.093	5.52	1.110
Gloomy - Exciting	5.81	1.134	5.32	1.354
Sleepy - Arousing	5.54	1.383	4.85	1.289
Distressing - Relaxing	5.87	1.260	5.19	1.419
Summer average	5.83		5.22	
Winter				
Unpleasant - Pleasant	4.06	1.485	4.12	1.288
Gloomy - Exciting	4.41	1.967	5.05	1.567
Sleepy - Arousing	3.67	2.028	4.85	1.466
Distressing - Relaxing	4.44	1.423	4.48	1.410
Winter average	4.15		4.63	

For the summer affective image, all four bipolar dimensions had higher mean for the group I compared to group II. Especially, for the first dimension, Unpleasant – Pleasant, the mean of group I was 6.11 out of 7. About the second dimension, Gloomy – Exciting, group I had much higher score (5.81) compared to group II (5.32). About the third dimension, Sleepy – Arousing, again group I had much higher score (5.54) compared to group II (4.85). About final dimension, Distressing – Relaxing, the group I had also much higher mean (5.87)

compared to group II (5.19). Also, comparing the average means of all four dimensions, group I had 5.83 and group II had 5.22. Thus, the people who had known Lapland before had much higher affective image towards Lapland during summer than the people who had not known Lapland, showing the importance of promotion and to be known by the potential tourists.

On the other hand, for the winter affective image, the opposite affective image was extracted, which meant that the group II got higher mean than group I for all four dimensions. For the first dimension, Unpleasant – Pleasant, the mean of the group I was 4.06 which was slightly lower than group II (4.12). For the second dimension, Gloomy – Exciting, group I got 4.41, compared to group II (5.05), implying that the people who had not known Lapland felt more excited towards the destination. For the third and biggest difference dimension, Sleepy – Arousing, group I got 3.67 compared to 4.85 by group II. The people who had known Lapland before felt that Lapland was much less arousing than the people who had not known Lapland before. As for the last dimension, Distressing – Relaxing, the mean of group I was 4.44 compared to 4.48 by group II. The average for the winter of the group I was 4.15 compared to 4.63 by group II. Thus, for the winter affective image, the people who had not known Lapland had much higher mean than the people who had known Lapland before.

There were substantial differences for both summer and winter destination image depending on the previous knowledge about the destination. During summer, the previous knowledge affected positively for the affective image, compared to winter that previous knowledge affected on the other way. Thus, it showed the importance of promoting the destination image properly. Also, at the same time, in terms of affective image, the potential of developing summer tourism in Lapland is enormous especially for those who have previous knowledge about Lapland.

7.2.2. Affective Destination Image and the Past Travel Experience to Lapland

Another key variable here was the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland (group 1) and the people who had never been to Lapland (group 2). There were differences between group 1 and group 2, and the results were listed on Table 11 below.

Table 11: Affective image and past travel experiences to Lapland

	Mean (1)	Std. Deviation (1)	Mean (2)	Std. Deviation (2)
Summer				
Unpleasant - Pleasant	6.22	.975	5.60	1.144
Gloomy - Exciting	5.97	1.150	5.37	1.311
Sleepy - Arousing	5.63	1.385	4.95	1.322
Distressing - Relaxing	5.78	1.211	5.34	1.435
Average	5.90		5.32	
Winter				
Unpleasant - Pleasant	4.34	1.310	4.03	1.366
Gloomy - Exciting	4.19	1.768	4.99	1.700
Sleepy - Arousing	3.34	1.860	4.72	1.639
Distressing - Relaxing	4.47	1.414	4.47	1.415
Average	4.09		4.55	

For the summer affective image, the mean of the group 1 was much higher than group 2 in each four dimensions. Especially, the first dimension, Unpleasant - Pleasant, the mean was 6.22 out of 7.00, so people who had been to Lapland think that it is really pleasant for the summer. As for the second dimension, Gloomy – Exciting, the mean of group 1 was 5.97 compared to 5.37 by group 2. As for the third dimension, Sleepy - Arousing, group 1 chose arousing (5.63) more than group 2 (4.95). As for the final dimension, Distressing – Relaxing, group 1 got 5.78 compared to 5.34 for group 2. Also, the average mean for group 1 was 5.90 compared to 5.32 for the group 2. Thus, for each dimension, the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland got much higher means, showing that the importance of the actual visit to shape the affective image.

The winter affective image was generally lower in terms of the four dimensions compared to the summer. However, there were difference between two groups depending on the dimensions. Group 1 showed more pleasant than group 2. On the other hand, the group 2 showed that Lapland was more exciting and arousing. About the final dimension, the mean was the same, implying that the visit did not affect the Distressing – Relaxing dimension. The comparison of the average between group 1 and group 2 showed that the people who had never been to Lapland had more positive affective image towards winter.

Thus, for the summer, the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had more positive image towards Lapland than the people who had never been to Lapland, so they might be an appropriate target for promoting Lapland, as the affective image influences the tourists' behavioural intentions (Keller, 1993; Rial et al., 2000; Rial, García & Varela, 2008, Basaran 2016, Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). On the other hand, during winter, the people who had never been to Lapland had more positive affection towards Lapland, implying that they might be an appropriate target for the promotion of the winter tourism in Lapland.

7.2.3. Summary of the Affective Destination Image

In this chapter, the key variables were researched for the affective destination image of Lapland. First variable chosen was the previous knowledge about Lapland. This showed that when they had known Lapland, they had more positive affective image towards Lapland on summer. On the other hand, the people who had not known Lapland had more positive affective image towards Lapland on winter. The second variable chosen was the previous travel experiences to Lapland. It also showed that if they had been to or had lived in Lapland before, they had more positive attitudes towards Lapland on summer. On the other hand, if there had been no previous travel experience to Lapland, they had more positive feelings towards Lapland on winter. These results showed Japanese people who knows Lapland or how have been to Lapland before would be an appropriate target for the summer tourism development and also showed the importance of promoting the information appropriately because their previous knowledge and past travel experiences affects their affective destination image so much.

7.3. Conative Destination Image and Key Variables

Conative destination image is defined as the tourists' intention or likelihood of visiting the destination, which can be seen as their travel inclination (Wang et al., 2023). There were three aspects to be researched in the questionnaire: intention to recommend, intention to spread positive word-of-mouth, and intention to visit or revisit. Thus, conative image strongly influences the tourists' behavioural intentions to visit a destination. In this chapter, key variables were the previous knowledge about Lapland, past travel experiences to Lapland, and gender.

7.3.1. Conative Destination Image and Previous Knowledge about Lapland

The first key variable was previous knowledge about Lapland. Two groups were researched: the people who had known Lapland beforehand (group I), and the people who had not known Lapland beforehand (group II). Table 12 showed the differences of the conative destination image of Lapland depending on the group.

Table 12: Conative image and previous knowledge about Lapland.

	Mean (I)	Std. Deviation (I)	Mean (II)	Std. Deviation (II)
Summer				
Recommendation	4.14	1.000	3.55	.909
Positive word-of-mouth	4.28	.757	3.94	.796
Visit/Revisit Intention	4.15	1.081	3.96	.870
Summer average	4.19		3.82	
Winter				
Recommendation	4.33	.653	3.75	1.015
Positive word-of-mouth	4.25	.744	3.99	.915
Visit/Revisit Intention	4.31	.897	4.05	1.076
Winter average	4.30		3.93	

When the summer conative image was compared, the people who had known Lapland agreed more for all the three statements. Especially, the mean of the intention to recommend of the group I was much higher (4.14) compared to group II (3.55). Also, for the other two statements, the mean of spreading positive word-of-mouth for group I (4.28) was higher than group II (3.94), and the mean of the visit or revisit intention for group I (4.15) was higher than group II (3.96). The average of all the means for the summer was 4.19 compared to 3.82 for group II. This showed the importance for the destination to be known.

For the winter, the people who had known Lapland before was also much higher among all three questions. As for the intention to recommend, the mean of the group I (4.33) was much higher than group II (3.75). Also, for the other two statements, the group I (4.25) would intend to spread positive word-of-mouth about Lapland in winter more than group II (3.99), and the group I (4.31) would like to visit or revisit Lapland in winter in the future

than group II (4.05). The average of all the means for winter was 4.30 for the group I and 3.93 for the group II. This also showed the importance for the destination to be known. Comparing the overall average for the summer and winter, the people who had known Lapland beforehand had more positive conative image than the people who had not known Lapland. Unlike the affective image, the mean of the winter conative image was higher than the summer one. The highest conative image was winter (group I), followed by summer (group I), winter (group II), summer (group II). This result showed how important the destination to be known for the tourists' travel inclination.

7.3.2. Conative Destination Image and Past Travel Experiences to Lapland

The second key variable for conative image was the past travel experiences to Lapland. The group 1 showed the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland, and the group 2 showed the people who had never been to Lapland. Table 13 showed the differences between the group 1 and the group 2.

Table 13: Conative image and past travel experiences.

	Mean (1)	Std. Deviation (1)	Mean (2)	Std. Deviation (2)
Summer				
Recommendation	4.40	.770	3.59	.969
Positive word-of-mouth	4.52	.570	3.93	.807
Visit/Revisit Intention	4.55	.675	3.89	.979
Summer average	4.49		3.80	
Winter				
Recommendation	4.44	.564	3.83	.981
Positive word-of-mouth	4.31	.693	4.02	.899
Visit/Revisit Intention	4.41	.911	4.07	1.037
Winter average	4.39		3.97	

For the summer, the average means of the agreement to these three statements for the group 1 (4.49) were much higher than the group 2 (3.80). Especially, for the first statement, the group 1 (4.40) would recommend the Lapland in summer much more compared to the group 2 (3.59). Thus, the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland would recommend Lapland in summer much more than the people who had never been to Lapland. For the second statement, the group 1 (4.52) also would like to spread positive

word-of-mouth about the Lapland in summer compared to the group 2 (3.93). For the third statement, the group 1 (4.55) would much more like to visit or revisit the Lapland in summer in the future than the group 2 (3.89). Thus, the past travel experience to Lapland affect positively to the conative destination image in summer.

For the winter, the average means of the agreement to all the three statements in group 1 (4.39) was much higher than in group 2 (3.97). For the recommendation of Lapland in winter, the mean of the group 1 was 4.44 compared to 3.83 in group 2. About the second statement, the group 1 (4.31) would spread positive word-of-mouth about Lapland in winter than the group 2 (4.02). About the third statement, the group 1 (4.41) would like more to visit or revisit the Lapland in winter than the group 2 (4.07). Thus, the past travel experience to Lapland also affect positively to the conative destination image in winter.

When comparing the group 1 and group 2, it was revealed that the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had much more positive conative image than the people who had never been to Lapland. Also, when it was placed with descending order in terms of the average conative image, the highest group was summer (group 1) followed by winter (group 1), winter (group 2) and summer (group 2). Thus, in terms of the conative destination image, it was concluded that the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland were more interested in the Lapland in summer, and the people who had never been to Lapland were more interested in the Lapland in winter. Also, previous study showed that the Japanese tourists who had been to Finland would not expect to repeat the experience (Suvanto et al., 2017), but this research showed that the past travel experience to Lapland affect positively to conative destination image for both summer and winter. Thus, when potential of the summer tourism in Lapland is considered, the people who have been to or have lived in Lapland would be one of the potential targets.

7.3.3. Conative Destination Image and Gender Difference

The third key variable for the conative image was the gender difference. There was only one person who answered, “prefer not to answer”, so that person was excluded from this part. Table 14 showed the differences between male and female of the conative image statements.

Table 14: Conative image and gender.

	Mean (Male)	Std. Deviation	Mean (Female)	Std. Deviation
Summer				
Recommendation	3.75	1.102	3.81	.927
Positive word-of-mouth	3.93	.827	4.13	.773
Visit/Revisit Intention	3.87	1.076	4.12	.890
Summer average	3.85		4.02	
Winter				
Recommendation	4.14	1.025	3.90	.878
Positive word-of-mouth	4.09	.949	4.08	.815
Visit/Revisit Intention	4.13	1.067	4.15	.995
Winter average	4.12		4.04	

The average mean of the winter conative image was higher regardless of the genders. For the male, there was a clear difference between summer and winter, and they had more positive conative image for the winter (4.12) than summer (3.85). However, for the female, there were less seasonal preference between summer (4.02) and winter (4.04). Thus, for the summer tourism development in Lapland, this gender aspect might be one of the key factors to choose the target because females had more interested in summer than males. On the other hand, the winter tourism in Lapland was more favoured by males, so males might be the target for the winter tourism development.

7.3.4. Summary of the Conative Destination Image

In this chapter, conative destination image was considered from the three key variables, which were previous knowledge about Lapland, past travel experiences to Lapland, and the gender differences. For the previous knowledge about the destination, there were clear differences between the people who had known Lapland beforehand and who had not known, so, previous knowledge about the destination affected enormously to shape their conative image. Thus, for the development of the destination, promoting the destination and letting the destination to be known are essential. For the past travel experiences to Lapland, the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had much higher means compared to the people who had never been to Lapland before. Also, it was shown that the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had more positive conative image towards Lapland in summer than in winter, which might be the key target for the future tourism

development in Lapland during summer. Thus, promoting the summer tourism to those who had been to Lapland might be one of the options to attract more Japanese people during summer. For the gender differences, males were less interested in summer and more interested in winter, compared to females who equally had the visit intention towards summer and winter Lapland.

7.4. Perceptions towards Activities in Lapland and Key Variables

Perceptions towards activities in Lapland were the second research question in this research. It was measured in the section 4 of the questionnaire. The activities for both summer and winter were chosen from the Visit Finland website. The key variables were the previous knowledge about Lapland, past travel experiences to Lapland, and the gender.

7.4.1. Perceptions towards Activities and Previous Knowledge about Lapland

The first key variable was whether they had known Lapland beforehand or not. The group I represented that the people who had known Lapland beforehand and the group II represented the people who had not known Lapland beforehand. The results were shown on Table 15.

Table 15: Perceptions towards activities in Lapland and previous knowledge about Lapland

	Mean (I)	Std. Deviation (I)	Mean (II)	Std. Deviation (II)
Summer	N=54		N=99	
Sami	4.06	1.054	3.37	1.209
Sauna	4.26	1.067	3.57	1.303
Lappish people	4.02	1.107	3.54	1.256
Midnight sun	4.70	.743	4.62	.724
Wild food	4.59	.740	4.41	.948
Average	4.33		3.90	
Winter				
Northern lights	4.85	.492	4.81	.650
Snow activity	4.52	.863	4.39	.977
Snowmobile	4.67	.727	4.63	.750
Ice breaker	4.07	1.079	4.21	1.118
Santa Claus	4.15	1.323	4.66	.797
Snow hotel	4.02	1.236	4.35	1.062
Average	4.36		4.23	

For the summer activities, the people who had known Lapland beforehand had higher mean for each activity. The activity that Japanese people for each group felt most interested in was “Midnight sun” with the mean of 4.70 (group I) and 4.62 (group II). The second most interesting activity was “Wild food” with the mean of 4.59 (group I) and 4.41 (group II). The third was “Sauna” (group I: 4.26, group II: 3.57). Matilainen and Santalahti (2018) found the most “Finnish things” for the Japanese people living in Finland and sauna, Moomin, and forest and nature were selected, which can explain the reason why the people who had known Lapland have much higher interest than the people who had not known Lapland. “Sami” and “Lappish people” were fourth and the least interesting activities chosen. The people who had known Lapland beforehand answered higher for all five activities and also comparing the average (group I: 4.33, group II: 3.90), it showed that previous knowledge affected their interests for each activity positively for summer activities.

For the winter activities, the most interesting activity for Japanese people were “Northern lights” for both group I (4.85) and group II (4.81). For the group I, the most interesting activity was “Northern lights” (4.85), followed by “Snow mobile” (4.67), “Snow activity” (4.52), “Santa Claus” (4.15), “Ice breaker” (4.15), and “Snow hotel” (4.02). One of the

main attractions in Lapland was to visit the home of the Santa Claus, but group I did not put special interests towards Santa Claus activities. The interests for Group II were different from group I. The most interesting activity for them was “Northern lights” (4.81), followed by “Santa Claus” (4.66), “Snow mobile” (4.63), “Snow activity” (4.39), “Snow hotel” (4.35), and “Ice breaker” (4.21). When comparing the overall average, the mean of group I (4.36) was higher than group II (4.23). Thus, the previous knowledge about the destination affected positively even though the activities they were interested in were different.

This chapter explored the relationships between previous knowledge about the destination and the perceptions towards each activity in Lapland. Group I, the people who had previous knowledge about Lapland, were more interested in both summer and winter activities, but for the summer, the previous knowledge affected the interests much more positively than winter. Thus, letting Japanese people know Lapland significantly influences their interests in activities especially during the summer.

7.4.2. Perceptions towards Activities and Past Travel Experience to Lapland

The second key variable was whether they had been to or had lived in Lapland. The group 1 represented the people who had been or had lived in Lapland, and the group 2 represented the people who had never been to Lapland. Table 16 showed the difference between group 1 and group 2 about the perceptions towards each activity on summer and winter.

Table 16: Perceptions towards activities in Lapland and past travel experience to Lapland

	Mean (1)	Std. Deviation (1)	Mean (2)	Std. Deviation (2)
Summer				
Sami	4.19	.965	3.46	1.211
Sauna	4.34	.971	3.67	1.300
Lappish people	4.19	1.061	3.58	1.237
Midnight sun	4.84	.369	4.60	.791
Wild food	4.66	.545	4.43	.947
Average	4.44		3.95	
Winter				
Northern lights	4.75	.672	4.84	.577
Snow activity	4.56	.716	4.40	.988
Snowmobile	4.62	.660	4.64	.762
Ice breaker	4.06	1.076	4.19	1.113
Santa Claus	4.03	1.379	4.60	.900
Snow hotel	3.97	1.307	4.31	1.079
Average	4.33		4.50	

For the summer, the most interesting activity for the group 1 was “Midnight sun” for both group 1 (4.84) and group 2 (4.60), and the second most was “Wild food” (group 1: 4.66, group 2: 4.43), followed by “Sauna” (group 1: 4.34, group 2: 3.67), “Lappish people” (group 1: 4.19, group 2: 3.58), and “Sami” (group 1: 4.19, group 2: 3.46). Also, comparing the overall means, the group 1 had 4.44 compared to 3.95 for group 2. Thus, the past travel experience to Lapland significantly influenced the interests in summer activities as the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had higher means for all the five activities, and it influenced especially, “Sauna”, “Lappish people” and “Sami” related activities, which were three least interested activities among all activities both for summer and winter.

For the winter, the most interesting activity was “Northern lights” (group 1: 4.75, group 2: 4.84), and the second most was “Snow mobile” (group 1: 4.62, group 2: 4.64). The least interesting activity was “Snow hotel” (3.97) for group 1 and “Ice Breaker” (4.19) for group 2. “Santa Claus” got the higher score for group 2 (4.60), but it was much lower for group 1 (4.03). One of the main purposes to visit Lapland for Japanese tourists was to meet Santa Claus (Maharjan, 2016). However, the people who had been to Finland would not expect to repeat the experiences (Suvanto et al., 2017), supporting that the people who had met

Santa Claus before showed less interested than the people who had never experienced Santa Claus activities. Also, comparing the overall average, the mean was higher for group 2 than group 1, implying that the people who had never been to Lapland felt more interested towards the activities in Lapland during winter.

When comparing all four groups, the order became the group 2 – winter (4.50), the group 1 – summer (4.44), the group 1 – winter (4.33), and the group 2 – summer (3.95). Thus, in terms of activities mentioned on the Visit Finland website, the winter activities were more interesting for the people who had never been to Lapland. On the other hand, the summer activities were more interesting for the people who had been to or lived in Lapland. Thus, for the development of the summer tourism in Lapland, the people who had been to Lapland or had lived in Lapland would be an appropriate target.

7.4.3. Perceptions towards Activities and Gender Difference

The third key variable was the gender difference. Table 17 showed the difference between male and female.

Table 17: Perceptions towards activities in Lapland and gender difference

	Male	Std. Deviation	Female	Std. Deviation
Summer	N=53		N=99	
Sami	3.42	1.278	3.72	1.152
Sauna	4.23	1.137	3.61	1.276
Lappish people	3.55	1.422	3.79	1.109
Midnight sun	4.55	.952	4.70	.579
Wild food	4.36	1.002	4.54	.812
Summer average	4.02		4.07	
Winter				
Northern lights	4.75	.806	4.86	.452
Snow activity	4.51	.933	4.39	.946
Snowmobile	4.74	.763	4.59	.729
Icebreaker	4.40	.927	4.03	1.173
Santa Claus	4.45	1.136	4.48	.993
Snow hotel	4.62	.860	4.02	1.212
Winter average	4.58		4.40	

For the summer, overall average towards the activities was similar (male: 4.02, female: 4.07), but the activities they were interested in were different. Both male and female felt the most interested in the “Midnight sun” as the top (male: 4.55, female: 4.70), and the second most was the “Wild food” (male: 4.36, female: 4.54). The biggest difference was the “Sauna”. The mean of the male was 4.23 compared to 3.61 for female. Japanese male might be a potential target for the Sauna related activities. However, the male was less interested in the activities like Sami (male: 3.42, female: 3.72) or Lappish people (male: 3.55, female:3.79).

For the winter, overall average was much higher for male (4.58) than female (4.40). The most interesting activity for both genders was “Northern lights” (male: 4.75, female: 4.86), and “Snow mobile” as the second most (male: 4.74, female: 4.59), and “Ice breaker” as the least interesting activity for male (4.40) and “Snow hotel” for female (4.03). The biggest difference between genders was “snow hotel” (male: 4.62, female: 4.02) and the second biggest was “Ice breaker” (male: 4.40, female: 4.03). Males were much more interested in snow hotel and ice breaker.

Comparing both summer and winter seasons, both genders were much more interested in winter activities, and especially males were very much interested in winter activities in general. However, the gender differences existed for each summer and winter activity. Especially for the summer, the male had the much higher mean for “Sauna” than female, and for the winter, “Snow hotel” and “Ice breaker” were the two activities having significant differences between genders.

7.4.4. Summary of the Perceptions towards Activities in Lapland

In this chapter, the perceptions towards activities and key variables were discussed. The key variables were the previous knowledge about Lapland, the past travel experiences to Lapland, and the gender. For all the variables and groups, the most interesting activity for summer was “Midnight sun” and the most interesting activity for winter was “Northern lights”.

The previous knowledge about Lapland affected their perceptions towards each activity. If they had known Lapland beforehand, they were more interested in the activities both for

summer and winter. Thus, promoting Lapland as a travel destination would be one of the useful strategies for the Japanese people to feel more interested in each activity.

The second key variable was the past travel experiences to Lapland. The people who had been to or had lived in Lapland were more interested in summer activities. On the other hand, the people who had never been to Lapland were more interested in winter activities. Thus, Japanese people who had been to or had lived in Lapland would be the potential target for the summer tourism development in Lapland, and on the other hand, the people who had never been to Lapland might be the great target for the winter tourism development.

The last key variable was the gender. Both genders were more interested in winter activities. The males showed high interests to all the activities in winter, but females were less interested in "Snow hotel" and "Ice breaker". For the summer, there were no major differences between genders except for "Sauna" showing that the males were very interested in compared to females.

7.5. Possible Obstacles for Japanese People Travelling to Lapland

In the last section of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked about the possible obstacles if they travel to Lapland, which was the third research question in this thesis. They wrote freely with their own words, and 88 respondents answered questions. The categorised data were shown on table 18.

Table 18. Possible obstacles for Japanese people when travelling to Lapland.

Category	N
Access, Distance, Travel Time	46
Money	35
Climate	31
Language	10
Mosquitoes	5
Uncertainty of Northern Lights	4
Less information	3
The needs for guides	2
Crowdedness	2

The most common obstacle for Japanese people coming to Lapland was the first category, “Access, Distance, and Travel time”, which was mentioned by 46 respondents, which was more than half of the respondents. This included the fact that Japan and Finland are geographically very far, and Japanese people usually do not get long holiday because of their working culture, so there is limited time for travelling, which matched with the previous study done by Suvanto et al. (2017). Also, some mentioned that the access from Helsinki to Lapland was also the problem.

The second common category was money. 35 respondents mentioned the obstacles related to money. Money has two aspects. First aspect is the money for travelling. Since the distance between Japan and Finland, the cost of the flight tickets and transportation to Lapland are usually very expensive. The second aspects are the cost inside Lapland. Finland is in the Northern Europe, so Japanese people regard Finland as one of the expensive countries. Also, most of the respondents in this questionnaire was younger generation, so this fact also might bring the problem related to money.

Third common category was about Climate. Lapland is located near the Arctic circle and 31 respondents answered that the climate of the Lapland would be an obstacle. Especially, when they visit Lapland during winter season, they should be prepared for the cold climate. Also, some mentioned that the darkness of the winter would be also one of the possibilities disturbing them from coming to Lapland. However, climate change would bring the potential for the summer tourism development in Lapland as it was mentioned in Yle News (2023), and it also have the potential to solve the problems such as underutilisation of the physical and social structures designed for the winter peak season during the rest of the year (Rantala et al., 2019).

The fourth common category was about Language. 10 respondents mentioned about the language barrier. This might have two sides. EF Education First (2023) researched the English skills in each country and categorised into 5 proficiency levels, and Japan is categorised as the low proficiency country and the ranking is 92nd out of 116 countries, so many Japanese tourists would have trouble when they go abroad without language help. Japanese tourists appreciate Japanese language web pages (Suvanto et al., 2017), so language help before their trip and also onsite could help eliminate this possible obstacle. Also, some mentioned about the Finnish language, so they cannot smoothly communicate

with the local people, which might also be the key obstacles for the Japanese people travelling to Lapland.

Five respondents mentioned the summertime mosquitoes because of the nature activities in Lapland, which was also one of the reasons why Lapland is not considered attractive during summer and autumn seasons (Rantala et al., 2011). Four respondents mentioned the uncertainty of northern light would be a possible obstacle for travelling to Lapland.

Thus, the biggest problem for Japanese people coming to Lapland would be the difficulty of the access including distance and time for travel, followed by the high cost for the transportation and the price in Lapland, climate especially for the cold winter, language barrier as Japanese people are not good at English, mosquitoes, and the uncertainty of northern light. However, cool climate for the summer would be chance for the summer tourism development to achieve year-around tourism, and it is possible to overcome language barriers by efforts both online and onsite.

8. Conclusion

In this research, the destination seasonal image of Lapland in Finland from the viewpoint of Japanese people was discussed by utilising the destination image theory. Finnish Lapland is one of the destinations facing significant tourism seasonality in the North, which brought economical, socio-cultural and ecological problems in the destination for both the peak and off-peak seasons. Japanese people are the third biggest tourism market outside of Europe, and Finland regarded Japan as one of the main targets along with Germany, Great Britain and China. Japanese people visit Finland all year around, but only 8 percent of the Japanese tourists visit Lapland during summer season even though 40 percent of the tourists visit Lapland during winter season. Thus, the Japanese tourists would be the potential target for the summer tourism development in Lapland to achieve year-around tourism in Lapland without tourism seasonality.

In order to gain an understanding of this research phenomena, the destination image theory was introduced, and Gartner's the cognitive-affective-conative model of destination image was utilised in this research. By understanding these three-destination image of Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people, this research tried to analyse tourists' perceptions of a destination's features (cognitive), tourists' emotional response to a destination (affective), and tourists' intention or likelihood of visiting the destination (conative). In addition, in order to understand the seasonal differences, this cognitive, affective, and conative destination image was divided into summer and winter seasons and analysed in this research.

For the cognitive image, Japanese people regarded Lapland as the destination that had plenty of natural attraction and scenery, quiet, clean, plenty of open-air and different activities. Also, they recognised Lapland as the destination, which was difficult to access, less crowded, and poor local transport, shopping facilities, and cost-performances. However, there was differences between Japanese people who had been to or had lived in Lapland and Japanese people who had never been to Lapland even though most of the variables were similar between these two groups. From the discussion, the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland felt easier to access to Lapland compared to the people who had never been to Lapland, showing that the access is not as difficult as they expected. Also, there were differences for the variables such as "fairs, festivals, and exhibition",

“night life entertainment”, or “high-quality beaches”. Cognitive image strongly affects the affective image, which eventually leads to the tourist’s intention to travel to a destination. Thus, Lapland as a travel destination should be promoted appropriately to avoid being perceived negatively by providing an accurate representation or by utilising these differences.

For the affective image, Japanese people felt more positive towards Lapland in summer for all the four dimensions, which are Unpleasant – Pleasant, Gloomy - Exciting, Sleepy – Arousing, and Distressing -Relaxing. From the previous literature, the positive affective image affects the motivations of the tourists or visit intentions, so Japanese tourists would be one of the suitable targets for developing summer tourism in Lapland. Also, from the discussion chapter, previous knowledge about Lapland and the past travel experience to Lapland affected significantly for shaping affective destination image. The people who had known Lapland and the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had much higher positive affective image for summer in Lapland. Thus, it showed the importance of appropriate promotion and letting Japanese people know about Lapland more as it influenced shaping positive affective image, and also the people who had been to Lapland might be one of the potential targets during summer in terms of affective destination image. Compared to summer, the winter affective image was more positive for the people who had not known Lapland beforehand or who had never been to Lapland before.

For the conative image, Japanese people as a whole had slightly more positive conative image in winter than in summer for three dimensions, which were intention to recommend, intention to spread positive word-of-mouth, and intention to visit or revisit the destination. However, when it was analysed deeply, it was found that the people who had known Lapland beforehand and the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had much more positive conative image compared to the people who had never been to Lapland before. Especially, the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had more positive conative image on summer than winter. Thus, the people who had been to Lapland or had lived in Lapland would be one of the appropriate targets for attracting Japanese tourists in summer. In addition, gender also affected shaping conative image. Males were more interested in winter and less interested in summer compared to females who were almost equally interested in Lapland for both summer and winter.

For the perceptions towards each activity in Lapland, the five summer activities and six winter activities were extracted from Visit Finland website and the respondents were asked about their interests towards each activity. The activities which Japanese people felt most interested in for each season was “Midnight sun” for summer and “Northern lights” for winter. For the activities mentioned on this website, winter activities were much more interesting for Japanese people. “Sami”, “Lappish people”, “Sauna” were the three least interested activities for the Japanese people and all of them was mentioned as the summer activities in Lapland. The interesting activities were also different depending on their previous knowledge about Lapland and past travel experiences to Lapland. The people who had known Lapland beforehand had much higher interest for the summer than the people who had not known Lapland beforehand, showing the importance of letting people know about the destination. Also, the past travel experiences affected positively for the summer activities, and the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland were much more interested in summer activities than winter ones. In addition, gender difference affected the interesting activities, and males were very much interested in all the activities in winter, and they were much more interested in “Sauna” than females, and females were less interested in “Ice breaker” and “Snow hotel”, but more interested in “Midnight sun”, “Northern lights”, and “Wild food”.

The data for possible obstacles when they travel to Lapland were also collected and they mentioned “Access, distance, and travel time” as the most frequently mentioned possible obstacles to visit Lapland because of the geographical distance and the difficulty of getting longer holiday in Japan originated from working culture. Money was mentioned on the second because of cost for travelling to Lapland and the cost inside the destination. Climate, Language, Mosquitoes, Uncertainty of Northern lights, less information, the needs for guides, and crowdedness were mentioned more than two respondents.

Through this analysis, the importance of letting people know the destination and the past travel experiences should be emphasized for the developing summer tourism in Lapland. The people who had known Lapland and the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland had much more positive affective and conative image towards Lapland in summer, which strongly influences the tourist’s actual behaviour to visit Lapland in the future. Also, about the perception towards activities, the people who had known Lapland and had visited Lapland before were much more interested in summer activities in Lapland

even though the winter is the main seasons. Thus, by letting them know Lapland or by targeting Japanese people who had been to Lapland before, Japanese people would be one of the possible targets for the summer tourism development in Lapland and they have the potential to achieve sustainable and year-around tourism in Lapland.

9. Limitation of this Research and Areas for Improvement

Even though this research was able to gain an understanding of the seasonal tourism destination image in Lapland from the viewpoint of Japanese people, there were limitations for this research. First of all, the size of the sample was not enough to generalize into the whole population. The total 155 respondents participated this research, but the Japanese population is 125 million people, so it would have some problems to apply this result simply into the whole population. Additionally, the respondents were gathered by convenience sampling, so there were differences between the number of respondents for each category such as ages and education levels.

Secondly, there would be the language misunderstanding between English and Japanese. The questionnaire was made in English because it utilised the previous research, but it was distributed in Japanese language for the Japanese respondents, so when it was translated from English to Japanese or from Japanese to English, there might be differences for the nuances and actual meaning of the respondents.

Thirdly, there were much more activities available in Lapland. In this research, the summer and winter activities were limited to the activities mentioned in the Visit Finland website, so if the activities were different, the result might be different. Moreover, even though some groups had more positive summer image than winter, it did not simply mean Lapland could attract more Japanese tourists because the summer is travelling seasons and there would be more competitors as Japanese people view Lapland in a larger framework in Northern Europe or even in whole Europe (Suvanto et al., 2017), which makes Lapland harder to be selected as a summer destination by the tourist. Thus, this research gave an understanding of one of the aspects that showed the potential for the summer tourism, but it is premature to guarantee that they would visit Lapland if they had more positive image on summer than on winter.

Finally, this research focused on the seasonal destination image differences, but the cognitive seasonal destination image was not measured depending on the seasons even though it would be different because nature activities in summer and winter are different, and the access is easier during winter times because of the peak season. Also, when several key variables were selected in this research, there were overlaps, for example, between the

people who had known Lapland and the people who had been to or had lived in Lapland. It would also affect the result of the research.

As for the improvement, this research was the first destination image studies in Lapland focusing on the seasonal differences. This research showed actual differences depending on the seasons especially for the affective and conative image even though it is inside one destination. Destinations that suffer from the seasonality problem should have the different destination image depending on the seasons as there are seasonal differences in a destination such as the activities and other attributes. By dividing destination image depending on the seasons, it would be possible to gain a deeper understanding of the destination. Thus, this destination image difference depending on the seasons should also be researched more for achieving the year-around and sustainable tourism in the world.

Appendix.

Section 1: Background Information
First, please tell us some background information about you.

1. Have you ever travelled to Lapland in Finland?
    1. Yes/ 2. No /3. Live or lived
2. Have you ever travelled to Finland?
    1. Yes /2. No /3. Live or lived
3. Have you ever travelled to Europe?
    1. Yes /2. No /3. Live or lived
4. Did you know about Lapland before this survey?
    1. Yes /2. No
5. If yes, where did you hear or get the information about Lapland?

6. Gender
    1. Male/ 2. Female /3. Other / 4. Prefer not to tell
7. Age
    1. 18-24
    2. 25-34
    3. 35-44
    4. 45-54
    5. 55-64
    6. 65-74
    7. Over 75
    8. Prefer not to tell

8. Education (including prospective)
    1. Junior high school
    2. High school
    3. Junior college /Vocational school
    4. Bachelor
    5. Master/Doctor
    6. Prefer not to tell

9. Previous overseas travel experience
    1. None
    2. 1-3 times
    3. 4-6 times
    4. 7-10 times
    5. 11 times or more
    6. Prefer not to tell

Section 2: Perceptions about Lapland

This section firstly gives you short introduction about Lapland and asks about the perceptions about Lapland by asking 3 open-ended questions. Feel free to write your opinion.

For the purposes of this survey, Lapland is defined as Finnish Lapland.
Lapland is the northernmost region of Finland, and Rovaniemi is its largest city. (Lapland Welcome, https://laplandwelcome.fi/ja/%e3%82%a2%e3%82%af%e3%82%bb%e3%82%b9/)

1. When you think of Lapland as a travel destination, what images and characteristics come to mind?

2. How would you describe the atmosphere and mood you will experience when you visit Lapland?

3. Please list any tourist attraction in Lapland that you think is distinctive or unique

Section 3: Recognition of Lapland
This section presents statements about Finnish Lapland. What is your opinion about them according to your image of Lapland?

1. I don't know
2. Strongly disagree
3. Mostly disagree
4. Neutral
5. Mostly agree
6. Strongly agree

Statements

1. The cleanliness and hygiene are good
2. The quality of the beaches is high
3. The availability of accommodation is good
4. The inhabitants are friendly
5. There are interesting places to visit
6. It is a quiet place
7. It has attractive natural attractions and scenery
8. The climate is pleasant

9. The urbanization made the destination convenient.
10. It is crowded
11. There is a good availability of open-air activities.
12. There are high quality restaurants
13. There are many historic sites/museums
14. The gastronomy is good.
15. It has an easy access to reach
16. The local transport is good
17. There are sufficient shopping facilities
18. There are good sport facilities
19. There is high quality accommodation
20. Night life/entertainment is good
21. Tourists can enjoy fairs, festivals and exhibitions
22. It offers a good value for money
23. The quality of services is high
24. Tourists can do different activities

Section 4: Activities in Lapland

In this section, we present examples of activities available in Lapland in winter and summer. What is your level of interest for them as a tourist?

(A) Summer Tourism

1. Immerse yourself in the indigenous (Sámi) way of life such as visiting cultural centre, nature centre, and museums.

Picture Credits: Mikko Ryhänen

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

2. Enjoy a summer Finnish sauna

Picture Credits: Emilia Hoisko

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

3. Get to know the culture of Lapland and local people by visiting the little villages or museums.

Picture Credits: Samuli Rosenberg, Flatlight Films

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

4. Experience the midnight sun surrounded by nature

Picture Credits: Samuli Rosenberg, Flatlight Films

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

5. Enjoy local delicacies and wild foods

Picture Credits: Soili Jussila

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

B. Winter tourism

6. Enjoy the mysterious scenery such as the Northern Lights

Picture Credits: Visit Finland

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

7. Enjoy skiing, snowboarding and sledding at the winter resorts of Lapland

Picture Credits: Rob Smith

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

8. Ride through the Arctic wilderness on a deer or snowmobile

Picture Credits: Juho Kuva

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

9. Board an icebreaker that breaks the ice in the frozen sea

Picture Credits: Visit Sea Lapland

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

10. Experience the magic of Christmas in Santa's hometown

Picture Credits: Visit Rovaniemi

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

11. Sleep, drink and eat in snow and ice hotels

Picture Credits: Timo Laapotti / Kemi Tourism Ltd

1. Not interested at all
2. Not very interested
3. Neutral
4. Interested
5. Very interested

12. Are there any other activities not mentioned here but you want to experience in Lapland in summer?

13. Are there any other activities not mentioned here but you want to experience in Lapland in winter?

Section 5: Feelings towards Lapland
This section asks about your feeling towards Lapland. Each pair of words represents opposite feelings or impressions. Please select a number on the 7-point scale according to your image of Lapland.

Is Lapland in summer in your opinion
unpleasant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 pleasant
gloomy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 exciting
sleepy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 arousing
distressing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 relaxing

Is Lapland in summer in your opinion
unpleasant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 pleasant
gloomy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 exciting
sleepy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 arousing
distressing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 relaxing

Section 6: Motivation for Lapland
This section asks about your motivation for Lapland in summer and in winter.
There are three statements each for summer and winter. How much do you agree with each statement according to your image towards Lapland?

Please select your opinion about the destination.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Mostly disagree
3. Neutral
4. Mostly agree
5. Strongly agree
6. I don't know

Statements

A: Summer
1. I would recommend summer in Lapland to my family and friends.
2. I would spread positive word-of-mouth about summer Lapland.
3. I would like to (re)visit summer Lapland in the future.

B: Winter
4. I would like to visit winter in Lapland in the future.
5. I would spread positive word-of-mouth about winter Lapland
6. I would like to (re)visit to winter Lapland in the future.

7.What barriers do you think would prevent you from travelling to Lapland?
(open-ended question)

If you have any thoughts, comments or feedback, please feel free to write here.

Thank you for answering the questionnaire.

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