



Relationship Between Customers' Country Brand Perception and Marketing Campaigns with National Stereotypical Messages

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Abstract

Nowadays concepts of stereotypes and destination image are rarely discussed together. Due to the complexity of both topics, controversial opinions are often found and seldomly researched further. This challenge can lead several DMOs to confusion, about whether they should or not use stereotype-based marketing to brand their country and attract tourists. Therefore, this research has studied stereotypes discussing their phenomena within the tourism destination context.

This study has emphasized the importance of stereotype-based content in destination marketing activities and its relation to customers' formation of brand image. The main objective of the research was to define the interrelations between concepts of stereotypes, branding, and destination image. In addition, the authors studied the influence of stereotyped marketing on customers' destination perception. The current topic was researched from a theoretical base point of view, including both customers' and businesses' sides. Researchers highlighted several frameworks found in the literature in order to provide validity for the practical research part.

To obtain valuable research results, the quantitative method was chosen. The method was chosen due to the main research question being relationship-based and the authors' motivation to get as many answers as possible. A survey was conducted to collect all the necessary data. The survey included an open-ended question to gather qualitative data which was quantified. The question was added in order to obtain deeper insights and get more variable answers. Due to the study determining a particular target group, the research was narrowed down to people studying in Finland.

The research results were carefully analyzed and presented in figures and tables. Each question was discussed and presented separately in the Results and Discussion chapter. Overall, the study found that stereotyped messages in destination marketing could bring brands desired recognition and differentiation.

Keywords/tags (subjects)

Destination brand, destination, image, stereotypes, brand identity, brand equity, marketing, destination marketing, stereotypes, stereotype classification

Miscellaneous (Confidential information) -

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1 Introduction and Research Objectives

Many academic publications have been discussing the phenomenon of destination image as a complex concept. Still to this day, researchers could not agree on a certain explanation for particular components of the concept, such as “how to measure destination image” for example, since there are such a large number of attributes that could be included, due to every destination being a unique variable. Mentioning stereotypes, the topic has been gaining popularity among businesses, especially in the tourism market, the reason for that being destination brands' desire to build their recognition in the highly competitive tourism market. Consequently, stereotypes were discussed in the context, as a tool that could help or ruin destinations' brand recognition and image. Therefore, this paper will present different authors' perspectives as well as this paper's authors elaboration on them. This research paper is aimed to find out the influence of destination marketing with stereotypical messages on destination brand image and destination association. The authors have decided to choose students living in Finland as a target group, the reasoning for this decision will be described in more in-depth in chapter 5.4. Respondents.

In view of the complicated nature of destination image formation and destination brand management, it is important to understand all the possible variables that have an influence on the constructs. Destination image and brand have been discussed by several authors from a stereotypical perception point of view. Certainly, the majority of the literature has discussed stereotypes in the context of psychology and sociology. However, the authors of the research paper managed to find a limited amount of accessible literature connecting stereotypes to the tourism industry. For example, Grønhaug (1992) has discussed stereotypes in the context of advertising. Also, Diamantopoulos et al. (2021) connected stereotypes with consumer behavior and tangible product branding. Several authors have also discussed stereotypical factors influencing destination image based on geographical proximity (Karri & Dogra, 2022). In addition, Albu (2013) and Chattalas et al. (2008) discussed stereotypes with COO and reversed COO concepts together. The research topic proved to be relevant and present to this day since today the researchers are still discussing the phenomena of stereotypes in the tourism concept due to its complexity and versatility.

At the same time, the broad amount of literature discusses the challenge of differentiating a tourist destination product in the view of brand positioning. A lack of destination brand

management practices leads to oversimplified and generalized marketing messages (Grønhaug & Heide, 1992). The challenge has led several DMOs to communicate cliched and stereotyped marketing messages in an attempt to attract international visitors. Therefore, it is essential to understand how to lead destination branding practices at the time of promoting common attributes of any popular tourist destination, naming picturesque beaches, breathtaking landscapes, crystal-clear seas, and friendly locals (Morgan et al., 2003).

Motivation

This academic paper will mainly examine three topics - destination brand, destination image, and stereotypes. Authors of this paper have shown interest in combining destination image, destination brand, and stereotype concepts since stereotypical phenomena have been widely discussed in the previous years, the topic has gained wide reach, although, it was discovered that there is a lack of literature connecting stereotypes and tourism in one context. This was a starting point for the authors' curiosity to explore and find possible threads which can work together between destination brand, image, and stereotype concepts.

Research Objectives

The research aims to contribute to the understanding of the influence of marketing campaigns with stereotypical messages on customers' country brand perception. By exploring the literature on the phenomena, the authors have found that country brand perception is dependent on different variables. Destination image have been acknowledged as a crucial aspect of consumer behaviour (Lee et al., 2002, as cited in Blain et al, 2005). Simultaneously, customer behavior highly relies on brand connection, where associations are believed to be a strong factor in the creation of a long-lasting brand image (Beig & Nika, 2019). Therefore, the authors have gained curiosity to research the concepts of destination image and brand association together under the influence of stereotypical marketing. Furthermore, the research also targets to outline practical implementations of destination branding management in the view of communicating stereotypical cues of a country's destination.

The current research should be carried out due to the lack of information about people's perception of stereotypes, which leads destinations to confusion as if those cliches and stereotypes will be an advantage in their brand development strategy or a disadvantage. Therefore, it is important to carry out this study, to understand if stereotypes are beneficial and if so, how they can be applied in the sphere.

At the beginning of the thesis project, few research papers have been found directly and indirectly connected to the research problem stated. In the process of theoretical review, two following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: Do stereotypical campaigns affect people's destination image?

RQ2: Do stereotypical campaigns affect people's association with the country brand?

To answer these questions, the topics of fundamentals of branding, destination branding, destination image, stereotypes, and stereotypes in marketing were investigated.

Finally, to answer the research questions formulated, the following three objectives were defined to achieve the result:

RO1: To create a strong and reliable theoretical groundwork based on which the research method should be designed and implemented.

RO2: To collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions formulated.

RO3: To formulate the interrelation of the Branding, Destination Image, and Stereotype constructs that can be applied as new strategies for destination branding and research perspectives for DMOs

2 Theoretical Background

A literature review has been structured using various referenced research papers, books, journals, articles, and others. It is organized by formulating the phenomena from a marketing point of view, followed by defining and understanding the constructs of branding, destination branding, image, and stereotypes. The literature review has been applied to building an understanding of the subject and designing an implementation method for thesis research.

2.1 Marketing

Marketing can be considered a common phenomenon. Why? Because Marketing is all around us every day, society encounters marketing actions by different companies and organizations daily, whether it will be on the streets, on TV, or in our local shops. Even though large numbers of people define marketing as commercials, it is not quite right. But how can marketing be defined today? Kotler (2020) suggests that marketing is an interaction tool, through which companies can deliver their messages to customers and promote long-lasting profitable relationships by proposing value and quality services. Thus, marketing can be described as a communication tool where businesses and customers collaborate with one another and together create long-lasting relationships based on trust and values.

Marketing decisions have been broadly criticized for communicating stereotypical messages and boosting stereotyping effects (Grønhaug & Heide, 1992). Today, responsible advertising is a must for organizations' marketing to avoid stereotyping specific population segments (such as women, minorities, and the elderly). Grønhaug and Heide stress the dilemma of whether stereotyping in marketing produces society's values or reflects them (1992).

Advertisement is a process that requires various decisions and investments. Finding the most influential content message and format, channels and suitable target group are the solutions that must be made for advertising success. According to Grønhaug and Heide (1992), advertisements reproduce or may lead to standardized messages that will contribute to the target group's perceptions associating with products, services, or people. The "level" of stereotype image that customers form under the influence of advertisement is dependent on several factors. The authors stress the fact that biased stereotype perception is likely to occur when the customer has no

detailed information about the product of advertisement. Moreover, product image can be perceived as product stereotyping. In the view that product image aims to be differentiated, and easily recognized, marketers sometimes tend to connect product attributes to customers' symbolic needs, such as "Pepsi drinkers think young" (Grønhaug, Heide, 1992, p.3). Grønhaug and Heide consider the connection to be added value and can increase a positive stereotype image.

Destination Marketing

Destination marketing is believed to be one of the most complex elements in the marketing world due to its constant changes. Destinations are so diverse by their nature, meaning there are so many different stakeholders and businesses working on a shared goal - to stay competitive and attractive in the constantly evolving market of tourism.

Thus, in a such highly competitive field, it is wise to onboard strategic-based marketing actions. Destination customers, also known as tourists, are becoming more demanding and selective year by year. Seeking more than just services but unique experiences, relationships, and emotions - all in one. (Soteriades, 2012.) Therefore, Soteriades (2012), highlights that destinations need to be more future driven now as never before. He believes that the most successful destination marketing organizations (DMOs) will be those who acknowledge the change, react to it and act on it. Strategic marketing actions by DMOs will promote their advanced thinking, showcasing their marketing actions as both efficient and effective.

According to Sotiriadis (2021), destination marketing and destination management are two interdependent spheres in the tourism industry. Destination marketing is a part of the superior construct of destination management, yet the realization of the latter is dependent on marketing activities. Organization of tourist assets and resources is the major role of DMOs, while the support of tourist flow is a task of destination marketing organizations.

Talking about how complex and competitive the tourism market is, destinations tend to be rather old-fashioned with their promoting actions. This market has such a variety of products and services to choose from, which makes every destination quite easily substitutional by others. Therefore, marketers should prioritize building their brand based on experiences you can get, rather than promoting common attributes of any popular tourist destination naming picturesque beaches,

breathtaking landscapes, crystal-clear seas, and friendly locals. (Morgan et al, 2003). For example, Australia has already acknowledged its stereotype-related flaws and has launched a stereotype-debunking campaign targeted toward South-East Asia and India. (Tourism Australia rolls out \$10m myth-debunking ad campaign, 2018.) Still to this day Australia has been judged for using one of their most popular icons “Kangaroo” in the majority of their marketing campaigns, most of which have been labeled as showcasing stereotypes and being bland (Cassidy, 2022).

Positioning

Talking about the importance of marketing message, target audience, and marketing channel, it is important to highlight the positioning aspect of marketing. When talking about positioning it does not really speak the brand’s voice or the brand’s value, instead marketers rely on positioning to emphasize and demonstrate the characteristics of a product – how different it is and why you should choose it over others. (Kapferer, 2008.)

Gwin & Gwin (2003) highlighted several steps to successfully position the brand and make the consumer choose your brand: conduct market research, identify your own competitive advantage, understand the reasoning behind your product and accurately communicate your message. Whereas, Kapferer (2008) noted, that when positioning a product there is a two-stage process

1. Identify competition – choosing or identifying your competitors is essential to help a company understand with whom they will be associated or compared with.
2. Identify what is your brand and why your product exists – asking a question “for what and why” will help to identify the reasoning behind brand positioning, while clearly understanding what your brand is about and why it is offering this unique product.

2.2 Fundamentals of Branding

Brand Equity and Identity

In 1991, Aaker introduced a model, to explain that “Brand Equity” can be defined as a set of brand assets/liabilities connected with a brand name that contributes to the value provided by a product or service.

Aaker's model of brand equity has following five components/dimensions:

1. Brand awareness
2. Brand association
3. Perceived quality
4. Brand loyalty
5. Other proprietary assets. (Aaker, 1991.)

It's important to point out that first 4 components described above are related to consumer-based brand equity, whereas the last component is more of a financial business side, which is why it will not be described in the next paragraphs.

Brand awareness – is about how familiar customers are with the brand, its values, and its message to the world. People being familiar with the brand, Beig & Nika (2019) interpreted the meaning as people can recognize it and differentiate it from other businesses on the market. They highlighted the fact that 'brand awareness' is a major part of brand equity especially consumer-based components. Brand recognition brings a crucial value to a business in a form of loyalty and support by the target audience.

Brand Association – is about feelings, emotions and experiences a consumer has in their mind when thinking about a particular brand. Association towards a brand can reflect a customer's attitude and connection to the brand. Emotional associations help the consumer to remember experiences they once encountered with a brand and as consequence, the connection towards a brand becomes naturally stronger. Beig & Nika (2019) discussed how unique brand associations are beneficial to develop this emotional differentiation in customers' mindset, to separate and position all brands on the market concerning quality, availability, or satisfaction levels. They believe strong brand associations are more likely to benefit brand equity as well as to create a long-lasting brand image.

Perceived quality – defines how perceived quality influences consumers' attitudes to the brand. In general, it is not related to the physical quality of the product, argued Beig & Nika (2019), but more to the general production quality business is offering. They consider quality excellence as a huge part of consumer-based equity and plays a crucial role in building brand image in hand with consumers' positive associations.

Brand Loyalty – the consumer's connection to the brand. The definition is closely tied to consumer-based brand equity and a tie point of the definitions described earlier (Beig & Nika, 2019). Businesses often implement loyalty strategies or programs because it is an emotional link between customers and the business itself. Emotional loyalty to the brand reflects consumers' desire to support the brand, continued Beig & Nika (2019), due to its values, vision, and goals whereas behavioral loyalty is about which brand comes up in mind when making a purchasing decision. Researchers concluded that the key to making your brand “a first choice” is to build a strong relationship and enhance the loyalty actions towards your “coming back” customers.

Researchers claim that brand identity is another preference tool that is considered by consumers when choosing one brand or another. However, brand identity can often be mixed with or thought as the same with brand image. Those are not the same, even though brand image is also considered to be a consumer preference tool. (Sääksjärvi & Samiee, 2011.) Brand identity is a set of factors and associations which businesses aim to maintain, which then reflect how organizations aim their brand to be perceived, described Sääksjärvi & Samiee (2011). Considering that, brand image is more about consumers' side, how consumers perceive the brand for themselves based on associations, quality, and such.

To make a picture clear, business is “an original source” which presents brand identity, whereas consumer is “a translator” which translates the source based on his feelings, experiences, and perceptions – brand image (Sääksjärvi & Samiee, 2011).

In addition, Ghodeswar (2008) mentioned such a definition as core identity. He explained that in the core of brand identity stand long-term values such as promise to the customer, product quality and service performance. Those variables standing in the core do not change no matter how far the brand expands, which markets it is planning to take on or which new target groups it wants to

cover. Therefore, authors can assume that to achieve continuous growth it's crucial to know how to develop brand identity efficiently and accurately, to not change the core values and as a consequence not to lose an already acquired loyal customer base.

Researcher highlighted that brand identity revolves around its customers in quite a literal way, brand mirrors their target groups as personalities, analyses them and their living environment to create a valuable brand message. While growing your brand identity the message should be cohesive and consistent to match other dimensions of brand identity. (Ghodeswar, 2008.) Thus, by putting effort into demonstration of a carefully built brand message, business will achieve consistent growth and development.

Destination Branding and Brand Image

Turning now to destination branding, its definition is based on traditional brand dimensions, yet it varies in the view of different products that place brand implies to. Only recently the topic of destination branding has gained intensive discussion among different authors. Although branding of the product and services can be traced back to the 19th century, destination branding concept remains a cause of arguments. (Blain et al., 2005).

Several studies have suggested an interpretation of the topic. Ritchie and Ritchie (1998) defined destination branding as

a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination: furthermore, it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination: it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience (Ritchie and Ritchie, 1998, as cited in Blain et al., 2005, p. 329).

Identification and differentiation as the basics of the branding concept (introduced by Aaker) were approached in Ritchie and Ritchie's definition of destination branding. The second part of the definition incorporates the promise of a unique experience not available at any other destination.

Another destination branding framework was proposed by Hankinson (2004). In the framework, Hankinson remarked that place branding performs four main tasks. First, brands as perceptual entities to consumer behavior theory that addresses to consumer's collection of associations: senses, reason, and emotions. Second, brands as communicators stand for a mark of ownership that differentiates from competitors by legally protected names, logos, and trademarks. Third, brands as value enhancers have led to the development of the concept of brand equity. Fourth, brands as relationships refer to a brand constructed with personality which enables the formation of relationships with customers. Thus, the customer experience of the destination brand is expanded by defining destination brand personality and equity.

Hankinson's model (2004) showed that brand experience is formulated by a core brand and four sections of brand relationships. The core brand represents a destination's personality, positioning, and reality. At the same time, four categories (consumer relationships, primary service relationships, media, and brand infrastructure relationships) allow to enlarge brand experience and tend to grow over time. (Hankinson, 2004).

Another definition of destination branding was proposed by Blain, Levy, and Ritchie (2005). The revised definition was based on the survey done by destination management organizations (DMOs). Using this approach, DMOs executives have been able to revise the definition with the following important themes in understanding destination branding: recognition, consistency, brand messages, and emotional responses. Based on the findings the definition given by Ritchie and Ritchie was extended by Blain. According to it, destination branding includes the creation of graphic identity, expressing the expectation of a travel experience, working to strengthen the emotional attachment between customer and destination, and "reducing consumer search costs and perceived risk" (Blain et al., 2005, p. 337). Altogether, destination brand activities stimulate customers to choose a destination over competitors (Blain et al., 2005). Hence, destination brands also work on formulating consumer behavior via its elements.

Together these studies supply important insights into the understanding of the concept of destination branding and its distinguishing points from the traditional branding framework.

Gardner and Levy (as cited in Caldwell & Freire, 2004) were the first who stressed the fact that brands can be classified by technical capability and personality. The hypothesis was followed by Munson and Spivey, who suggested that brands can be characterized into two dimensions: having functional and representational (or image) aspects. The functional aspect refers to performance or utilitarian aspects, such as price, service quality, nature, culture, and so on. On the other hand, representational aspects are linked to individual self-expression in a way that the choice of a destination identifies the consumer. Such classification is supported by De Chernatony's and McWilliam's Brand Box Model with functionality and representationality as dimensions to measure consumers' perceptions. (Caldwell & Freire, 2004).

Destination branding aims to create a positive destination image. According to Lee et al. (2002), consumer behavior is strongly influenced by destination image (as cited in Blain et al, 2005). Image can be defined as a list of beliefs, ideas, perceptions (Rahayu, 2017), and a holistic impression of a destination (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991, as cited in Blain et al, 2005). Santana and Gosling also highlight an individual's perception of the environment while traveling as an interpretation of the destination image (2018). Various aspects can be emphasized in the understanding of destination image, such as perception toward destination image, destination preferences, experience, evaluation of destination image, and the process of its construction. Yet, numerous studies accentuate a lack of supporting theory for future destination image study development. (Rahayu, 2017).

Destination image describes a consumer's knowledge and attitude toward the destination. Echtner and Ritchie (1993, as cited in Rahayu, 2017) state that tourism products include not only historical, natural, and cultural attractions but also people living in the destination or destination society. The last one is considered a strong factor to strengthen destination image. Consequently, stereotypes about the local society are strongly connected to image formation. Echtner and Ritchie support the importance of destination society by addressing the fact that the friendlier local society is the more positive image tourists build (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993, as cited in Rahayu, 2017). Stereotypes will be discussed more precisely later in the paper.

Acknowledging the direct influence of destination image and social stereotypes on consumer behavior, it is important to understand different image dimensions. According to Santana and

Gosling (2018), two dimensions (cognitive and affective) are widely recognized in the literature. Cognitive image refers to beliefs and knowledge one has about a destination. Chen, Lin, Gao, and Kyle (2015) advocate that cognitive image includes common (such as price or quality), unique and atmospheric images (as cited in Santana & Gosling, 2018). Special attention is brought to the uniqueness of a destination, several authors stress the fact that distinct characteristics influence consumer behavior to choose the destination over competitors. Cognitive image has an impact on the affective image which is a set of feelings about the destination. Also, according to Qu et al (2011) cognitive image has an impact on a destination's uniqueness that can be viewed as another dimension of destination image (as cited in Santana & Gosling, 2018). The overall image is a combination of the two described dimensions.

For a better understanding of the concept of destination image, it is important to consider the image formation process. According to Gunn's proposed model (1972), the process of image formation consists of seven steps which start from the transformation organic destination image to an induced image (as cited in Kim & Chen, 2015). Organic destination image refers to a consumer's limited perception of a destination not influenced by any commercials or other secondary sources. Consequently, when consumer's organic image is influenced by accessing further information it transforms into the induced image of a destination. Further, decision, travel to destination, participation, and return home take place. In stage seven, the consumer's image changes under the impact of the tourist experience.

Country, Region, and City Branding

In destination marketing, the definition of "destination" can vary depending on the subject of the study. Country, region, and city might be termed as destinations. Yet, Caldwell and Freire (2004) stress the dilemma of whether they should be treated similarly. For example, creating a stable image of the country is challenging because it corresponds with constantly changing political events (Caldwell & Freire, 2004) and the latest movie or news (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000). O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2000) also bring up the challenge of nation branding since it is less easy for nations to develop brand persona and personality. In terms of nation image, the authors stress the definition of a dominant image, which is strong enough to displace other images.

According to Caldwell and Freire, people perceive country, region, and city differently (2004). Countries are perceived with representational aspects because of their functional diversity. Region and city are more affected by functional aspects. The authors also stress the fact that people's nationality can have an influence on how they perceive the country.

On the other hand, more recent research (2011) done by Herstein suggests that country, region, and city branding are interdependent processes. Thus, branding strategy depends on the country's characteristics and there are four types of country positioning. First, a heterogeneous-geography-multinationality culture country (characterized by a variety of landscapes and cultural atmospheres) might achieve a more positive destination image by creating a country brand more powerful than a city and region brand. Second, a heterogeneous-geography-uniform-nationality culture country (variety of landscapes and lack of cultural atmospheres) might create a country brand equal to a city brand. Third, a homogeneous-geography-multinationality culture country (lack of landscapes and variety of cultural atmospheres) might aim to create a regional brand stronger than a country brand. Finally, a homogeneous-geography-uniformity-nationality culture country (no advantage in terms of landscapes and cultural atmosphere) might focus on city branding rather than country branding.

Measuring Destination Image

Still to this day the majority of researchers could not agree on one measuring "system" for the destination image, however, there have been a few research papers that can be considered as valid. Earlier in this paper, the authors described destination image as a set of beliefs, perceptions, and a holistic impression of the destination. There are a lot of speculations on how to measure the destination image. Thus, Byon and Zhang (2010) discussed how there are 3 types of destination image: organic, induced image, and complex image. Consequently, a person can hold an organic destination image when he has a natural opinion of the destination and might not even have the intention to visit the destination, whereas with the induced image person can get a certain feeling towards a certain destination through information seeking process, bumping on different articles or promotional campaigns while having the intention to visit. Complex images, however, occur when people have already visited the destination. (Gunn, 1972, as cited in Byon & Zhang 2010). Researchers also proposed an idea that destination image consists of two factors, cognitive which represents opinions and beliefs and affective which represents feelings and emotions. As a

consequence, the authors finalized that the measuring scale should consist of both aspects, cognitive and affective.

Later on, the cognitive and affective theory was widely recognized and acknowledged through destination image components.

Furthermore, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) recognized that destination image had both functional (e.g., scenery, facilities, activities, and accommodations) and psychological characteristics (e.g., friendly people, feeling, and atmosphere). The functional aspect was related to tangibility (i.e., cognitive) and the psychological characteristics included intangible aspects (i.e., affective). (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991 as cited in Byon & Zhang, 2010, p. 513).

Apart from the cognitive and affective measuring model, despite it having a big response, Russel and Ward (1981, as cited in Byon & Zhang, 2010) argued that the destination measurement should not only be based on cognitive aspects since a person can acquire the emotional attachment to country, city or region as well. As a consequence, to this opinion, Russel (1981) proposed a measuring scale based on two bipolar dimensions including:

1 - pleasant-unpleasant and arousing-sleepy dimension

2 - exciting-gloomy and relaxing-distressing dimension

The theory described above was tested by other researchers and confirmed its usability and effectiveness in the tourism context. In addition, researchers emphasized that both cognitive and affective measurement dimensions are useful and will help to better understand tourists' perception of a certain destination.

2.3 Stereotypes

Destination image is an essential part of building a destination brand, marketing activities and highly influences tourist behavior. Yet, an image can negatively affect the perception of destination

culture, authenticity, local culture, and people. Stereotypes as a part of destination image can be a reason for a negative belief of a specific destination. In the next paragraphs, the authors will discuss stereotype definitions, stereotype classifications, and stereotypes in relation to country, brand, and destination image.

Stereotype Definition

Stereotypes are a psychological concept that is widely known in our modern society, which can be defined as people's external perceptions about different subjects (countries, brands, people, etc.). Albu (2013) and Diamantopoulos, et al, (2021) defined a stereotype as a socially shared set of beliefs and generalizations about members of a cognitive social category that describes members of a group with a particular characteristic. Albu (2013) believes that stereotypes are mental structures that help to organize and simplify information customers receive from the environment. They also can be considered behavioral patterns that help us to react and respond to certain issues.

Earlier in the paper, the cognitive and affective perspectives of destination image were discussed. According to Herz and Diamantopoulos (2013) stereotypes can work as both cognitive and affective processes. From the former perspective, stereotypes can work as time-saving devices provoking cognitive processes that simplify communication with a complex environment when "other information cues are inaccessible or too complex to assess... or consumer expertise is low" (Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2013, p.402). Also, stereotypes can provoke affective processes or emotional associations. Country of Origin cue (that will be discussed detailed later) works as a linkage between product and positive or negative associations with specific nations.

Zingora, Vezzali, and Graf (2020) are presenting stereotypes as a lens through which one group interprets information from external groups. Authors suggested that stereotypes are a multifunctional tool, which works before, during, and after the interaction. They believe that stereotypes are time resistant, lead to prejudice, negative attitude, and become a barrier in communication. The idea is, that before the interaction takes place, stereotypes of one group set the expectations, making a kind of "frame" vision of the external group. This "frame" vision can also be described as biased since the interaction did not take place yet, however one group already has some expectations or opinions. Talking about opinions, those can influence people's behavior

in one way or another. This is exactly what happens during the interaction. Since one group already has set some expectations, those can influence one's behavior. Simply put if one already has expectations or stereotypes formed it is already framing one's vision. Therefore, one will behave in the same manner, probably not be so open-minded, and have prejudgments on certain topics. And finally, how stereotypes are working after the interaction. Post interaction one group starts to elaborate on the past encounter and interpret it in the light of previously formed stereotypes. To conclude, stereotypes provoke biased opinions and influence our behavior and attitude.

Many researchers claim that is hard to determine the origins of prejudice or stereotypes based on their universal nature. Herz and Diamantopoulos (2013) accentuate that country stereotypes can be formed under direct (actual experience) and indirect (education, media) influence.

Classification and nature of biased opinions highly rely on researched groups and circumstances. According to Fiske (2017), the science of prejudice started developing in the 20th century. European researchers started applying this concept by considering the cultural aspects and discovering how stereotypical and biased behavior influences society. In addition to that, researchers emphasized the importance of categorizing stereotypical behavior with cultural patterns in mind.

Greenberg and Baron stressed the five perceptual biases that can work together with the stereotyping process (as cited in Lehtonen, 2005) that can lead to a false image of others. These are the fundamental attribution error, the Halo effect, the similar-to-me effect, the first impression effect, and the phenomenon of selective perception. First, the fundamental attribution error refers to the tendency of one to explain the action of another based on his or her traits instead of finding the answer in the situation or environment. Second, the Halo effect refers to the transfer of overall positive or negative attitudes to specific traits of an object or person. Such perceptual bias is broadly applied by branding since in the case of successful branding of a particular company, the consumer tends to have a positive attitude toward new products produced by the same brand. Third, the similar-to-me effect means the tendency of a person to consider others to see things in the same way as s/he does. Lehtonen (2005) considers it the biggest challenge of intercultural communication. Furthermore, the first impression error means that people are likely to judge others based on their first expression. Finally, the phenomenon of selective perception means the tendency of focusing our attention on specific traits and ignoring other.

Stereotype Classification

Virtually all explanations of social stereotyping rest on categorization. However, there are almost endless bases on which humans might be parsed into groups. (Bigler & Liben 2007)

Fiske et al.'s stereotype content model suggests that stereotypical perception consists of two dimensions: warmth and competence (as cited in Diamantopoulos et al, 2021). The model links stereotype content to people's attitudes. Warmth relates to the cognitive assessment of others' positive or negative intentions. Positive (warm) intentions are considered friendly, cooperative, and kind while negative (cold) intentions are considered competitive, conflictual, and unfriendly. Competence applies to an extent others can achieve their positive or negative intentions and people's cognitive assessment of the extent to which others are able to benefit or harm them. Therefore, the model views stereotype content as not a simple evaluating response but acknowledges cognitive appraisal in two dimensions.

Warmth	Competence	
	Low	High
High	Paternalistic prejudice Low status, not competitive Pity, sympathy (e.g., elderly people, disabled people, housewives)	Admiration High status, not competitive Pride, admiration (e.g., in-group, close allies)
Low	Contemptuous prejudice Low status, competitive Contempt, disgust, anger, resentment (e.g., welfare recipients, poor people)	Envious prejudice High status, competitive Envy, jealousy (e.g., Asians, Jews, rich people, feminists)

Figure 1. A Stereotype Content Model (Fiske, Cuddy, 2002).

Stereotypes also can be classified into at least two types based on the target group to which one's perceptions are built. Auto-stereotypes are conceptions about one's own group (and/or culture, nationality), while hetero-stereotypes refer to conceptions of the group to which one does not belong. In 2007 Bolten highlighted the importance of meta-images or suspected hetero stereotypes (conception of what others think about one's own group), as cited in Hass et al (2017).

Accordingly, Lehtonen (2005) classifies stereotypes into four groups: simple auto- and hetero-stereotypes and projected auto- and hetero- stereotypes.

Empirical evidence (Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2013) suggests that countries can be associated with functional and emotional stereotypes. For example, France with its association with hedonism reflects emotional stereotypes, while Germany and its association with utilitarianism reflect functional stereotypes.

Country of Origin Effect

Several studies discuss a country of origin effect (COO) in relation to national stereotypes (Chattalas, 2008, Diamantopoulos, et al, 2021). As it was mentioned before, the country-of-origin effect is an affective process initiated by stereotypical perception. The COO effect is the process of stereotypical connection of the product to positive or negative perceptions of certain countries. For example, Mercedes's brand achievement can be addressed to the national stereotypes about German competence. Albu stresses the approach of two perspectives to analyze the COO effect in the tourism industry (2013). According to it, the COO effect can be analyzed from the country of origin customer's view and COO tourist product view. As an example, Germans are considered tourists who expect high-quality service – the hosting country must adapt tourist products according to their preferences. Thus, the COO can influence both customer and tourist products in the view from a hetero-stereotypical perspective.

According to Festinger's dissonance theory (1957, as cited in Herz, Diamantopoulos, 2013), consumers like to have cognitive elements consonant with each other, which refers to elements being logically followed by each other. On the contrary, cognitive elements are dissonant when they do not follow each other, causing cognitive dissonance or discomfort that consumers strive to reduce. Involving the theory, ads containing COO cues also can cause consonance or dissonance in consumers' perceptions. Herz and Diamantopoulos, thus, experimentally proved that consonance between country stereotypes (functional and emotional) and ads containing COO cues (functional and emotional) positively influence cognitive and affective brand evaluations (2013). The described consonance – match – leads to higher purchase intention and higher positive word-of-mouth. Yet, brand behavior does not always change under exposure to only country stereotypes.

Country and Brand Stereotypes

Country of origin effect has a basis in stereotypical conceptions about country and brand. Research has shown that country stereotypes intuitively transform into conceptions about products and brands with origins from these countries and help to forecast behavioral reactions (Herz, Diamantopoulos, 2013). In turn, COO cues activate country stereotypes (a set of beliefs and conceptions about people living in a country) and therefore impact brand assessment.

Diamantopoulos et al. state that several researchers apply the SCM model to capture country and brand stereotypes, which are driven by discussing two dimensions: warmth and competence (2021). Particularly, country warmth corresponds with inhabitants' intentions and competence reflects perceptions of efficiency. Bourdin, Halkias and Makri (2021) discussed how warmth as a dimension does not compare to competence for purchase decisions on a relevance scale. The explanation for such an opinion is based on a belief that competence for purchasing decisions is easily determined by people's opinions on product manufacturing, company performance, and ability to solve customers' needs. However, recent studies have also shown the credibility of warmth as a dimension that can influence purchase decision-making and even become a key variable under certain circumstances, for example, spontaneous purchases, where people are experiencing warm feelings towards a company. While brand warmth refers to socially responsible actions, competence reflects the perception of a brand's potential to create solutions for consumers' needs. Saying that Bourdin, Halkias, and Makri (2021) theorized that it is more likely to see a shift toward competency-based purchasing decisions in the future.

Country stereotypes and brand stereotypes can be explored in relation to country and brand image. Yet, Diamantopoulos et al. (2021) highlight a difference between the constructs. Compared to country stereotypes, the country image contains a wider array of approaches and measuring tools. Similarly, country affinity (sympathy, attachment to a specific country) is another related construct, yet it differentiates from country stereotypes as affinity is based on emotions while stereotypes capture shared beliefs about the country. Finally, brand image distinguishes from brand stereotypes in the view that image implies brand associations while stereotypes imply cognitions.

Stereotypes and Destination Image

By extensive review of the literature, Karri and Dogra (2022) proposed a construct of a “comprehensive framework for DI formation” (figure 2). The construct illustrates the starting point of destination stereotypes formation as well as interrelations with destination image and its components.

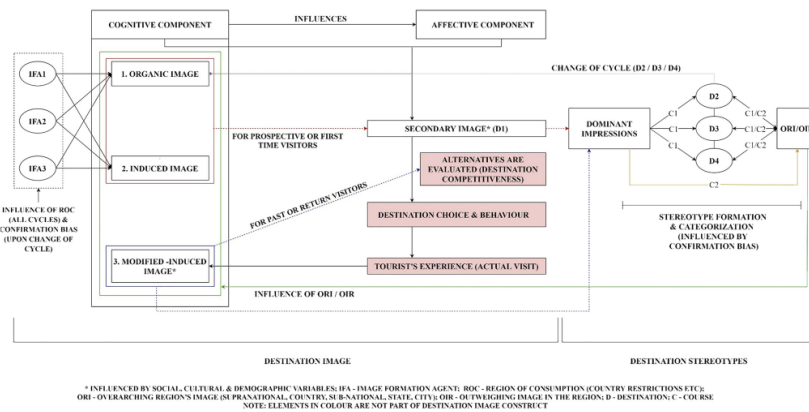


Figure 2. Comprehensive Framework for DI Formation (Karri, Dogra, 2022).

The proposed framework stresses the probability of occurring stereotypes about a destination with the presence of other destinations' cognizance. Destination stereotypes refer to the stereotypes held by an individual or group about a destination with reference to dominant impressions of another destination. As an example, a group can have destination stereotypes about destination A based on their perception of destinations B, C, and D on the bases of similarities of destinations or ORI (outweighing image in the region, referred to as perception about nearby destination).

Also, the framework proposes the fact that destination stereotypes are the extension of destination image construct, where the dominant expressions are the result of both secondary (organic and induced images) and primary (modified-induced, or also complex) images.

3 Research Method

The method for this research is quantitative. The research question about the influence of stereotypical marketing on destination image is aimed to find a causal relationship between variables, a relationship-based question (Hoover 2021).

RQ1: Do stereotypical campaigns affect people's destination image?

Thus, a quantitative research method was chosen for the following research question. In addition, the quantitative research method was favored by authors due to the importance of getting as many answers as possible to find out if certain marketing campaigns could influence people's country perceptions, as well as determine a behavioral pattern.

Since the quantitative method for RQ1 was chosen, Likert scale was the most valid and relevant to measure several survey components. The reasoning behind it is that the Likert scaling system favors diversity, it allows to turn yes/no answers into answers with a broader attitude. Moreover, the Likert scale will help to avoid "extreme" answers to questions, it will give interviewees a broader option rather than jumping to radical "agree" or "disagree". (Johns 2010.)

The authors will evaluate respondents based on the frameworks reviewed in our theoretical background. The models which will be discussed are the Stereotype Content Model (see chapter Stereotype Classification, p.18-19) and Russel's affective grid (see chapter Measuring Destination Image, p.15-16). To assist those models, create more context, visuality and reach more valuable results, the authors brought in the destination example - Australia and its' marketing campaigns (Figures 3 and 4). Australia was a choice based on previous research. According to our research, Australia was the least visited destination by our chosen target group, therefore it was a natural choice since while studying stereotypical behavior patterns it was discovered to be more definite if people have had little to non-previous contact with the destination.



Figure 3. Tourism Australia Launches New 'Philausophy' Campaign (Browning 2019).

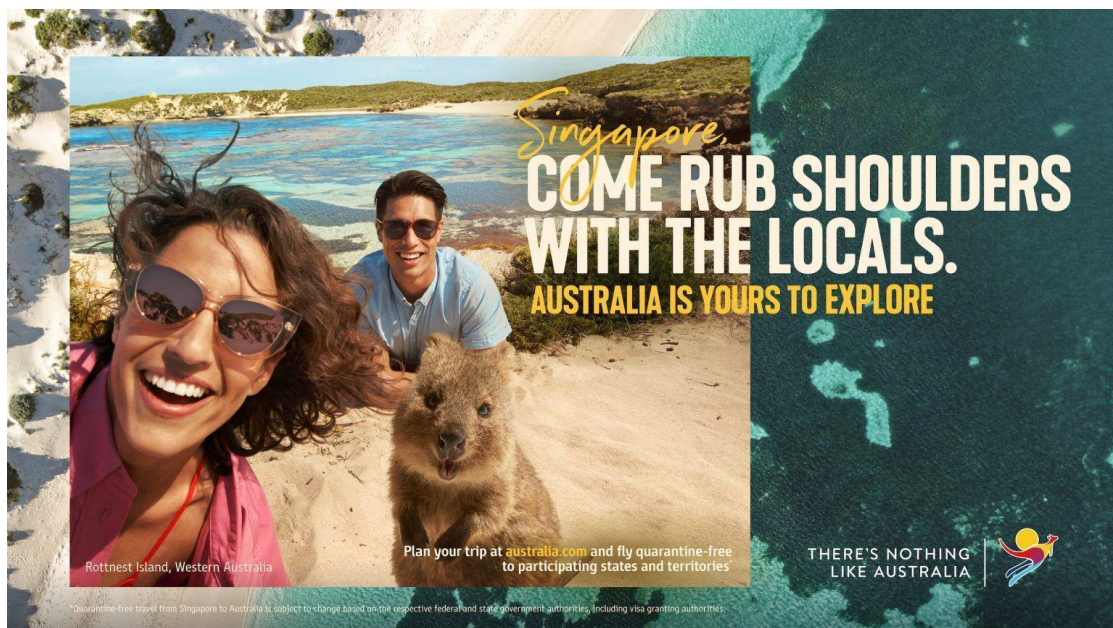


Figure 4. Tourism Australia Release New Campaign And It's Chock-Full Of Aussie Celebs (Anderson 2019).

However, the authors also plan to include an open-ended question to gather data about participants' associations with a destination brand, to get further insight into their thoughts, which is considered qualitative data. However, the qualitative data will be transformed into numerical

results - quantified. The basis of using an open-ended question is to gather the most variable answers and unpredictable variations of the questionnaire results.

RQ2: Do stereotypical campaigns affect people's association with the country brand?

3.1 Analysis Methods

As was mentioned in the methodology description, the authors are using a quantitative research method. However, the survey was designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Consequently, the authors will use different analysis methods according to the different data collected. Quantitative questions (RQ1) based on the Likert scale, will be analyzed through descriptive statistics methods including

- *mode* (the most common number)
- *frequency* (the number of times a value is found)

(Mishra et al 2019)

Qualitative data of the research (RQ2), open-ended question, will be analyzed via *content analysis* method. This method is used to evaluate patterns, for example, it could be used to determine the frequency of an occurring variable among overall received answers. (Warren 2020.) With this method authors will need to identify "chosen" variables in advance, in order to find possible similarities among other variables. Variables analyzed through the content analysis method will be then shown in statistical tables as quantified data.

3.2 Data Collection

The Purpose of the questionnaire, for this research paper, is to explore the destination image of people living in Finland before and after our stereotyped marketing campaign. This will determine if stereotypical campaigns had any influence on the existing destination image and if they did, was it positive or negative. In addition, the authors will study respondents' associations concerning Australia as a destination, in order to develop a possible connection between stereotypical campaigns shown and associations received after stereotypical message exposure.

To conduct our data collection, the survey method of questioning will be used, therefore the chosen tool is Google Forms. This tool was favored by the authors due to its simplicity and

familiarity to both authors and respondents, moreover, it also has all the required analytics features. General demographic questions were placed at the end of the survey since in this particular research they are not used for the actual research question part. Those questions would not act as profiling questions, authors are not planning to profile results by general demographic questions in the result part, therefore they are placed at the end of the questionnaire. When analyzing the survey results, authors will analyze demographic on a general level. The questionnaire was opened on 26.10.2022, answers were received during an 11-day period. Then the survey was closed on 05.11.2022. There were 40 answers received. 17,5% (or 7 out of 40) of respondents replied that they are not living in Finland and 2,5% (or 1 out of 40) of respondents replied that they have lived in Australia, therefore, they were sent to the end of the questionnaire due to them being outside of our target group. As a consequence, the results were analyzed based on 32 replies relevant to the chosen target group.

3.3 Respondents

In the view of a broad research phenomenon, the target group living in geographical proximity, and a subject country of stereotypical perception needed to be chosen. As a target group, people (mostly, students) living in an economically developed country, Finland, have been chosen. The target group of the research method does not imply a selection based on gender and age. Moreover, the target group for the thesis research was chosen in view of the authors' possibility to reach the highest possible number of answers, which will positively affect the reliability of the quantitative method of the research. Furthermore, since the example of a real marketing campaign, which will be applied to the survey, is an Australian marketing campaign launched in 2016, it is important to review the target group with little knowledge about a subject country possessed which is considered a factor of stereotypical formation by Herz and Diamantopoulos (2013). Finally, the statistics from Statista were checked, and Australian inbound tourism revealed one of the lowest numbers of Scandinavian tourists (see Figure 5). At the same time, statistics for Finnish outbound tourism did not include Australia as a popular travel destination (see Figure 6).

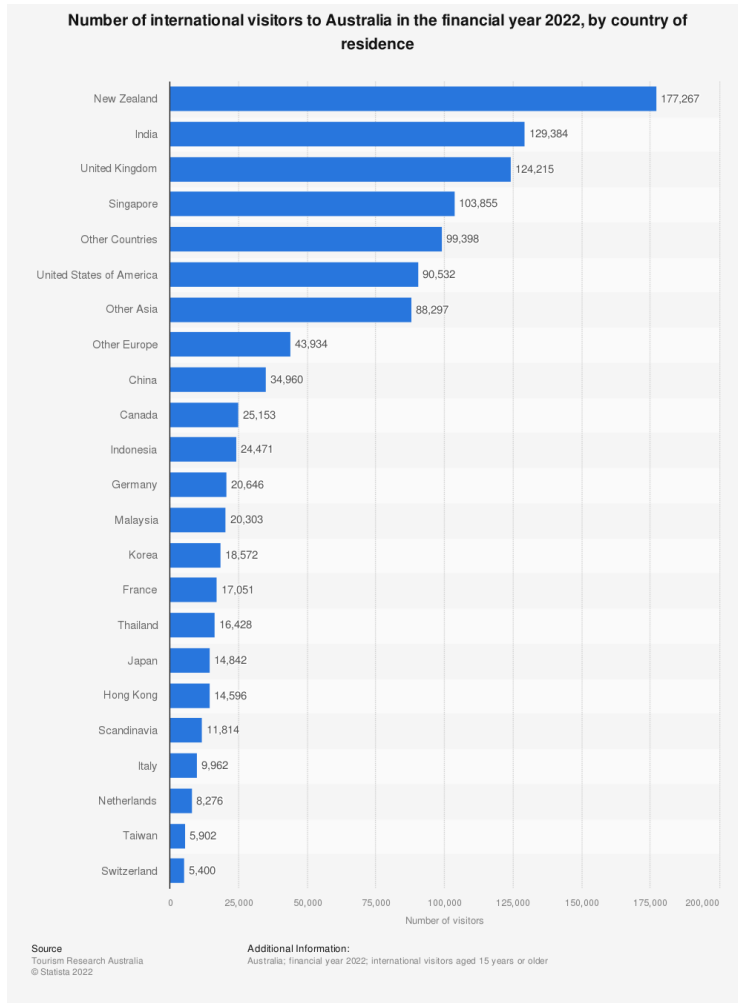


Figure 5. Number of International Visitors to Australia in the Financial Year 2022, by Country of Residence. (Tourism Research Australia, 2022).

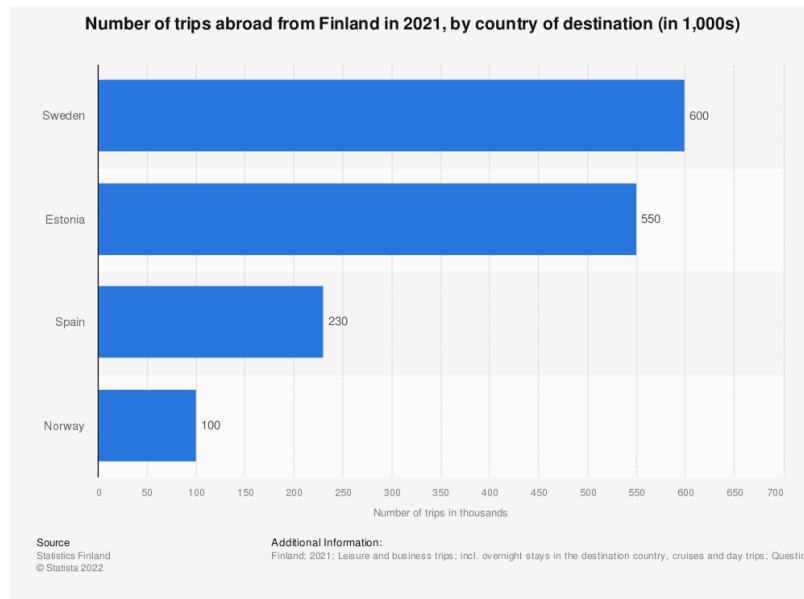


Figure 6. Number of Trips Abroad from Finland in 2021, by Country of Destination (in 1,000s). (Statistics Finland, 2022).

For the research part of the thesis, the number of 40 respondents was reached via shared communication channels, where the authors had access to share a link without the need of collecting email addresses to respect the respondents' privacy and voluntary aspect of the research. However, as was mentioned previously due to filter questions in the beginning, only 32 answers from respondents have been analyzed (n=32). Demographical questions (age, gender) were answered by 32 respondents. Among 32 respondents, the majority were in the age of 18-25 - 21 people/65,6%, age group of 26-34 reached the point of 9 people/28,1% of the overall amount, followed by 2 people/6,3% of respondents in the age of 35+. Moreover, 20 people/62,5% of respondents were females, while 12 respondents/37,5% were males (see Appendix B).

3.4 Reliability

At the beginning of the study process, little research could be found on the subjects of the thesis. Therefore, the authors explored relevant studies on the topics of branding, destination branding, destination image, and stereotypes. Research data for the theoretical background is accessed through JAMK Library's e-books and databases, such as SAGE Journals Premier, ProQuest Central, and Emerald eJournals Premier. Also, authors used electronic resources that are available on the internet without licensing and copyright restrictions. Since only a few studies explored the subject

directly related to the thesis project topic, many studies were applied by authors to find the answer to the research question.

The data used for the theoretical background of the thesis is based on existing research knowledge on the topic and different points of view on the subject and methodologies applied. To ensure the usability of the data the thesis is following JAMK's Project Reporting Instructions in accordance with the APA publication manual, seventh edition. Description of how the research implementation was conducted as described in the implementation chapter of the thesis. The description includes the original purpose of the research, the population covered by data (respondents), observation and data units, data collection information, and the instrument of data collection.

The information gathered during the implementation stage is accessed through a voluntary survey, and participants of the survey are notified about the purposes of the survey and further implementation of the results. All the information gathered during the implementation stage is not considered personal data.

To ensure a reliable data production process, data collection and questionnaire testing was conducted. The testing process was included to control question formulation, overall structure, and satisfying survey user experience. The testing process included two phases: testing the questionnaire among the authors and the questionnaire involving the interviewer. After the tests were conducted, the questionnaire was improved and developed by formulating more accurate survey questions.

The researchers reported the structure of the survey in the chapter Appendices.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The research follows the ethical principles of JAMK University of Applied Sciences, good scientific practice, valid legislation, as well as data security guidelines. The researchers act according to the values of the JAMK University of Applied Sciences. The authors follow the responsible conduct of research practices, which are intended to be honest, careful, open, and respectful of the works of other researchers. Ethical principles in human sciences were adhered to in conducting the research. (Ethical Principles for JAMK University of Applied Sciences, 2018).

The research follows the principles linked with handling personal data and data protection. The paper does not possess the personal data, listed by the European Commission (n.d.) and Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman (n.d.). The collected data contain information about age, gender, and nationality. The basis for collecting the data is linked to the necessity of identification of possible correlations with the objectives of the research. Confidentiality and informed consent have been adhered to in conducting the survey. The information is collected anonymously and optionally under the consideration of respondents. The participants were able to deny their participation and/or cancel their participation at any point in the research without any consequences. The respondents have been notified about the purposes of the research. Every individual who took part in this project was treated fairly and equally without distinction based on age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, political or other opinions, health, disability, sexual orientation, or any other form of mistreating personal characteristics or status. Every participant was able to discuss with the researcher the content before, during, or after the survey was conducted. (Ethical Principles for JAMK University of Applied Sciences, 2018)

The research does not require a preliminary ethic review and/or research permit. The researchers are familiar with the storage, ownership, and usage rights of the materials for the thesis. In view of the absence of other parties, the agreement on the rights was not created and signed.

The data is stored and accessed by the authors of the thesis through the Teams channel platform registered for students' accounts and JAMK's library (Janet Finna) students' accounts and backed up by the platforms. The data of the implementation phase is stored in Google Drive personal accounts of the authors and backed up by Google drive. Access to the data is available only through authors' student accounts (Teams and Janet Finna) and personal Google accounts. Access is not provided to the other parties.

4 Results

The following chapter will present results from the practical part of the research. The following data was collected by using Google forms and results will be illustrated in figures created in Excel/Google Forms. All the questions were formed based on the studied literature and will be analyzed separately and divided by concept/framework basis.

The questionnaire had gathered the number of 40 responses total, however, as was mentioned previously due to existing filter questions in the beginning, only 32 answers from respondents have been analyzed (n=32).

The survey had two filter questions, the first of which was meant to identify if a person is living in Finland. 17,5 % or 7 people out of the initial total (40) answered that they are not living in Finland, therefore were forwarded to the end of the questionnaire straight away. This question was crucial and had to be answered in the beginning due to the previous research. Since the destination example in the questionnaire is Australia, it was mentioned in the previous chapters that people living in Finland were in the minority concerning Australia's Incoming travelers, therefore had little to no contact with the destination. The second of the filter questions was aimed to determine if people have visited Australia. This helped authors to get more relevance to the research, due to the reason that people who already had direct contact with the destination are less likely to have stereotypical tendencies, therefore if people answered "I have lived in Australia" they were forwarded to the end of the survey. The results have shown that 2,5% or 1 person out of the initial total 40 have lived in Australia, the rest 38 people, or 95% have never visited Australia, and only 1, or 2,5% have stayed in Australia for less than a week. Therefore, the authors filtered out people who are not in the same target group, and that way they have determined who are most suitable candidates for the stereotype-based research, receiving 32 relevant candidates to proceed with the questionnaire.

Russel Affective Grid

I See Australia as Unpleasant/Pleasant

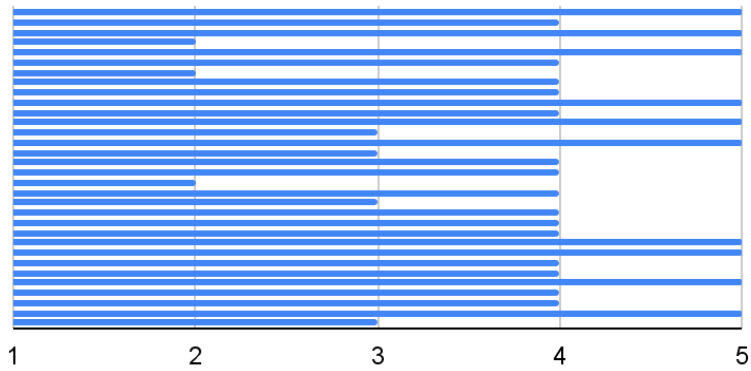


Figure 7. How Respondents see Australia as a Destination via Russell Affective Grid in the Dimension of Unpleasant/Pleasant

I See Australia as a Sleepy/Arousing Destination

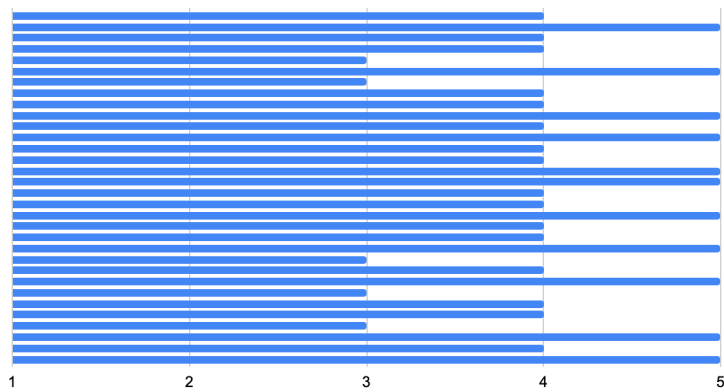


Figure 8. How Respondents See Australia as a Destination via Russell Affective Grid in the Dimension of Sleepy/Arousing.

After Seeing Marketing Campaigns Above, I See Australia as Unpleasant/Pleasant Destination

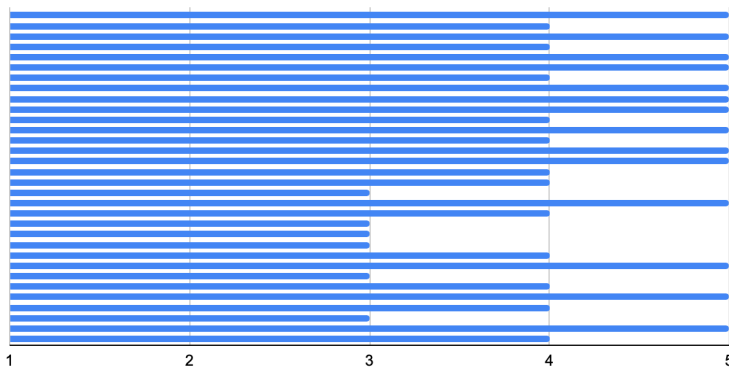


Figure 9, How Respondents See Australia as a Destination via Russell Affective Grid in the Dimension of Unpleasant/Pleasant after Marketing Campaigns.

After Seeing Marketing Campaigns Above, I See Australia as Sleepy/Arousing Destination

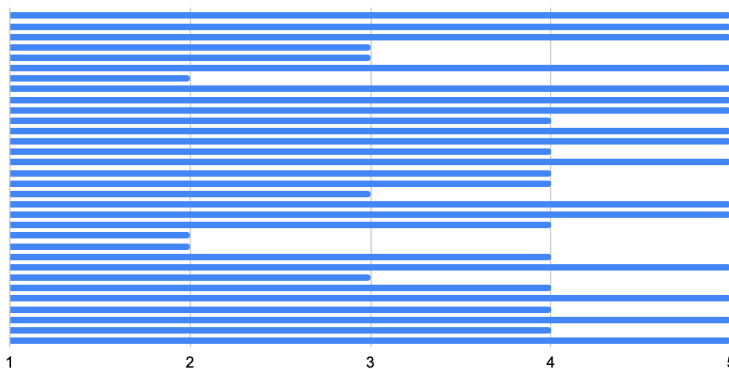


Figure 10. How Respondents See Australia as a Destination via Russell Affective Grid in the Dimension of Sleepy/Arousing after Marketing Campaigns.

To evaluate the influence of marketing campaigns on the target group image of Australia as a tourist destination, Russel's Affective framework was applied (see chapter Measuring Destination Image, p.15-16). The respondents were offered to evaluate the destination based on a two-dimension scale of unpleasant/pleasant and sleepy/arousing before and after seeing stereotypical marketing campaigns. The answers' value was based on the previously described Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) with a neutral option 3. The results of

image evaluation both before and after seeing marketing campaigns were evaluated based on the frequency of the answers.

For the dimension of the unpleasant/pleasant scale, the mode answer was 4 (agree) being chosen 16 times with a frequency of 50%, followed by 5 (strongly agree) with a frequency of 34% and 3 (neutral) with a frequency of 16%. Also, for the dimension of the sleepy/arousing scale, the mode answer was 4 (agree) being chosen 15 times with a frequency of 47%, followed by 5 (strongly agree) with a frequency of 31% and 3 (neutral) with a frequency of 13%. (Figure 11).

Row Labels	Count of Unpleasant/Pleasant	frequency%
3	5	16 %
4	16	50 %
5	11	34 %
(blank)		
Grand Total	32	

Row Labels	Count of Sleepy/Arousing	frequency%
2	3	9 %
3	4	13 %
4	15	47 %
5	10	31 %
(blank)		
Grand Total	32	

Figure 11. Mode and Frequency of Respondents' Perceptions of Australia Based on Russell Affective Grid Before Seeing Marketing Campaigns.

After the respondents were presented with the marketing campaigns, they were asked to evaluate both dimension scales (unpleasant/pleasant, sleepy/arousing) one more time. According to the results evaluated, the mode answer for the unpleasant/pleasant scale was 5 (strongly agree) changed from 4 (agree) compared to the results before. However, the frequency of neutral option (3) at the same dimension has also slightly increased compared to the results before. At the same time, the mode answer for the sleepy/arousing scale was 5 (strongly agree) changed from 4 (agree) compared to the outcomes before. (Figure 12).

Row Labels	Count of After marketing Unpleasant/Pleasant	frequency%
3	6	19 %
4	12	38 %
5	14	44 %
(blank)		
Grand Total	32	

Row Labels	Count of After marketing Sleepy/Arousing	frequency%
2	3	9 %
3	4	13 %
4	9	28 %
5	16	50 %
(blank)		
Grand Total	32	

Figure 12. Mode and Frequency of Respondents’ Perceptions of Australia Based on Russell Affective Grid After Seeing Marketing Campaigns.

The difference between the results was calculated based on frequency and difference in a mode number. As it was mentioned before, the mode number for both dimension scales changed from 4 (agree) to 5 (strongly agree). Consequently, the difference in frequency of answer 5 (strongly agree) was calculated (Figure 13). The results showed that on both dimensions the frequency increased, being 9% more frequent for the dimension unpleasant/pleasant and 19% more frequent for the dimension sleepy/arousing.

	comparison	
Pleasant/Unpleasant (5)	9 %	increased after marketing
Sleepy/Arousing (5)	19 %	increased after marketing

Figure 13. Difference of Mode and Frequency of Respondents’ Perceptions of Australia Based on Russell Affective Grid.

Stereotype Content Model

The stereotypical messages of the Australian marketing campaigns were assessed through the dimensions of warmth and competence from SCM - Stereotype Content Model (adapted from

Diamantopoulos et al, 2017) in order to define what image of the destination the marketing translates to the customers (Figure 14). The warmth dimension was evaluated through the following four perceptions: friendly, kind, warm, and good-natured. The competence dimension was evaluated through the following perceptions: capable, competent, efficient, and intelligent (see chapter Stereotype Classification, p.18-19). All the perceptions were analysed in the results by the frequency of the answers.

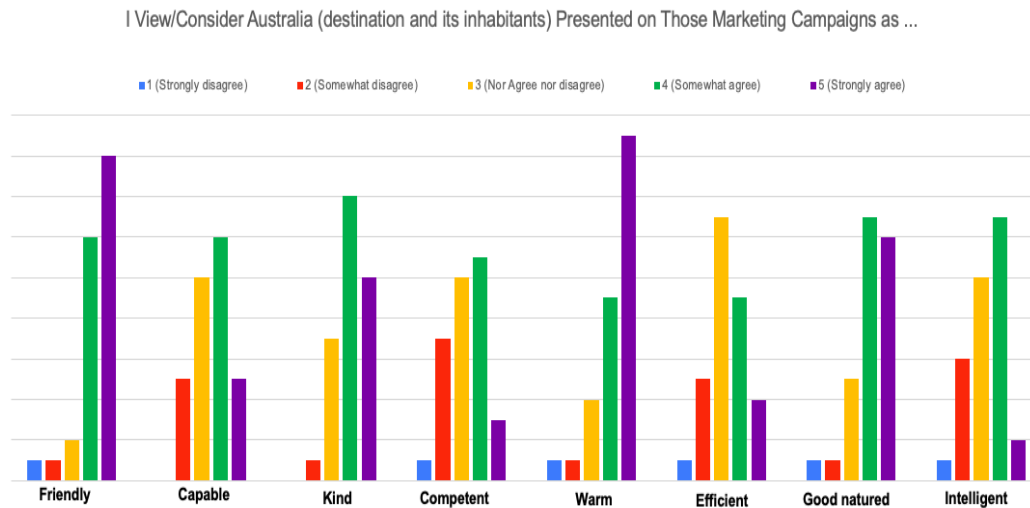


Figure 14. Evaluation of Australia based on SCM - Stereotype Content Model.

Warmth

Perception/Dimension	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Friendly	6%	6%	88%
Kind	3%	22%	75%
Warm	6%	13%	81%
Good-natured	6%	16%	78%

Table 1. Frequency of warmth variables translated in marketing campaigns

Results presented above are categorized by positive, neutral, and negative variables. Those variables were recognized after analyzing the character's nature of Likert's' scale answers. These

answers were evaluated and analysed by frequency. Looking at the results above, there can be seen a continuous pattern, which shows that most people have answered “somewhat/strongly agree”, and not less than 75% of positive answers were detected in every dimension. Neutral (nor agree nor disagree) and negative (somewhat/strongly disagree) variables had a less occurring trend. Negative variables were detected not more than 6% in every dimension, whereas neutral variables can be agreed to be the most inconsistent variable of all. The mean number was calculated to better visualize the pattern of answers, where negative perceptions gained 5%, neutral - 14%, and positive 80%. As a result, it showed that the majority of the respondents have a positive perception, regarding the warmth dimension, of the stereotypical marketing campaigns seen before answering SCM model questions.

Competence

Perception/Dimension	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Capable	16%	31%	53%
Competent	25%	31%	44%
Efficient	19%	41%	41%
Intelligent	22%	31%	47%

Table 2. Frequency of competence variables translated in marketing campaigns.

To evaluate the competence dimension, the answers were evaluated by frequency of negative, neutral, and positive answers. Analysis of the frequency results shows that the image of Australia translated on the marketing campaigns is perceived more in a positive way by the perceptions of capable (53%), competent (44%), and intelligent (47%). Perception of Australia as an efficient destination gained equally neutral (41%) and positive (41%) answers.

Overall competence was evaluated by the mean number of frequency results of negative, neutral, and positive perceptions. As a result, the mean number of negative perceptions gained 20%, neutral - 34%, and positive - 46%. That shows that respondents perceive Australia as a destination translated in the marketing campaigns more as a competent destination.

Associations

As for the qualitative part of the research, an open-ended question, about peoples' association with Australia as a destination, was included in the survey. Authors of this research have theorized that respondents' associations will appear similar to the stereotyped marketing campaign is translating. The participants of the survey were asked to list as many associations as they have dividing each by a comma. The authors then created a list of words, which during the analysis of data was used along with the text mining method by searching for as many similarities as possible between the authors' word list and respondents' associations.

Text mining word list: Kangaroo, Beach, Sea, Koala, Ocean, Sun (The following words were chosen due to them being translated in Australian marketing campaigns)

	TOTAL answers	32
	Answer	Percentage
	Kangaroo	50 %
	Beaches	31 %
	Sea	22 %
	Koala	16 %
	Ocean	9 %
	Sun	6 %

Figure 15. Frequency of Text Mining Words Used in Respondents' Answers.

The figure above (Figure 15) shows how often text-mining words were detected in a total of 32 answers. Looking at the results it is evident that the words Kangaroo (50%) and Beach (31%) were the most frequent among other variables of our respondents. The figure below (Figure 16), demonstrates all the "associations" received and analysed by the frequency of each association appearing more than 1 time in one answer. The most popular associations appeared to be *kangaroo, spiders, beaches, animals, surf, Sydney, and weather* which were appearing with not less than 25% of frequency. After analyzing the results, the authors can approve the earlier said theory that the reason behind "Beaches" and "Kangaroo" being the most frequently appearing

associations can be the reason that those “variables” are clearly translated on earlier shown marketing campaigns (Figure 3 and Figure 4)

Answers	Count of Answers
kangaroo	16
spiders	11
beaches	10
animals	8
surf	8
Sydney	8
weather	8
sea	7
desert	6
snakes	6
koala	5
reef	4
nature	3
ocean	3
Opera house	3
people	3
sharks	3
sun	2
aboriginals	2
Melbourne	2
New Zealand	2
parks	2
warm	2
wildlife	2
wine	2
atmosphere	1
bars	1
beautiful colours	1

Figure 16. Overall Associations List Received.

5 Discussions and Limitations

This chapter will analyze the phenomena of the research supported by a literature review and a summary of the results table (Table 3). The research questions will be stated and discussed as well as the research problems covered. The chapter will also discuss the limitations of the research.

Summary

Subject	Results
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Change of Destination Image before and after seeing destination marketing campaigns (based on Russell Affective grid)	By calculating and comparing 32 answers received the destination image was analyzed based on two dimensions: unpleasant/pleasant and sleepy/arousing. As a result, the marketing campaigns have influenced the image of the destination towards a more pleasant and arousing image. Therefore, the marketing campaigns have resulted in creating a more exciting image of a destination.
SCM - Stereotype Content Model	32 answers were received and analyzed based on two dimensions: warmth and competence. The majority of respondents showed positive perception for both dimensions, even if the warmth dimension (80%) was higher than competence (46%).
Associations	Among 32 answers received, 16 answers or 50% had mentioned "Kangaroo" as one of Australia's associations. All 6 text mining words were found and filtered. The most frequently appearing associations were "Kangaroo" and "Beaches".

Table 3. Summary of the Results.

Destination branding is a long-term and challenging process in view of the complex nature of the product branded. In order to communicate a complex product to customers and potential target groups, the existing image and ways of its influence should be carefully approached to pursue the most effective results.

As was stated in the stereotype part of the literature review, stereotypes can be viewed as a mental schema (Diamantopoulos et al., 2021) that influences brand evaluations and consumer behavior. Consequently, it is beneficial for the destination to translate the image of the country as a friendly, cooperative (warmth), and efficient (competence) destination. By evaluating the mean of the SCM model's frequent answers it can be concluded that overall customers perceive Australia (translated in the marketing campaigns as a destination) in a positive way by both perception dimensions: warmth and competence. However, the mean number of warmth perceptions (80%) is

higher than the mean number of competence perceptions (46%). Therefore, the image of the destination translated in the marketing is beneficial to provoke the emotions of sympathy (high warmth/low competence) and admiration (high warmth/high competence). (Table 3).

Considering the discussed earlier dissonance theory, it is crucial for destination management organizations to understand what stereotypes or perceptual biases the customers possess about the destination. In order to achieve positive brand evaluations, higher purchase intention, and higher positive word of mouth, it is beneficial to translate marketing messages about the destination that are consonant with consumers' cognitive perceptions.

Double evaluation of destination image by Russel's affective grid proved that presented marketing campaigns with a typical image of Australia leverage the overall customers' image of the country as a tourist destination. By reaching a higher positive perception of a destination as a pleasant and arousing destination, the marketing campaigns present the country as an exciting destination.

After analyzing the results of *Associations*, authors can approve the earlier said "theory" that the idea behind "Beaches" and "Kangaroo" being the most frequently appearing associations can be the reason that those "variables" are clearly translated on earlier shown marketing campaigns (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

As it was previously discussed in the Brand Fundamentals chapter of the literature review, associations are the feelings and emotions which create a stronger connection to the brand in a customer's mind. Therefore, customers by experiencing higher and more vivid associations become more attached to the brand. This brings a higher recognition level to the brand itself. Examining the results of the research it can be assumed that people seeing or hearing the words "Kangaroo" and "Beaches" in one context will most likely have a clear picture of Australia in mind, meaning those words have filtered and created differentiation in their mind concerning a certain brand - Australia (Beig & Nika, 2019). Mentioning that, destination brands often tend to rely on common attributes (such as crystal-clear sea, and white endless beaches...) when marketing and fail to present their true asset to travelers, which is not really a differentiating point in the competitive tourism market anymore. Even though the research has shown that *beach* is one of the strongest associations with Australia among the respondents, it has also shown *kangaroo*, which can shift from just an association to an intense competition and differentiating point when marketed correctly without falling into stereotypical context.

Speaking about brand, associations have proven to be one of the key variables for Brand Identity. Brand identity being one of the main tools for destination brands to translate and showcase how they want their brand to be seen or perceived (Sääksjärvi & Samiee, 2011). Thus, associations being one of the essentials in the process. While producing tourism marketing campaigns, destinations have already thought about what associations or feelings a particular campaign will translate and if it will establish unique differentiating points and associations for the brand in customers' minds. Judging by the survey results, Australia's tourism campaign has managed to translate at least one unique selling point "Kangaroo" to the customers and make it a strong continuously appearing association.

Finally, by addressing the literature review and analyzing the results, the research question stated at the beginning of the paper can be approached and discussed. To understand the phenomena of the topic the following questions were formulated:

RQ1: Do stereotypical campaigns affect people's destination image?

RQ2: Do stereotypical campaigns affect people's association with the country brand?

The aim of any marketing campaign is to affect the target customers' perception about the product. Yet, the nature of the destination image is complex, dependent on many variables, and causes arguments. Therefore, it is relevant to question the presence of any influence of marketing and promotion-oriented actions. The results of the questionnaire showed a significant positive influence of marketing with typical image and stereotypical cues on the destination image. The influence has been measured by a comprehensive framework and was translated to numerical data. However, it is crucial to state that the numerical data is only one of the possible evaluations of the destination image and should be addressed and evaluated further.

Stereotypical marketing campaigns, chosen by the authors of the research, indeed had an influence on the respondent's associations with the destination brand. The following trend was tested and proved by forming a list of attributes translated in the marketing campaigns and later filtered and all found in respondents' answers. However, this influence can only be confirmed

partially due to the respondents' having listed their own associations outside of the "word list" and no answers were found with all 6 "word list" associations listed.

Limitations

At the beginning of the research a limited number of scientific articles, directly and indirectly related to the subject of the study, were available. The phenomena of the study gained interest at the beginning of the 21st century and is still being discussed among different authors. However, no research was found that directly explored the interrelations of the constructs of the study. Therefore, information from different resources and articles was applied to create a solid theoretical base.

The limited amount of research papers can be explained by the complexity of the constructs related to the concepts of the study such as destination branding, destination image, and destination stereotypes. Yet, several authors discussed the phenomena of the stereotype-based study in relation to Country of Origin (COO) and consumer behavior.

In consideration of destination image and destination stereotypes, the complexity of these concepts being studied and intertwined together should be explored by reaching a higher number of respondents. Due to the limited time frame and limited resources, the authors failed to reach a wider research sample. Nevertheless, the answers received were enough to answer this study's research questions. Consequently, bigger research will result in higher reliability of the research. Moreover, studying destination stereotypes requires the target group and destination to be carefully identified and narrowed down in order for hetero stereotypes to be applied and bring valuable results.

6 Conclusions and Future Suggestions

In the following chapter the authors will communicate conclusions gathered by the end of the research. In addition, future suggestions would be stated for the current research, which could benefit further greater research on the topic. Finally, will give potential future suggestions for the DMOs concerning the use of stereotypes in tourism marketing campaigns.

Conclusion

Tourism market has been known as a constantly evolving variable. The competition has been growing; therefore, tourism enterprises and destination brands repeatedly need to come up with the most engaging and valuable assets to showcase the uniqueness of the destination. One of the research objectives was to discover if national stereotypical messages can be used in tourism marketing and if they will have any possible benefits to the DMOs. Based on the research done it can be confirmed that stereotypical clues/messages can be beneficial for tourism enterprises to use in order to build recognition and differentiation in the market.

Following other objectives, current research has gathered all accessible relevant literature regarding brand image, stereotypes, destination marketing which was later discussed and analyzed through stereotypical context. Authors have examined customers' responses based on the proposed frameworks to evaluate stereotypical behaviour clues and perceptions.

In conclusion, the following study has proposed possible perspectives of involving stereotypical messages into their branding strategies. That being stated, authors have noted that stereotypical messages can be perceived differently by everyone, therefore there is a need to showcase some background information about your destination to avoid falling into the "stereotyped product" niche.

Future Suggestions

It is important to stress that stereotypes are a controversial topic therefore one of the main suggestions for future research is to study stereotype concepts more in-depth connecting them with tourism-related variables. In this particular case, authors could not conduct such detailed research at the stage of collecting the literature due to the Limitations.

Moreover, as it was mentioned in the chapter of limitations, discussed results can be supported by conducting research with reaching a wider research sample. Also, for the survey, the authors reached a specific target group (people living in Finland) based on literature background that suggests that stereotypes are likely to develop under influence of limited possessed knowledge of

the communicated product (destination). However, the proposition can be evaluated on different target groups that have more detailed knowledge of the destination for deeper insight into the topic.

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Appendices

Appendix A. The Structure of the Survey

Stereotypes in tourism marketing.

Hi and welcome to our survey!

First of all, we would like to thank you for your time and effort to complete this questionnaire. We aim to explore the topic of stereotypes and their influence on tourism industry (based on Australia tourist destination as an example).

The survey is anonymous, participation in the survey is voluntary and no personal data is required. The data gathered would be processed and analysed for a thesis research.

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Please try to answer as honest as possible - it will help us to get a better understanding of the topic.

We appreciate your contribution!

Answer value:

1 - Strongly disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly Agree

Do you live in Finland?

- A. Yes, I live in Finland
- B. No, I live in another country

Have you ever visited Australia?

- A. No, I have never visited the country
- B. Yes, I have stayed there less than a day
- C. Yes, I have stayed there less than a week/ a week
- D. I have lived in Australia

I see Australia as ... destination

- A. 1 - Unpleasant
- B. 5 - Pleasant

I see Australia as ... destination

- A. 1 - Sleepy (Dull, Quiet)
- B. 5 - Arousing (Awakening, Breathtaking)

Stereotypes in tourism marketing. Part 2.

Almost there!

Now, we would like you to analyse Australia as a tourism destination represented in the following marketing campaigns. It is important for the credibility of the research that you do not look at the answers given before.

Marketing campaign №1



Figure A 1

Marketing campaign №2



Figure A 2

I view/consider Australia (destination and its inhabitants) presented on this marketing campaign as

...

- A. Friendly
- B. Kind
- C. Warm
- D. Good-natured
- E. Capable
- F. Competent
- G. Efficient
- H. Intelligent

1 (Strongly disagree)

2 (Somewhat disagree)

3 (Nor Agree nor disagree)

4 (Somewhat agree)

5 (Strongly agree)

Appendix B. Demographics Cross Tabulation

Age Range of the Respondents

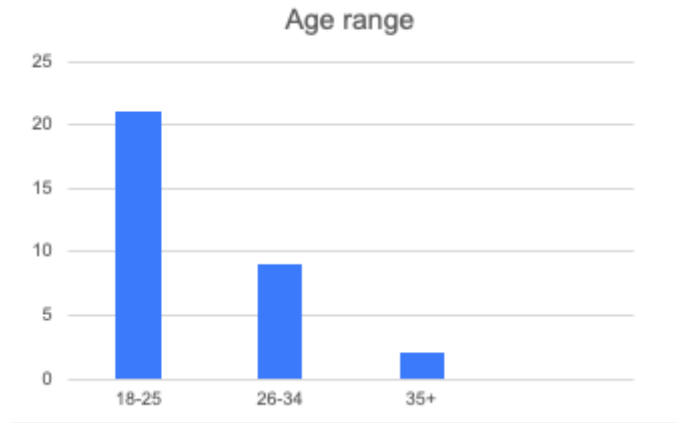


Figure B 1

Gender Range of the Respondents

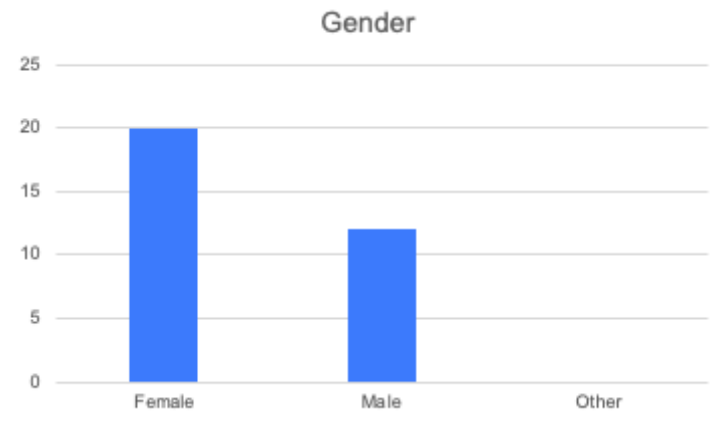


Figure B 2