



**DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS FOR PROMOTING FINNISH TOURISM IN  
SOUTH KOREA THROUGH PROMOTING DESTINATION IMAGE**

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<p>The objective of the thesis is to develop the digital destination marketing of Finland in South Korean outbound tourism market in order to increase outbound travelers from South Korea to Finland. The author has observed that there is a gap between the general perception of Finland as a tour destination for South Koreans, and the messages that Finland's destination management organizations (DMO) send out to promote its images. This thesis is written to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in Finnish tourism marketing field, especially in promoting Finland in South Korea.</p> <p>The literature review focuses on destination marketing, particularly Finland's destination marketing and digital marketing. Also the focus is on tourism destination image(TDI), role of travel intermediaries in destination marketing, and the scale and current trends in South Korean outbound tourism.</p> <p>The study was carried out in the form of semi-structured interviews about Finland's tourism destination image with 6 expert interviewees. For data analysis, qualitative thematic analysis method was used. The results and findings of the interviews revealed challenges and opportunities in promoting Finland as a tour destination in South Korea. In the result chapter, the author created developmental suggestions for attracting South Korean outbound tourism to Finland.</p> <p>In conclusion, the thesis result is reviewed and summarized, and main limitation of the research is discussed.</p>

**Author(s)**

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**Keywords**

Travel Destination image (TDI), travel intermediary, destination marketing, digital marketing

**Abstract**

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## 1 Introduction

Finland is once again selected as the Happiest country in the world for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row since 2018 by United Nations World Happiness Report (World Happiness Report 2023). With international attention focused on Finland's high quality of life, well-developed social welfare system, high performing education system and gender equality, how does Finland promote its tourism to international tourism?

This thesis focusses on investigating existing tourism destination images of Finland for the international outbound tourism market, specifically the destination image marketing of Finland in South Korea. Then, the author compares the findings to see how effectively Finland is promoting its tourism destination images in South Korea. Also, the author presents developmental suggestions for promoting destination images of Finland in South Korea that potentially more South Korean outbound tourism flows into Finland.

### 1.1 Tourism and Tourism destination image

The World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) definition of tourism is "a trip to a main destination outside usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure, or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited."

To understand how tourists choose a destination, Gregory Ashworth and Brian Goodall viewed the decision-making process as the 'push' motivations and the 'pull' images components. While 'push' motivations are ignited by various socio-psychological motives, 'pull' component represents the images individuals possess for a destination experiences, facilities and type of holiday activities. (Ashworth & Goodall 2012, 43-45.) 'Push' factors are internal and personal reasons that a person desire to escape daily routines and pursue personal interests. 'Pull' factors are external and draw people to a particular destination. 'Pull' factors can include a variety of images a person has on a destination including natural beauty of a destination, historical and cultural attractions, or recreational opportunities. 'Pull' factors can be naturally occurring or fixed factors such as natural beauty of a destination or historical and cultural attractions. 'Pull' factors can also be produced by creating positive images of a place by destination marketing organizations (DMO).

In Finland, a governmental destination marketing organization (DMO), Visit Finland([visitfinland.com](http://visitfinland.com)), promotes Finland as a travel destination for international travelers. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines DMO as the entity that brings together authorities, stakeholders, and professionals and/or facilitates partnerships with or within the tourism industry with the objective of forming a collective vision about the destination. The goal of a DMO is to develop and promote the destination through the coordination and management of essential

activities, such as financing, strategic planning, marketing, decision-making and destination product development.

## **1.2 Research background**

The author has worked in the tourism industry as a professional facilitator and guide since 2016 in Finland. She has served several clients from governmental Finnish DMOs, South Korean major tour agencies, governmental agencies and its delegates, educational tour delegates groups, and individual tourists. She also has worked with Finnish governmental DMO for 2 years as a translator. During the process, she has learned and gathered information about what images Finland wants to present to the world as well as South Korean public.

The author has broad experiences in dealing with South Korean clients and noticed the gap between common images and perceptions of Finland for South Koreans and what Finland promotes for their destination image. Therefore, there is a need to compare the destination image of Finland that Finland wants to present and investigate the actual perception of Finland's destination image in South Korea.

## **1.3 Objective of the thesis**

The objective of the thesis is to develop the digital destination marketing of Finland in South Korea to increase outbound travelers from South Korea to Finland. The author has observed that there is a gap between the general perception of Finland as a tour destination for South Koreans, and the messages that Visit Finland send out to promote its images. This thesis is written to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in Finnish tourism marketing field, especially in promoting Finland in South Korea.

### **1.3.1 Development task**

The development task for the thesis is to conduct original research of current destination image of Finland for South Korean outbound tourism market by interviewing tour intermediaries in South Korea and compare them to current Visit Finland's marketing activities for creating destination image of Finland. In this thesis, Visit Finland's marketing promotions of destination images are analyzed to see what destination images of Finland is being promoted in South Korea. Later, the findings of current marketing activities are examined against South Korean tour operators to see how effectively Finland is being promoted in South Korea. Lastly, digital destination marketing developmental suggestions are presented in the thesis to attract more travelers from South Korea to Finland.

Research questions are as follows:



RQ1 What is the tourism destination image the Finnish travel industry wants to present in the South Korean outbound tourism market?

RQ2 What is the tourism destination image of Finland to South Korean travel intermediaries?

RQ3 What kind of destination marketing could close the gap?

### **1.3.2 Delimitation**

Outbound tourism includes residents of one country traveling to another country for leisure, business or other purposes. In this thesis, the author has focused on South Korean outbound tourism in leisure travels which may include leisure, business, education or other purposes.

Visit Finland's website as well as Business Finland's website are used for the research of destination images marketing of Finland. The reason for this is that Visit Finland is a part of Business Finland's operations, and it is the largest DMO in Finland for promoting tourism for Finland.

Interviews for the thesis are conducted via phone and email due to the physical distance between South Korea and Finland. Also, in Korean culture, they tend to avoid video interviews when not necessary. Interviewees are selected in their expertise working as a travel intermediary for South Korean outbound tourist. To get a variety of responses, employees from small to medium sized company as well as large tour companies are selected.

Developmental suggestions of destination marketing of Finland in South Korea are applied to digital marketing as digital marketing is the main method used by Visit Finland and other DMOs' marketing activities in South Korea.

## **1.4 Structure of the thesis**

After this chapter 1 of introduction, chapter 2 outlines key concepts of relevant literature reviews. Chapter 3 explains the research methodologies used in this thesis and shows how the research is conducted. Then chapter 4 presents the findings and discuss the current activities of tourism marketing of Finland, and discuss South Korean outbound tourism, and interviews performed for research. In Chapter 5, the author presents development suggestions for digital marketing for Finnish DMOs. Lastly, Chapter 6 is the conclusion and discuss limitations of this thesis and possible future research for the topic in this thesis.

## 2 Literature review

The thesis investigates the image that Finnish national tourism organization (NTO) projects to the international market, more specifically towards South Korean outbound tourism market, and compares to the tourism destination images (TDI) that South Korean potential travelers have of Finland as a tourism destination.

### 2.1 Destination marketing and factors of its success

A destination marketing is the process of a pursuit on a goal to attract visitors and tourists by promoting a specific geographic area, such as city, region, or country from the demand perspective. Destination marketing is often referred to as destination branding, and it is to create positive image of a destination and ultimately to generate economic benefits to the local community.

A destination is a place that people visit for leisure, business, education, culture, or any other motivations. A destination is away from one's immediate neighborhood vicinity and could be domestic and international. From a supply-side, a destination can be defined by geo-political boundary, from which the tax regime provides funding for destination marketing. (Pike 2020, 2.)

Marketing is the process by which companies create value for customers and society, communicate the value, deliver and exchanging offerings. The aim of marketing is to result in strong customer relationships that capture value from the customers in return, while creating value for society. (Kotler, 2022, 31-32.) Marketing activities can include market research to recognize customer needs and wants, determine the ideal price for the product for the offerings, promotion and advertising to create demand for the value offerings, and distribution and logistics to ensure the successful delivery of the value that was promoted.

Destination marketing is the activity of promoting a particular destination to potential tourists. Its aim is to create a positive image of a destination to attract tourists to the place. Destination marketing is systematically linking supply (destination features and benefits) with demand (needs and wants of travelers) and enhancing competitiveness of a destination in a sustainable manner. (Kotler 2022, 519.)

Often a destination marketing organization (DMO) works as the entity responsible for coordinating the promotion of geo-political boundary, to enhance destination competitiveness and therefore the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the wider host community (Pike 2020, 2). The primary role of a DMO is to develop and implement strategies to promote and market a specific destination. A government agency DMO plays a key role in bringing together other public agencies, tourism

producers and even destination communities for purposes closely related to tourist destination development and/or marketing (Negrusa & Coros 2016, 2). A DMO can be a government agency or private organization.

The following diagram shows a comprehensive approach to destination marketing and its complexity. Often national and local government allocate budgets and resources for destination marketing of their regions, and DMO typically reflects both funding model and government strategies and stance of the destination marketing. The DMO must have a clear understanding of their roles and functions in relations to the local tourism industry. (Wang & Pizam 2011, 8.)

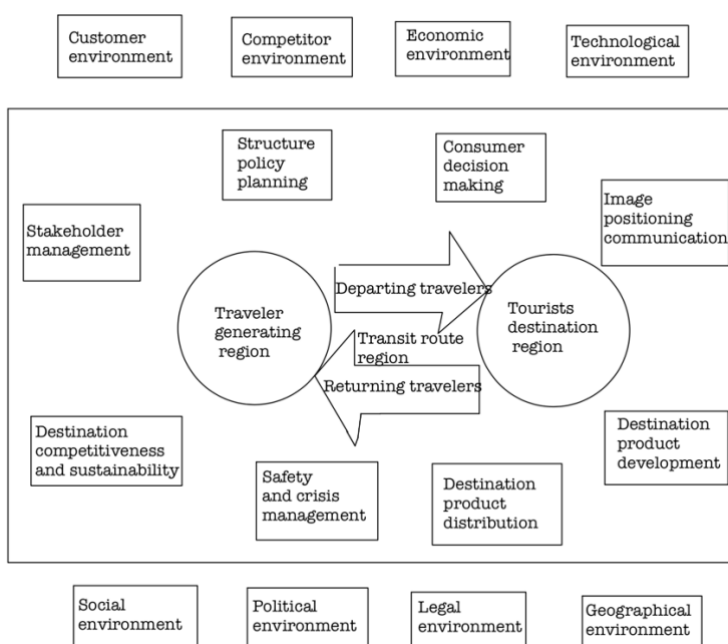


Figure 1. Concept and scope of destination marketing and management (adapted from Wang & Pizam 2011)

A successful destination marketing starts with strategic objectives for the destination that can enhance the long-term prosperity of people while ensuring the enjoyment of visitors. It also ensures maximizing profitability of local business and optimize tourism impacts by balancing socio-cultural sustainability with economic benefits. (Baker & Cameron 2008, 82.) In their article, 'Critical success factors in destination marketing', Baker and Cameron reviewed related literature in depth, and identified 33 different success factors. The 33 factors can be divided into 4 sub-stages, which are 'strategic orientation', 'destination identity and image', 'stakeholder involvement' and 'implementation, monitoring and review'. (Baker & Cameron 2008, 93.)

The importance of implementation, monitoring and review stage is researched by Blain, Stuart, Levy and Ritchie in 2005. They surveyed 409 DMOs, and out of 99 DMOs (24.2%) that responded

to the survey, the research found out that almost half of DMOs in the survey believe that they are successful in creating desired image in destination branding, however they do not measure visitor perceptions. The consistent measuring of visitor attitude changes is necessary to continually readapt the marketing message to best fit evolving consumer perceptions. (Blain, Levy & Ritchie 2005, 336.) Monitoring and measuring destination marketing enhances destination image among visitors and assists DMOs in measuring achievements.

### 2.1.1 Finland's destination marketing

The ministry of economic affairs and employment oversees tourism policy in Finland. The national tourism organization (NTO) is responsible for promoting and marketing tourism in Finland, and it is operated by Business Finland. The NTO in Finland is officially called Visit Finland, which operates under the jurisdiction of the Finnish government and works to develop and implement tourism strategies to attract visitors to Finland and support the growth of the tourism industry in Finland. (Ministry of economic affairs and employment of Finland, 2022.) Finnish tourism planning is carefully orchestrated with Finland's national carrier, Finnair, to reach various destinations within Finnish tourism market.

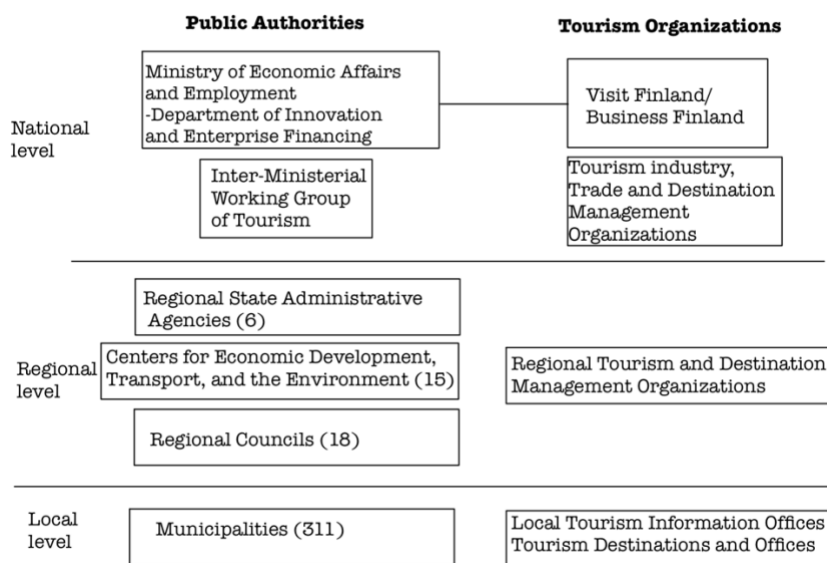


Figure 2: Finland organizational chart of tourism bodies (adapted from OECD 2020)

Prior to COVID-19 restriction and Russia's invasion to Ukraine which have significantly weekend the sector, tourism export had been growing constantly in Finland. In 2019, tourism in Finland marked 17% of the export income in service sector. The total demand for tourism was approximately 16 billion euros, and its direct share of GDP was 2.7%. Tourism also employed over 154,000 people having significant influence on regional economies. (Ministry of economic affairs and employment of Finland, 2022.)

In general, Finnish tourism SMEs (small and medium-sized tourism enterprises) are found to be moderately dependent on the resources of the NTO. SME organizations tend to have resource dependencies and interdependences towards NTO, and especially international marketing activities. (Seppälä-Esser, Airey & Szivas 2009, 187.) Visit Finland markets high quality tour products internationally on behalf of SMEs.

Directing products and communication to the right target groups is paramount of importance in tourism marketing. Finland has four target international markets, which are Germany, Great Britain, China and Japan. The target market groups are determined based on evaluation of the market's potential and the market situation. (Ministry of economic affairs and employment of Finland, 2022.)

Business Finland includes image and product marketing directly to consumers, opening of B2B relationships, maintenance, PR, and media work. It also carries out surveys and market research and analyze research data for the use of tourism operators. It ensures operational resources for Visit Finland foreign representatives and supports approximately 70 regional tourism organizations in Finland including tour organizations of city, municipality, and province. (Ministry of economic affairs and employment of Finland, 2022.) The main role of visit Finland is to develop and market Finland's travel image as well as help Finnish travel companies to internationalize, develop, sell and market high-quality travel products. It operates actively and has representatives in offices in Germany, UK, France, Spain (including Italy), China, Japan, India and South Korea, USA and Russia. (Business Finland 2023.)

One of the most successful cases of Finland's destination marketing is to associating Santa Claus or Joulupukki in the image of Finland. The association between Finland and Santa Clause very strong, and Santa Clause is a major industry itself in Lapland. In 2019, almost 1.1 billion euros went to Lapland from tourists' consumption, while 8 billion euros went to Uusimaa. More than half (54%) of the tourism demand in Lapland was foreign. (Ministry of economic affairs and employment of Finland, 2021.) Due to Santa Clause's is uncertain mythical and historical characteristic, Lapland took an advantage of the image and stereotypes of Santa by becoming an 'official' Santa village (Winter 2009, 110). Embracing the image of Santa and venturing further into Finland's stereotypical image of being in a cold climate with snow, wooden huts, lakes and forests has proven to be a success for Finland's image around world as country with Santa Clause.

The tourist consumes images or representations of a society; and any reality is obscured by many levels of representation. Therefore, the tourist is unable to penetrate any underlying reality, but must consume the representation, the sign, or the image of the touristic object. (Pretes 1995, 10.)

### 2.1.2 Digital marketing in destination marketing

Prevailing implementation of the internet in the 1990's and the rise of social media in the 2000's marked significant turning points for digital destination marketing. The growing internet and social media have given a huge boost to customer - engagement marketing fosters direct and continuous customer involvement in shaping brand conversations, brand experiences, and brand community. (Kotler 2022, 41.) Digital marketing hands over the control to consumers, therefore engaging with the right target groups is key to success of digital marketing (Santana & Gil 2017, 158).



Figure 3. Steps for digital marketing (adapted from Santana & Gil 2017)

Today, digital marketing has become a critical component of destination marketing strategies, with most DMOs using a wide range of digital channels and social media platforms to promote their destinations to the target audiences. Some of the benefits of digital marketing includes 1) market penetration through the internet to digital devices, 2) market development to new geographical markets and taking advantage of the low cost of advertising internationally. (Chaffey 2019, 14.)

Current destination marketing is a two-way affair – in addition to customer relationship management, today's marketers are asking 'How can we influence our customers?', but also 'How can our customers influence us?' and even 'How can our customers influence each other?'. (Kotler 2022, 36.) Digital marketing is moving destination marketing from passive advertising to active engagement on various online platforms including social media channels, however with social networking pages, it is more about quality than its quantity.

On a structural level, the foundations of digital tourism marketing can be derived from three media types – 1) paid media, 2) owned media and 3) earned media types. The predominant aim of digital destination marketing is to procure market square participants for one's own company to exploit all turnover potentials and thus contribute to an increase in the transaction quota. (Lück, Ritalahti & Scherer 2016, 79-80.)

Digital marketing has become essential part of destination marketing, and although they do not have boundaries and are unlimited, they often adapt to local language and cultural boundaries. According to social media as a communication and marketing tool in tourism research done by studying samples of 13 DMOs around the world in 2016, most of the DMO in the studies publish in English and there are DMOs that create target specific accounts on social media platforms for specific countries or groups of users. (Roque & Raposo 2016, 60-64.)

## **2.2 Tourism Destination Image (TDI)**

Promoting destination image is of crucial importance in the field of tourism as it plays a key role in attracting tourists, driving visitor numbers that leads to creating economic revenue for the local economy. In a highly competitive tourism market, a positive and attractive destination image can portrait a destination as unique and attractive place to visit, and it can create interest and desire among potential tourists to travel to the destination.

Image can be defined as “the perceptions, beliefs, impressions, ideas and understanding one holds of objects, people, events or places” (Gartner 2000, 295). Perception or image of a destination can feel true reality for potential tourists, therefore affecting the decision-making process of choosing a destination. A negative image of a destination can influence tourists to steer away knowingly or unknowingly from a destination, there for intentionally creating a positive image of a destination is crucial in destination marketing. The travel destination image is perceived by potential travelers and the importance of the TDI has been well studied over the years. (Pike 2002, chapter 3.)

In journal article, Iordanova explains that a source of misunderstanding with TDI definition has its root cause in the interchangeable use of attitude, perceptions, ideas, and impressions to define it. The similar concepts cannot be used synonymously and suggests a definition of TDI: ‘A construct consisting of impressions, beliefs, ideas, expectations and feelings accumulated towards a place over time gathered from a variety of information sources and shaped through an individual's socio-demographic and psychological characteristics.’. (Iordanova 2015, 40.)

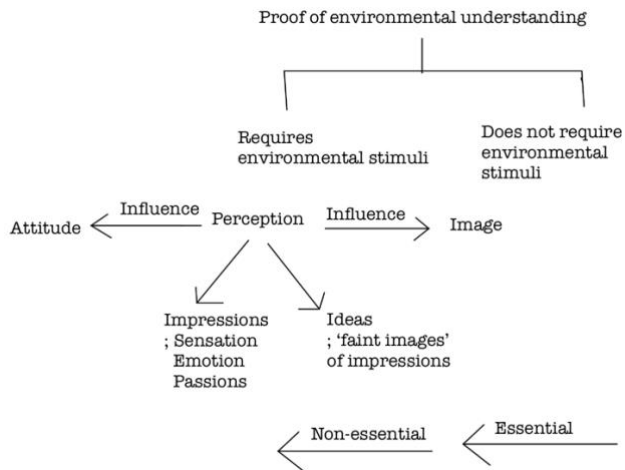


Figure 4. Differences between attitudes, perceptions, image, impressions, and ideas (adapted from Iordanova, 2015)

Destination image has a major influence on consumers' travel decisions, to the extent that perceptions held by target consumers and travel trade intermediaries are so important that they can affect destination competitiveness (Pike 2020, 163). Consequently, monitoring the perceptions and attitudes held of the destination in target markets through various channels, such as social media, advertising, and public relations campaigns, among others is essential for the destination marketing organization. Also, attention should be given to the locals' image of their own community, rather than visitors' only, to bring the tourism development benefit to the local community. The projected images and symbolic meanings of psychological characteristics that locals and visitors associate with a specific destination can strongly influence destination positioning and eventually the tourists' purchasing behavior. (Govers, Go, & Kumar 2007, 15.)

To measure destination image, it should be envisioned as both holistic and attribute based. Each of the attributes of destination image may contain functional, tangible, psychological or abstract characteristics such as feelings or auras. To capture all the components, a combination of structured and unstructured methodologies should be implemented to measure a destination image. (Echtner & Ritchie 1993, 10.)

### 2.3 Role of travel intermediaries in destination marketing

Often DMOs have little to no contacts with tourists, and they have little to no control over the quality of the actual visitor experiences, relative to the promise that they made in destination marketing communications and promotions (Pike 2022, 13). It is where the travel intermediaries' role come in from packaging and distribution of travel products and control the direct communications and management of travel experiences of tourists.



Tour intermediaries can be a person or an agency that supplies a tourism service to consumers, such as an overseas wholesaler, inbound tour operator, online or retail travel agent, airline, cruise ship, visitor information center, tour guide or hotel concierge (Pike 2022, 278). Travel intermediaries can also be a search engine or tour research center working from a university. They are one of the most important stakeholders of DMOs' B2B activities. They affect destination demand and tourists' selections in direct or indirect manners (Pearce 2008, 150).

DMOs are usually reliant on a small set of powerful intermediaries for selling tour packages, and deal with small to medium tour operators that usually have specific themes of tour products for the destination. Travel intermediaries offer expert advice and support for travelers' decision-making process, and play a key role in booking, payments, cancellations, and selling insurances and other ancillary services.

## **2.4 Korean outbound tourism**

South Korean outbound tourism has been constantly growing since overseas tourism was liberalized in 1980's. When South Korea hosted 1988 Seoul Olympics and internationalization through the Olympics increased demand for overseas travel.

Traditionally there are a few large travel agencies providing travel services and products in South Korean outbound tourism market, however in the recent years, global online travel agency (OTA) platforms have been growing in numbers (Visit Korea 2021). Global online travel agency that are expanding in South Korean market are Expedia, Booking holdings, Trip.com and Airbnb. On the other hand, Korean OTA are also on the rise, in comparison to global OTA, they are convenient and service friendly for South Koreans (Visit Korea 2021). Also, since the early 2000's there has been a growing trend of travel experts who have been active throughout the travel industry establishing their own independent small sized travel agencies. They are attracting themed travel and off-the-beaten track destinations (Travel times 2005).

South Korean outbound travelers tend to rely heavily on travel agencies or travel platform service often used by travel agencies when making overseas travel reservations. In a survey from 2020, Korean travel newspaper asked nearly 2000 respondents about their methods of booking overseas travels. The results showed that 79% of respondents used travel agencies or travel platforms when booking overseas travel reservations. (Travel times 2020.) Hana tour is the largest tour intermediary with 20 % share of the market in South Korea with over 1200 physical tour agencies selling their products. Hana tour explains their sales structure as B2B2C (Hana tour s.a.).

Korean tourists are less price-sensitive to trips to OECD countries. When Koreans travel to distant destination such as Europe, the budget becomes less sensitive compared to when traveling within nearby Asian countries. In general, Koreans travelling to richer countries are those more for pleasure trips and are ready to take high travel costs than those travelling to less developed countries. (Park 2016, 97.) According to UNWTO's world tourism barometer, South Korea was between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> places in international tourism expenditure from year 2018 to 2020 (UNWTO 2021).

(USD billion)					
Rank			2018	2019	2020
19	'18	World	1440	1466	536
1	1	China	277.3	254.6	254.6
2	2	United States	126.0	134.6	134.6
3	3	Germany	95.6	93.2	93.2
4	4	United Kingdom	70.9	71.9	71.9
5	5	France	48.9	51.7	51.7
6	9	Russian Federation	34.3	36.2	36.2
7	6	Australia	37.0	36.0	36.0
8	8	Canada	34.5	35.8	35.8
9	7	Korea(ROK)	35.1	32.7	32.7
10	10	Italy	30.1	30.3	30.3

Figure 5. International Tourism expenditure (UNWTO 2021)

According to Segmenting East Asian tourists by travel motivation study, Korean travelers scored high as 'novelty seekers' – they consider the culture and the heritage as the most important pull travel motivation and put little emphasis on such characteristics as variety and cost (Assiouras, Skourtis, Koniordos & Giannopoulos 2015, 1406-1407). They seek cultural novelty such as louvre in Paris, natural landmark as fjords in Norway and travel to famous architectural landmark such as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

#### 2.4.1 Current travel trends in South Korea

During the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions from 2021 to 2022, South Koreans' travel was mostly limited to domestic travel. Post COVID-19, South Korea being one of the top numbers in outbound tourism, the concept of 'revenge travel' and 'revenge spending' was introduced through various media outlets while describing the phenomenon as 'revenge for missed opportunities for travel' during the pandemic (Kim, Seo & Choi 2022, 1900).

When measuring South Korean tourists' perceived images of overseas destination, the study found out that tourists would stay more than 3 weeks if they perceived the destination to have a similarity in lifestyles. Destination's images that could attract South Koreans are 'natural and scenic beauty', 'adventurous atmosphere', 'availability of tourist information' 'architectural similarities' and 'environmental friendliness'. (Chen & Hsu 2000, 413.) To increase the length of stay for South Korean, travel destination should promote a familiar yet idealistic lifestyle, and having a Korean speaking tour guide or local staff is found to be important factors.

Post COVID-19, in 2022, when a travel magazine conducted an online survey for 5,522 people, about where the Koreans would like to travel to in Europe, Switzerland (20.1%) came first. Switzerland has been on top spot in preferred travel destination for several years, followed by France, Spain, the U.K., Italy, Greece, Germany, Netherland, Denmark, and Czech Republic. (Travel times 2022.) 46.7% of the respondents answered that they would use a travel agency or online travel agency (OTA) when visiting Europe (Travel times 2022). However, the most traveled destination for South Korean outbound travelers in 2018 are Japan, China, Vietnam, U.S.A., and Thailand (Travel times 2022). In reality, Koreans mostly traveled to nearby and North American destinations.

#### **2.4.2 Interests towards Finland from South Korean outbound tourism**

South Koreans' interests and admiration of Finland and the Nordic countries have been increasing since the turn of the century. In 2009, one of the largest online travel magazines conducted a survey for 4,646 people online about their image of Finland (Travie 2009). For the respondents who were 43.83 % men and 56.16% women, the image of 'advanced welfare state' came at the first place by 21.07%. Secondly, they thought of 'xylitol' which shows the power of TV and other media advertisement in South Korea. Third image was the image of 'Santa Clause' by 12.57%. Some of other answers were 'education', 'snow', 'Nokia', 'birch forest'. (Travie 2009.)

Over 90% of the respondents wished to travel to Finland for visiting Santa Clause's hometown (24.6%), traditional Finnish sauna experiences (15.84%), reindeer sleigh and safari experience (15.45%) and Aurora borealis observation (11.54%). Since the survey was performed in December, the seasonality might have affected the survey (Travie 2009).

On the other hand, the most reluctant factor to travel to Finland was 'cost' (55.53%), followed by 'distance' (16.64%) and 'language barrier' (10.46%). Package travel was the most popular way to visit Finland among the respondents by 39.26%. The reason being this is the unfamiliarity of Finland as the destination. The respondents preferred to travel the Nordic countries (74.3%) Sweden, Denmark, and Norway in one tour rather than visiting only Finland (19.11%). (Travie 2009.)

### **2.4.3 Summary: what are the key factors in destination marketing to study in own interviews?**

In chapter 2 literature review, the author covered the theories relevant to the research for the chapter 3, such as destination marketing, Tourism destination Image and travel intermediaries. Also, it studied relevant information in Finland's tourism marketing and South Korean outbound tourism.

### **3 Research methodology**

In this chapter, the research methodology and interview structure used for the thesis are described. Several factors were put into consideration in choosing research methodology, for instance, which type of data is needed for the research, the nature of the research questions, and ethical considerations. Then, this chapter describes about interview participants and how data is collected from the interview. Lastly, data is analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis.

#### **3.1 Research design**

Research methodology is a systematic and structured way of conducting research, and for this thesis a qualitative research methodology is suitable for the overall design of the research. Qualitative research focuses on text as empirical material instead of numbers. Qualitative research is useful in collecting and analyzing non-numerical data, such as words, observations, and perspectives of participants, in daily practices and knowledge referring to the issue under study. (Flick 2007, chapter 1.)

Quality issues in qualitative research are applicable in all stages of research process. Ensuring quality in qualitative research is accomplished by making efforts in planning, conducting, and reporting qualitative research. (Flick 2007, chapter 6.)

Prior to conducting the interviews, Visit Finland's strategy and tourism destination images (TDI) are investigated to form relevant and well-informed interview questions. Visit Finland's strategy and TDI were selected for investigation since it represents Finland's national tourism strategies, and it is the largest DMO in Finland.

Semi-structured online interviews offer opportunity to intergrade open-ended questions and addressing theoretically driven variables of interest (Galletta, William & William 2013, 24). Semi-structured interviews are versatile and flexible, they generate easily analyzed results while requiring intensive effort on developing questionnaire (Wilson 2014, 24). In order to ensure that the samples of data from interview contents reflect the research questions and objectives of the thesis, thoughtful and purposeful approach to selection of interviewees are necessary. The interviewees are selected on these grounds, and they characterize a qualified and diverse group of interviewees. The more commonly used semi-structured interview is more open-ended than structured. (Wilson 2014, 26.) For this interview, some structures were used to build the questionnaire, such as showing images of Visit Finland's marketing material from their website to interviewees.

## 3.2 Finland's tourism strategy

In the previous chapter, Finland's destination marketing is discussed. In this chapter, the author investigates Finnish government's tourism strategy by studying Business Finland's 'Visit Finland strategy 2021-2025' as well as South Korea specific vision of Business Finland. This is done to answer the first research question: what is the destination image the Finnish travel industry wants to present in the South Korean market? After investigating Finland's tourism strategy, appropriate questions for the interview process can be formed.

### 3.2.1 Visit Finland strategy 2021-2025

Business Finland's strategy was updated in 2020, and is focusing on three factors, which are economic growth, sustainable development, and increased competitiveness. The strategy 2021 - 2025 is a roadmap to guide through ever changing operational environment that can unexpectedly change the tourism market by influences from not only domestic factors but also from international circumstances. (Business Finland 2021.) As previously discussed in the thesis, Business Finland's main target markets are Germany, Great Britain, China and Japan.

Business Finland has a vision for Finnish tourism becoming a number one destination for sustainable tourism, and it wants to make Finland the first choice for mindful travelers (Business Finland 2021). A mindful traveler could mean someone who understands the ambiguous influence of their own presence brings to the tour destination, and it could be a creative or destructive force to the destination (Currie 2000, chapter 2).

Some of Business Finland's marketing plans are innovative promotion of country image to build and improve the awareness, image and interest among target group, and long-term efforts to make Finland more attractive for all-year-round destination (Business Finland 2021). Business Finland also implements storytelling in the marketing to create increased market visibility (Business Finland 2021). Storytelling in destination marketing can be a holistic approach in which the DMO use multiple communication channels by trying to involve all destination brand stakeholders in the co-creation process. Storytelling seeks to express a message about a destination brand's qualities and identities in order to bring about tourist satisfaction, loyalty and attractiveness of the destination. (Youssef, Leicht & Maroungiu 2019, 702.)

Business Finland calls their main target group as 'modern humanists'. The target group is described as a person who avoids mass tourism and considered an experienced traveler who prefer locality and critical towards advertising. Business Finland sees the target group as adventurous on their own terms, and have above average education and income levels, and open to sustainability, new culture, and local people. (Business Finland 2021.) Business Finland further

broke down the modern humanists' group into nature explorers, natural wonder hunters, activity enthusiast, authentic lifestyle seeker, comfort seekers and city breakers.

	Nature Explorers	Natural Wonder Hunters	Activity Enthusiast	Authentic Lifestyle seeker	Comfort Seekers	City Breakers
Motive for travel	Peace of nature and recovery	Unique experiences in nature	Active holidays in natural surroundings	Experiencing local lifestyles	General well being and relaxation	Urban experiences and sights
Interested in	National parks, Forests and lakes, Seaside views, Archipelago, Northern lights, Midnight sun, Wilderness retreats, Mushrooms and berries	Northern lights, Midnight sun, National parks, Forests and lakes	Extreme sports, X-country skiing, Animal spotting, Activities in water, snow & nature	Museums and events, Festivals and concerts, Being in nature, Sauna, Food culture, Cultural destinations, Design districts, Unique accommodation	Unique accommodation, Wellness services, Spas, Husky & reindeer safaris, Easy exercise in nature	City sights, Urban culture, Distinctive character, Museums and design districts, Food culture, Events, Shopping
% of all travellers	16	12	14	22	16	22
% of traveller considering a trip to Finland	34	35	41	29	35	28

Figure 6. Segments of the main group of 'modern humanists' is divided by their travel motives (adapted from Business Finland 2021)

The following diagram shows Business Finland's marketing aims for 2021-2025. It emphasizes a long-term strategy and Finland's wish for attracting 'high spending' travelers. Its aims are to increase revenue from travel by selling value adding services and increasing overnight stays. (Business Finland 2021.)

Size of Market	Growth Potential	Network Priorities	Sustainability
Volume	Development of demand and recovery	Emphasis from VF's domestic clients and long term strategy (based on own supply) priorities	Quality seekers "High spending"
Spending	Development of accessibility and capacity	Finland's commercial country image - BF's export industries + Finland Promotion	Year-round services, GinI index, Possibilities to implement the elements of sustainable travel
Finland's market share, Finland's relative competitive advantage	Input/output of marketing and sales efforts	Partnerships and presence on markets	Balanced market portfolio Regional risk management
Finland is leading sustainable travel destination			

Figure 7. Market efforts for strategy season 2021-2025 framework. (Business Finland 2021)

Business Finland highlights their core strategies as maintaining Finland's country image as all year-round sustainable travel destination, and this is evident when following their social media accounts.

### **3.2.2 Finland's TDI**

Business Finland runs Instagram account has 417,000 followers under the name of 'Our Finland', and is active on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube which their recent short videos have views over 1.1 million with 19,000 followers. The pictures, and short videos on both Instagram and YouTube presents nature of Finland, Finnish seasonal sports, indoor and outdoor activities, culture including sauna, food, public transportation, Finnair, architecture, Finnish design, northern lights, and Santa Clause. In terms of regions in Finland, Lakeland, Lapland, Archipelago and Helsinki are promoted, and all four seasons are represented as separate themes.

The images and recent campaigns, such as 'inner Finn' portraits Finland as a sustainable, mindful, and relaxing destination that has hidden gems to be the happiest country in the world. In fact, Visit Finland's landing page presents a video of Finnish nature with a title that reads 'Happiness – it's in our nature, The happiest country in the world'. The website is accessible with 9 has languages options including English, Swedish, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Russian.

The main messages and images that Finland presents its attractiveness as a destination for tourism while promoting sustainability practices. The website, [visitfinland.com](https://visitfinland.com) provides not only tourism destination images but also useful information and products for travelers who plan to travel to Finland. The tourism destination images are well showcased as a happy and unique destination with pure nature, and with variety of indoor and outdoor activities to choose from all year around. It is also portrayed as a well-being/ healing destination with relaxation and mindfulness themes. Finnish foods and dishes are also showcased always including natural ingredients from Finland in Nordic/ Finnish cuisine. The images emphasize the message that authentic Finnish ways of living is the key to happiness.

### **3.2.3 Business Finland's vision for South Korea**

Business Finland defines on their Finnish website its target group which is 'young people in their 20's and 30's and families with children'. The reasons behind the focus on South Korean outbound tourism is that nearly 30 million visits occurred from South Korea to destinations abroad in 2019 and the South Koreans have a high spending while they are abroad. (Business Finland 2022.)



One of Finland's unique selling points to South Korean outbound tourism market is the easy accessibility to Europe as Helsinki being the closest European destination from Seoul compared to any other European cities (Business Finland 2022). However, this unique selling point is currently hindered as Finnair does not fly over Russian airspace currently, causing the travel between Seoul and Helsinki to increase by 3-4 hours.

Business Finland observes that South Korean outbound travelers are looking for Nordic 'slow life' or 'healing' tourism as well as unique experiences such as northern lights or dog sledding. They are also interested in the locality of the destinations, such as visiting local cafes, restaurants, and sightseeing of landmarks. (Business Finland 2022.) They are well prepared for their tour, and well informed especially by Korean search engine results giving information by fellow Korean travelers. They are looking for authentic experiences however they are also seeking convenience and efficiency.

Business Finland's vision for South Korean outbound tourism market is to become the most desired sustainable travel destination in the Nordic region by 2023 (Business Finland 2022). By year 2024, Business Finland aims to become the most desired sustainable development tourism destination for South Koreans, as well as the top destination for northern lights and healing travel destination (Business Finland 2022). while maintaining clean and safe image, as well as top destination for aurora sightseeing. The most trending European destination for nature and healing travel (Business Finland 2021).

### **3.3 Interview**

After a careful review of current market strategy of Finnish destination marketing plan by Business Finland, the author defined questions for interviewees to gain relative data for the second research question which is: what is the destination image of Finland of South Korean travel intermediaries? The author has various acquaintances in South Korean tourism industry, however to select interviewees who can represent the South Korean outbound tourism industry for Finland and the Nordic region, the initial list of interviewees had to be further narrow down.

#### **3.3.1 Participants**

For this thesis, 6 interviewees who are professional travel intermediaries and offer tours to world-wide destinations including the Nordic countries to Korean outbound tourists. The travel intermediaries offer tours to Finland, often combined with other Nordic and Baltic destinations. Their companies' sizes vary from small and medium to the largest tour company in South Korea. During pre-selection of interviewees, it was discovered that none of the participants offered Finland

as a sole destination, and as a matter of fact, no such product is currently offered in South Korean outbound tourism market.

The interviewees are contacted from the authors network as well as recommendations from other tour operators in South Korea. They were chosen based on their years of expertise in this research topic area as well as relevance to the topic. They all have experience in planning, developing, operating, selling and/or marketing tour products to Finland. Also, to get diverse perspectives, different professional roles within tourism industry were considered. Some of them are managers, and some are entrepreneurs, and some are staff members within tour organizations.

### 3.4 Data collection

Qualitative method of semi-structured interviews was performed for the thesis. The primary data was gathered through interviews which took place during April 2023. Most of the interviews were conducted over the phone since most of the interviewees preferred the phone conversation, and some preferred the interview done in writing.

For cultural reasons and considering the interconnectedness of the outbound tourism industry circle in South Korea, identity protection was a valid concern for the interviewees. They were informed that the interviews were recorded and transcribed, however their identities remain anonymous on the thesis. The interviews were conducted in Korean language and transcribed in Korean using Teams automated transcription function. However, due to high inaccuracy of the function, the interview contents were manually transcribed in Korean and later translated into English language for the thesis.

The following table 1 contains the list of the interviewee and their information. To protect their identity, as agreed prior to the interviews, nick names are used and their position descriptions are stated without revealing exact job titles.

Table 1. List of interviewees.

Interviewee	Position description	Channel	Interview date
Interviewee 1	Manager at a major tour operator	Via phone	April 24, 2023
Interviewee 2	Travel entrepreneur at small sized tour company	Via phone	April 25, 2023
Interviewee 3	Staff at the largest tour operator	Via phone	April 26, 2023
Interviewee 4	Manager at a medium sized tour operator	Via phone	April 27, 2023
Interviewee 5	Tourism expert	Via phone	April 28, 2023

Interviewee 6	Manager at small sized tour company	Via email	April 25, 2023
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Interview questions were not sent in advance to prevent any bias or tailoring of responses by overthinking or trying to fit the answers to the questions. Also, time constraints were considered, since the interview was scheduled for up to an hour, sending questions in advance may not be proper to take up more time from the interviewees. However, some picture images were sent by messages prior to the interviews to make sure that the images arrive to the interviewees for the interviews.

### **3.4.1 Interview questions**

Interview questions are formed once existing literature about the topic are carefully reviewed. This can include reviewing library books, journal articles, and relevant thesis previously written. Also, the author's personal observations and experiences on the topic is reflected in the interview questions since author has worked within the industry over the years. Every word in the in the interview questions serves a purpose, and it should be brief. Sometimes there are overarching sub-questions to elaborate on the main questions. (Galletta 2013, chapter 2.) The interview starts with introduction of the thesis author, the interviewer, and brief introduction of the thesis topic in general, and explaining the purpose for the interview.

Interview questions are formed based on the literature analysis; some structured questions were asked as well as open-ended questions to test to see the degree of understanding of Finnish tourism marketing by Visit Finland perceived by South Korean tour intermediaries. Open-ended questions are thoughtfully framed; however, they are broad enough to encourage the interviewee to expand their thoughts and knowledge on the topic without restrictions. The sub questions are asked to go deeper in the question topics, expand on the expertise, asking for examples and sometimes to redirect the question to the intended direction. Although close-ended questions are avoided, sometimes yes and no type of questions are asked to ensure that the conversation revolves around interviewee's personal experiences rather than perceived reality or imagination.

Visual images are also included in the questions, they may or may not be familiar images for the interviewees, however they are used to stimulate the interview discussions. Visual images can bring changes and variety to the interview by keeping the interviewees interested in continuing the discussion. Visual images are useful in comparing the tourism image marketing from Finland and perception of the interviewees' images of Finland. Images used for the interview are selected from

Visit Finland's webpage, and since Business Finland aims to promote Finland as all-year-round destination, images of spring, summer, fall and winter were selected.

The interviews have a set of flow by numbering the questions, however during the interview, if the author senses appropriate, some questions are skipped to the latter part to be flexible should the author felt it is important to explore further on the related topic rather than going to the next prepared question. If the interviewee goes tangent on an unrelated topic, the interviewer should be able to politely redirect the flow of the conversation without losing too much of allocated interview time.

The interview questions are attached in the appendix of this thesis at the end. The interview is summarized at the end of each interview with main points, and by thanking the interviewer for their time and efforts. They are also asked to comment further on the interview on a later date if any thoughts or ideas arise.

### 3.5 Data analysis

The data collected from the interviews are analyzed using thematic method. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within data (Braun & Clarke 2006, 88-89). When analyzing qualitative research that is vague and undefined, thematic analysis is flexible in providing mechanics of coding and linking broader theoretical or conceptual issues (Braun & Clarke 2012, 65). Thematic analysis is useful in analyzing contents of the interviews and is widely used for its versatility and capacity to provide nuanced findings. It systematically classifies, organizes, and finds insight to discover repetitive themes in a data set. (Braun & Clarke 2012, 88-89.) Thematic analysis offers in-depth understanding and uses interpretive approach.

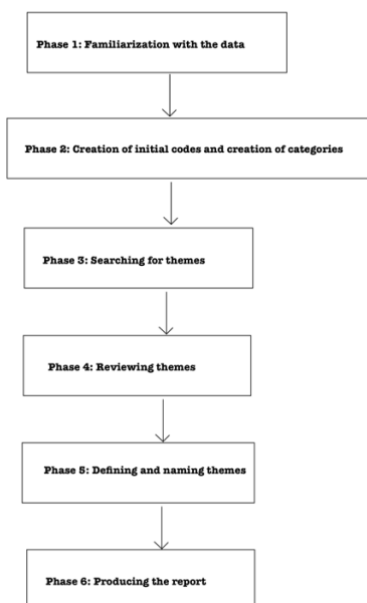


Figure 8. 6 steps of a thematic analysis (adapted from Braun & Clark 2006)

Thematic Analysis method starts with familiarization of the data. In this thesis process, familiarization of data already began during the interview process while taking notes. After the interview, the author listened to the audio recordings, transcribed in Korean then in English. Then the author vigilantly re-read the data multiple times to get familiar with the it further.

Next, initial codes are created according to meanings and patterns. Codes are short, descriptive labels that are showing up across the entire data set in an interesting fashion. Coding is the process of systematically organizing the data into the themes, and the themes can be further refined after the coding. (Braun & Clarke 2012, 62.)

Once initial codes are ready, the author evaluates how to put codes together under different themes. The themes should be distinctive from one another and have enough data to support the themes. Some themes are removed due to the fact they do not have enough data to support or found to be not relevant enough.

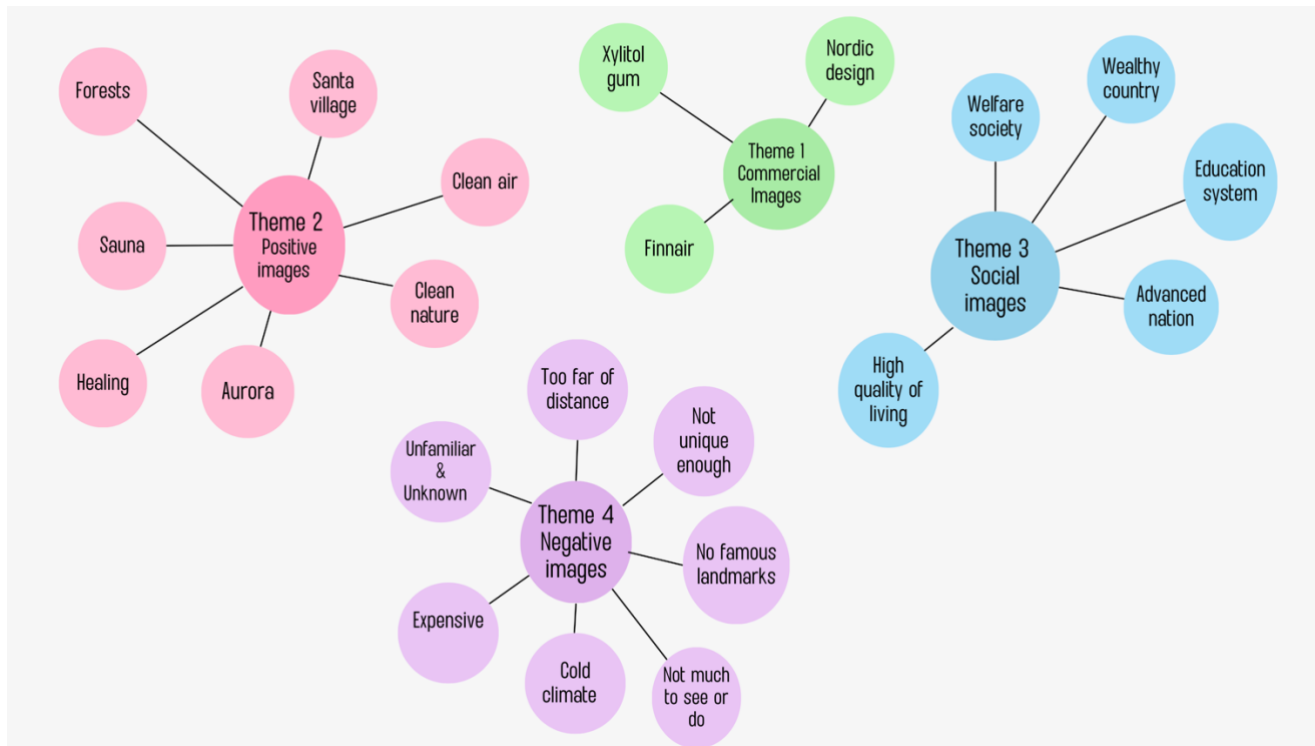


Figure 9. Codes and themes generated by thematic analysis.

Once the author reviews the themes carefully and outlined 4 themes related to the research questions. There are four themes categories which are commercial images, positive images, social images, and negative images. The following table describes the themes, codes, descriptions, and examples from the interview conversations describing the codes.

Table 2. Thematic analysis of the interview contents.

Themes	Codes	Descriptions	Sample quotes
Commercial images	Xylitol gum	The advertising of xylitol gum by Lotte product since 1990's has left a big impact in South Korea.	'Hyvä! Hyvä! Every Korean knows those words!'
	Finnair	The tour intermediaries are familiar with the fact that the shortest route to Europe is between South Korea and Finland.	'Having Finnair serving the route from Korea is super beneficial in selling the Nordic package tours.'
	Nordic design	Interviewees assume that Finnish design and the Nordic design is interchangeable.	'When I think of Finland, I think of design, because the Nordic design is famous and popular in Korea for over a decade.'
Positive images	Santa village	The only destination the well-known to South Korean outbound tourism market outside Helsinki.	'I don't know what else there is to do in Finland besides Helsinki and Santa village?'
	Clean air	The air quality is a hot topic in South Korea every year, especially in winter, the fine dust particles from Chinese industrial region fogs up the atmosphere.	'There must be no fine dust particles in the air like we do here.'

	Clean nature	The image of pristine nature is well marketed in South Korea through television shows and social media outlets.	'Finland engraved in Korean's mind as a clean country.'
	Aurora (The northern lights)	Interviewees compared Finland, Canada, Iceland, and Norway for Aurora sightseeing destinations.	'Finland is lesser known for aurora sightseeing destination. Most Koreans who are interested in aurora go to Canada or Iceland.'
	Healing	Interviewees who have been to Finland, felt it was a very calm and healing to visit Finland.	'I was so relaxed in countryside Finland, it's something you couldn't know if you haven't been there.'
	Sauna	Sauna is common and popular in South Korea. Koreans are aware that sauna originates from Finland, want to experience the original sauna in Finland.	'Sauna is of course a must experience in Finland.'
	Forests	Along with clean nature, the images of forests and lakes are well marketed in South Korea through television shows and social media outlets.	'I have this impression that people in Finland living in the forests.'  'Are there famous mountains in Finland?'

Social images	Welfare society	Finnish welfare system is often viewed as a socialism in South Korea, and viewed as a utopian society.	'Finland is famous for having a well-functioning social system.'
	Wealthy country	South Koreans are not generally aware of Finland's history. The image of Finland as a wealthy Nordic country is dominant.	'I have an image of Finland as a rich nation.'
	Education system	Every year, a number of South Korean education technical visitors come to Finland to visit schools to learn from Finnish education system. They are sensitive to rankings and are not aware of recent changes in international tests results.	'I heard that Finland has a very good education system!' <p>'Finnish education is famous in Korea!'</p>
	Advanced nation	South Koreans look up to Finland as one of the model advanced nations in the Nordic region.	'Finland is a Nordic advanced nation!'
	High quality of living	South Korea's working culture has been a topic internationally for decades, and they envy the way the	'Finnish people must feel content with their lives.'



		Nordics have work-life balance. However, they feel it would not be applicable in South Korea.	
Negative images	Too far of distance	The physical distance between South Korea and Finland, as well as the time difference (6 hours) make it harder for Koreans to decide in choosing Europe as a destination.	'Finland is not a destination you can just pack up and go like Southeast Asia.'
	Not unique enough	The tour intermediaries mentioned that showing forests and lakes are not enough to convince customers to visit Finland.	'There is nothing that special in Finland that can suggest to my customers that it's a must-see.'
	No famous landmarks	The tour intermediaries had hard time coming up with any landmarks in Finland. Some mentioned Oodi library and Santa village.	'It is easier to sell tours if there is Louvre or the Eiffel tower. Or even the fjords in Norway.'
	Not much to see or do	Tour intermediary themselves admitted not having many ideas of Finland. Some of them visited Finland on a FAM trips, and they saw	'I was on the cruise going from Helsinki to Stockholm, and there were so many little islands. Is there anyone living there?'

		potentials during the visits.	Can tourists get there?'
	Cold climate	South Korea has four distinctive seasons, and therefore, in general, they prefer to travel to a warmer climate, except for some special occasions i.e. experiencing the northern lights or Santa village etc.	'Most of all, it's cold in Finland.'
	Expensive	Finland along with other Nordic countries are perceived as a pricey destination for South Koreans. Sometimes, those who have visited Norway or other Nordic countries, find Finland relatively inexpensive.	'I was surprised to see that Helsinki was not as expensive as I thought it would be.'
	Unfamiliar & unknown	When South Koreans travel to the Nordic region, they usually combine other Nordic countries in the itineraries. Even compared to Norway, Finland is much lesser-known destination.	'If someone picked the Nordic region as a tour destination, the person probably has already seen the rest of the world.'

Once the themes are clearly separated from one another, and described using codes, the author then finally convert the analysis into a research writing. The writing is presented in the next chapter and is done by selecting relative extracts and referencing back to the research questions and literature review. (Braun & Clarke 2012, 63.)

## 4 Results

The previous chapter provides current state of Finland's tourism destination images perceived by South Koreans and in this chapter. There are gaps between destination image the Finnish travel industry wants to present in the South Korean market and the images that South Korean outbound market has about traveling to Finland. In this chapter, interview data is further analyzed and categorized into challenges in promoting Finland as a tour destination, opportunities in promoting Finland, and development suggestions.

### 4.1 Challenges from negative tourism destination image of Finland perceived by South Korean tour intermediaries

The interviewees have extensive experiences and knowledge in dealing with South Korean outbound tourism and are familiar with their own market uniqueness as well as Finland's position in the tourism market on a world stage. Some of the answers reveal Korean stereotypes of visiting Finland or the Nordic region in general and revealed their lack of information and knowledge of Finland.

The following are the main challenges that were found during the interview process.

Table 3. The core challenges stated by the interviewees.

Core challenges	Number of times mentioned
Unfamiliar & Unknown	5
No famous landmarks	5
Not unique enough	4
Cold climate	4
Expensive	4
Too far of distance	4

Current information about South Korea report from 2022 by Business Finland states that one of the obstacles for South Koreans in choosing Finland as a destination is lack of information and not knowing what to do and where to go in Finland. Although Koreans have positive images of Finland, however visibility of Finland in papers and social media is few. (Business Finland 2021.)

#### **4.1.1 Unfamiliar image of Finland as a tourism destination**

Most interviewees commented on the emotional unfamiliarity of Finland as a destination.

Unfamiliarity with a destination can be caused by lack of information about the destination and lack of contacts with marketing activities from the destination.

Interviewees mentioned that due to unfamiliar image of Finland as a tour destination, it can make South Korean outbound tourists feel uncertain or anxious about choosing Finland as a destination. Although in the recent years, Finland has been introduced through television program to Korean audience, there is a strong consensus that Finland is not a usual tour destination.

#### **4.1.2 No famous landmarks familiar to South Korean tourism market**

Interviewees commented that South Koreans prefer visiting famous landmarks. This is not only because they want to take photos to show back home, but also, they want to see famous sites that they learned through textbooks at school or see well known landmarks that they are familiar with through media exposures.

Interviewees mentioned that a lack of famous landmark in a tour destination can be challenging to persuade their customers to purchase a tour to the destination. They commented that for Koreans a famous landmark is not only about artificial structures, but it includes beauty of nature. Some mentioned Eiffel tower or the Louvre Museum in Paris, and some mentioned Norwegian fjords. When asked about landmarks from Finland, some interviewees who have visited Finland mentioned the Sibelius monument and another mentioned Helsinki cathedral. Other interviewees were not familiar with any specific landmarks from Finland.

#### **4.1.3 Indistinguishable images**

When asked about tourism destination image of Finland to interviewees by showing photos from Visit Finland's webpages, some mentioned that the images are beautiful, but they could not have known that the photos are from Finland. One interviewee mentioned that Finland is one of the Nordic countries, and the interviewee does not have any special impression specifically towards Finland. Some interviewees confused other landscape with Finland and mentioned the high mountains in Finland which Finland does not have.

When a tour destination has an indistinguishable image from other destinations, it can be challenging to attract tourists and can be perceived as lacking unique features, and therefore tourists may be less motivated to visit and more likely to choose alternative destination that offer a more distinctive experience.

#### **4.1.4 Cold climate**

One of the strongest tourism destination images of Finland from the interview is that Finland has a cold climate, some interviewees described Finland having extreme cold climate. Cold climate can be a challenging tour destination image for some travelers, as they may prefer warmer weather and activities that are appropriate for the warmer weather conditions.

When asked about tourism destination image about aurora (the northern light) seeing activities, interviewees mentioned that when compared to Iceland or Canada, Finland is slightly lesser-known destination for aurora sightseeing.

#### **4.1.5 High cost for visit**

Tour destinations that are perceived as too expensive to visit can be a barrier for many, especially for those who are budget conscious. The interviewees revealed that South Korean outbound tourists have an impression of Finland being very expensive place to visit. The flight cost is already much higher compared to other nearby locations, then the image of the Nordic destination being very expensive is strong for South Korean tourists.

#### **4.1.6 Physical distance between Finland and South Korea**

Attracting tourists to a remote destination can be a challenging task. The interviewees all agreed that having Finnair connection between Seoul and Helsinki is extremely attractive. Interviewees also mention the fact that Helsinki is a travel hub for transit passengers, flying daily from Seoul, is very beneficial to promote Finland as a destination. However, the interviewees commented on the actual hours, 10 hours prior to the war in Ukraine, which is still a large barrier in deciding choosing Finland as a destination. With the elements of unfamiliarity of Finland's tourism destination image for South Korean outbound tourists added to the physical distance of over 10 hours of flight time, Finland loses its attractiveness as a tourism destination.

One interviewee mentioned the irony of choosing Finland as a travel destination based on its image of being a sustainable and environmentally friendly choice while flying a long distance with an air carrier.

### **4.2 Opportunities in tourism destination image of Finland perceived by South Korean tour intermediaries**

The following table contains core opportunities for Finland's tourism destination image improvement based on positive images stated by South Korean tour intermediaries.

Table 4. The core opportunities stated by the interviewees.

Core opportunities	Number of times mentioned
Clean nature	6
Finnair	5
Aurora (the northern lights)	4
Education system	3
Welfare system	3
Healing (well-being)	3

#### 4.2.1 Clean nature

All interviewees mentioned that Finland reminds of clean tourism destination image. Clean and beautiful nature images are crucial in tourism as nature is often one of the main attractions itself for tourists, and promoting pristine and well-kept natural environments through images can significantly impact the destination selection.

Clean and pristine tourism destination image can evoke emotions and create a sense of desire to escape to the destination. Having all interviewees commenting on clean nature of Finland showcases the clean and well-preserved natural images of Finland through various marketing channels have affected in improving Finland's tourism destination images in South Korea.

Clean nature images can also increase responsible and sustainable tourism seekers to Finland as South Korean society's awareness on green and sustainable tourism increases, therefore there are movements to travel to a destination that conserves the nature and preserve for future generations.

#### 4.2.2 Finnair

Interviewees also commented that having direct flight between Seoul and Helsinki is a huge advantage. Prior to the war in Ukraine began, Seoul-Helsinki flight connection was the shortest route to Europe from South Korea. Finnair also planned flights between the second largest city in South Korea, Busan and Helsinki route, but during the Covid pandemic period, the plan was scrapped.

Having a direct flight connection to South Korea from Helsinki ensures efficient travel planning for South Korean outbound tourism, and with Finnair's offering on extensive connection route network, it can be advantageous for travelers to explore not only Finland but combining different parts of Europe.

### **4.2.3 Aurora (the northern lights)**

Although interviewees mentioned the northern lights tourism of Finland, there are several other contenders promoting northern lights tourism and offering opportunities to witness the natural phenomenon. Interviewees stated that Iceland, Canada and Norway have been promoting northern lights tourism more actively in South Korea compared to Finland.

Observing northern lights is a costly and once-in-a-life experience for many South Korean outbound tourists, and at the same time offering adventure and outdoor activities such as snowshoeing, dog sledding, reindeer sleigh rides, snowmobiling, ice fishing, ice floating and many more. To Korean tourists, the northern lights tourism is usually sold together with visiting the Santa's village in Rovaniemi. There are also photography opportunities and cultural immersion by experiencing Sami lifestyle in Lapland.

### **4.2.4 Education system**

A half of the interviewees commented on the well-designed education system of Finland when discussing the tourism destination image of Finland. South Korea being one of the most competitive societies when it comes to educations, and naturally the stress is enormous. Finnish children achieving high academic performance has been introduced in South Korean news outlets, and the teachers' qualification, professionalism, and their focus on holistic development of children have been attracting South Korean educators' technical visits over the decade. Their technical visits are often combined with sightseeing and leisure activities.

Having the image of high achieving society with children studying in relaxed manner and supportive school system give Finland an opportunity to attract parents with young children and teenagers to visit Finland on holidays to observe the environment and the atmosphere.

### **4.2.5 Welfare system**

Interviewees stated that Finland has strong image of having a comprehensive welfare system, and these systems can have a positive impact on tourism as they represent quality of life. Interviewees also noted Finland being the World's Happiest Country, and some of them connected the title with presence of well-functioning welfare system.

Having a tourism destination image of comprehensive welfare system along with equal and honest societal images can attract outbound tourism from South Korea for cultural tourism. Finland's unique cultural identity as a well-functioning welfare state can bring responsible and sustainable tourism seekers.



#### **4.2.6 Healing (well-being)**

‘Healing’ tourism is commonly used in South Korea to describe traveling to a destination to promote mental and emotional health and wellness. When interviewees mentioned about healing tourism potential of Finland, they pointed out the clean and pristine nature, forest bathing, and outdoor activities in natural settings.

Interviewees also mentioned about tourists seeking wellness tours are attracted to activities that promote mental and emotional wellbeing in cultural theme, such as Finnish sauna experiencing and retrieving to cottages in the countryside.

### **4.3 Summary of challenges and opportunities in tourism destination image of Finland**

Through the interviews, the author discovered that Finland’s tourism destination image in general is positive among the interviewees and also in their observations of their customers’ opinions of Finland’s images. However, the attractiveness and willingness for traveling to Finland based on positive images was not big enough of a motivation. For instance, one interviewee said that he was not sure what to suggest once they send customers to Helsinki. He knew of a couple of churches and Sibelius monument, however, he did not know what sort of activities there are to do for staying more than one day.

With increased attention to sustainable and responsible tourism, Finland now has an opportunity to promote Finland in unique ways to attract South Korean tourists by developing a tailor-made marketing plans to attract them to Finland. The next chapter suggest a few ideas in developing digital marketing of promoting Finnish tourism in South Korea.

## 5 Suggestions for development: increasing attractiveness of Finland as a tour destination for South Korean outbound through digital marketing

In this chapter, the author explores developmental suggestions for digital marketing activities promoting Finnish tourism in South Korea to close the gap between perceived tourism destination images that Koreans have about Finland and what Finnish DMOs wish to be viewed as.

The suggestion is focused on content marketing that creates and shares relevant and engaging content, such as blog posts, articles, videos and social media posts to attract target audience. In content marketing practices consumers are not directly asked to buy a product or service, instead relative content in the form of solution to the subjects faced by consumers presented which in turn create the awareness about the product or service through media (Gurjar, Kaurav, & Thakur 2019, 295).

### 5.1 Target marketing strategy

Target marketing strategy is a marketing approach that divides a generalized market into distinct segments based on criteria. The first stage in target market strategy is segmentation which is a technique that business chooses to focus their effort on the certain group of customers. (Chaffey 2019, 166.)

Informed by	Stage of target marketing	Informs
Market research and analysis of customer data	<b>Segmentation</b> Identify customer needs and segment market	Market segment definition
		Persona development
		Customer experience requirement
Demand analysis	<b>Target marketing</b> Evaluate and select target segments	Select online targeting Target segments
		Online revenue contribution for each segment
		Customer lifecycle targeting
Competitor analysis Internal analysis	<b>Positioning</b> Identify proposition for each segment	Core brand proposition Online value proposition
		Online marketing mix
		Lifecycle brand development and proposition messaging
Evaluation of resources	<b>Planning</b> Deploy resources to achieve plan	Online marketing mix
		Restructuring
		Automated online customer contact strategy

Figure 10. Stages in target marketing strategy development (adapted from Chaffey 2019, 166)

Visit Finland Japan is an example of Business Finland segmentation of their target customers. If Finnish DMOs aspire to attract South Korean outbound tourism, having a focused marketing channel in South Korean language is essential in getting closer to the audience in South Korea. Furthermore, Finnish DMOs should segment South Korean outbound market categorized further by age, gender, income level, lifestyle or purchasing behaviors.

The author proposes targeting families with young children, since Finland is well known in South Korea for its education system as well as balanced lifestyle for its citizens. The focus is not on education and the direct result of education itself, however, the focus is on combination of promoting Finnish ways of relaxed learning style, taking care of one's wellbeing by spending time in the nature, and showcasing the slow-paced lifestyle while learning to explore different emotions.

Family group can go through further segmentation - those who are likely to pay a premium for high-end experiences and those who might be able to afford the high cost and prefer to stay in more affordable accommodations and choose inexpensive activities.

Once market segmentation and target market are selected, positioning Finnish tourism in a way that sets Finland apart from other destination is crucial. Since the most interviewees commented that they could not distinguish Finnish landscape from other Nordic countries' landscape, identifying what Finland seeks to effectively promote to South Korean outbound market is essential.

The following sets of captures from Instagram pages from Visit Norway( 807,000 followers), Visit Sweden( 342,000 followers), and Visit Finland( 414,000 followers) show how similar their images are for audience abroad.

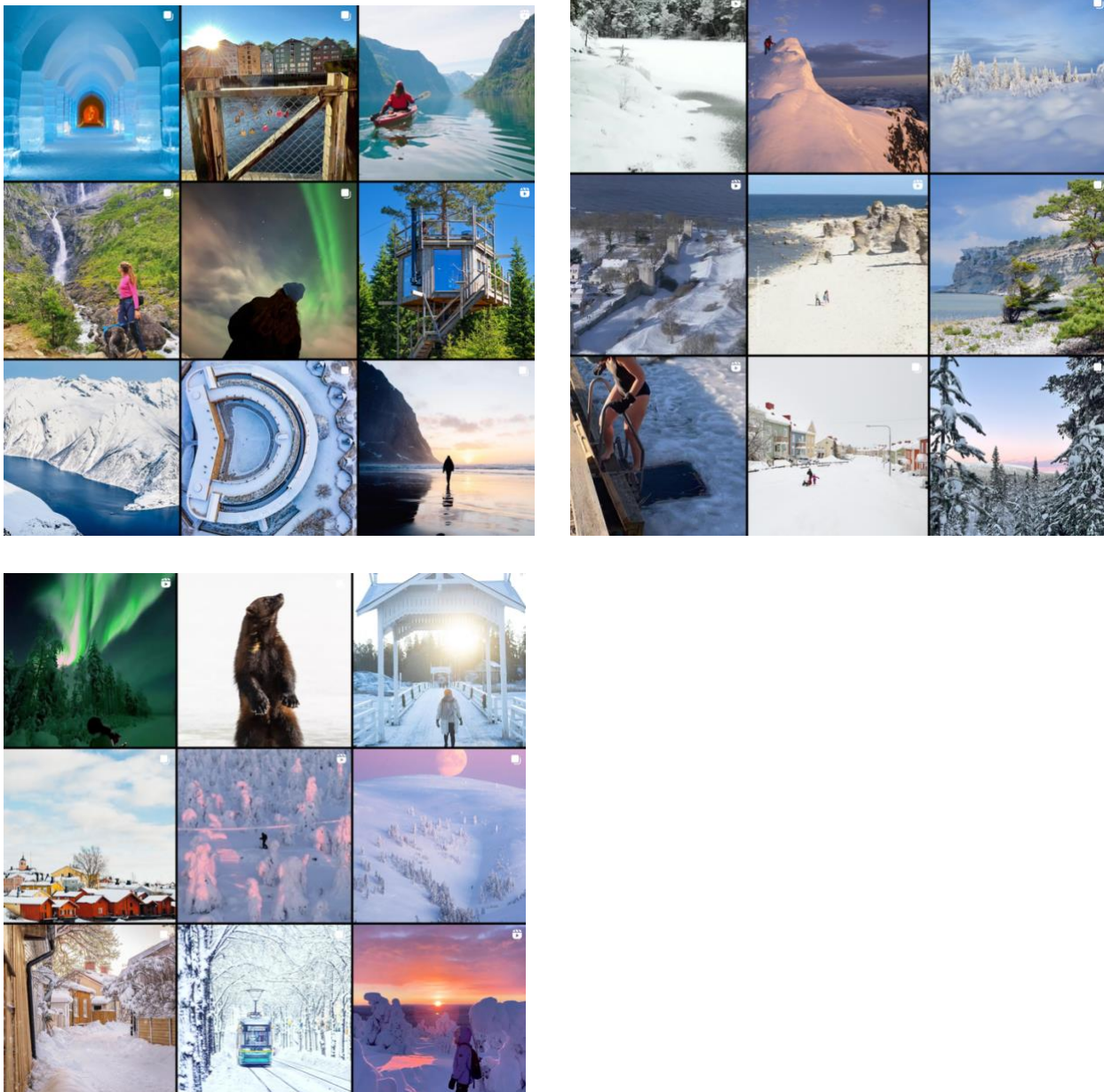


Figure 11. Visit Norway, Visit Sweden and Visit Finland image captures (Instagram 2022)

The author suggests that Finnish DMO to promote not only nature photos, but also more images of Finland that are culturally unique and differentiated which puts Finland on a favorable place that resonates with the target audience.

When planning target marketing in South Korea, Finnish DMOs must get familiarized on what the most effective channels of communication are.

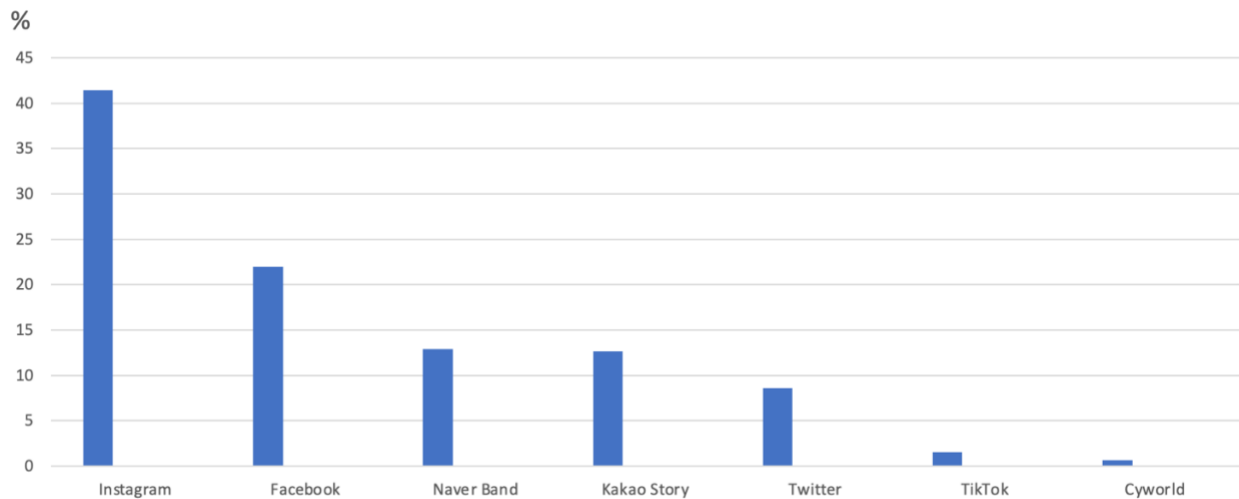


Figure 12. Most frequently used social media in South Korea as of July 2022 (adapted from Statista 2022)

Instagram by far is the most popular social media channel, followed by Facebook. Naver Band and Kakao Story together take up over 25% of the social media market. Google is not a popular search engine in South Korea, but Naver is. When planning and measuring digital marketing campaign success rates, Finnish DMOs should utilize only the channels that are the most applicable in the target market.

It is worth communicating in Korean language in South Korean outbound tourism marketing since it allows Finnish DMOs to effectively deliver messages to the target audience. Language plays an important role in conveying information, emotions, ideas and shows respect and appreciation for the local population. Delivering messages in Korean is also a good idea to form deeper connection with the target market to build trust and overcoming a language barrier.

## 5.2 Digital marketing suggestions to improve tourism destination image (TDI) of Finland in South Korean outbound tourism market

The following suggestions are based on analyzing the expert interview conversations to increase attractiveness of Finland as a tour destination for South Korean outbound tourism market. To make suggestions for Finnish DMOs that plans to promote their tour products and service towards South Korean market, Business Finland's vision for South Korean outbound tourism market is used: to become the most desired sustainable travel destination in the Nordic region by 2023 (Business Finland 2022). By year 2024, Business Finland aims to become the most desired sustainable development tourism destination for South Koreans, as well as the top destination for northern lights and healing travel destination while maintaining clean and safe image, as well as top

destination for aurora sightseeing (Business Finland 2022). Overall, their aim is to become the most trending European destination for nature and healing travel for South Koreans (Business Finland 2021).

### **5.2.1 Increasing familiarity and showcasing uniqueness of Finland while promoting sustainable tour destination through social media channels**

Unfamiliarity about Finland as a tourism destination can lead to potential visitors to avoid Finland consciously or unconsciously for visiting. To prevent this, DMOs can create a positive image of Finland through digital social media marketing campaign that highlights the unique features and attractions. Instead of showcasing beautiful and pristine nature of Finland that is already well-known to the audience, Finnish DMOs can share images and video clips of Finland's cultural heritage, Finnish design products, Finnish cuisine, and Finnish architecture.

A lack of famous landmark in Finland can present opportunities for Finnish DMOs to creatively promote their destination with unique cultural experiences and alternative attractions such as unique Finnish history and local experiences.

Finnish DMOs can focus on promoting sustainable tourism in South Korean market, empathizing environmental conservation to minimize the negative environmental impacts of tourism activities. Although Koreans must fly over 7,000 km to arrive in Finland, Finnish DMOs can empathize the aspects of cultural preservation supporting traditional practices, and economic benefits for local communities in Finland.

Additionally, education and awareness are keys to sustainable tourism for South Koreans. Through collaboration and partnerships with South Korean tour intermediaries, sustainable tourism starts from South Korea and continues throughout the stay in Finland. For instance, educating Koreans on responsible tourist behavior can start in South Korea through various digital marketing channels as well as from the moment they purchase a tour from tour intermediaries.

### **5.2.2 Raising awareness of Finland as the northern lights seeing destination**

To promote Finland as a northern light seeing destination, Finland can take on various marketing strategies to highlight its unique attraction and experiences that sets Finland apart from other well-known northern lights seeing destinations.

Cold climates can be a challenging tour destination for some travelers, however, with effective marketing strategies and right experiences, Finland in cold climate can be a successful tourism destination especially for northern lights seeing. South Koreans are quite familiar with the Santa in

Finnish Lapland, therefore when reinforced by strategic marketing campaigns and unique cultural elements of Finnish Lapland, attractiveness of visiting Finland for northern lights should increase.

DMOs can collaborate with Finnish people who can communicate in Korean language to promote Finland and provide authentic perspectives and stories of Finland. Another strategy is to collaborate and encourage South Koreans who are visiting Finland to share their positive experiences on social media platforms. South Korean travel-related social media (TSM) users are keen on receiving travel related information from a variety of sources, which must be believable and trustworthy (Hur, Kim, Karatepe & Lee 2017, 170). Visually compelling photos or videos from fellow South Koreans would normalize visiting Finland as a tour destination and create an emotional connection with future potential visitors.

Partnering with South Korean tour intermediaries is a crucial part of northern lights tourism. Tour intermediaries writing blogs, promoting and sharing photos of Finnish Lapland and northern lights on their own social media pages or websites can be effective marketing strategies.

### **5.2.3 Starting with stopover programs to overnight stays across Finland**

Currently no tour products are offered to Finland as a sole destination in South Korean outbound tourism market. While trying to increase overnight stays in Finland, DMOs can promote stopover programs with step-by-step guide to what to do and where to go is recommended. For South Korean visitors who are intimidated by the unknown Nordic destination, stopover programs when they visit more familiar European destinations might increase exposure of Finland as a tour destination.

Stopover programs allow airlines to promote the destination and may lead to extended stays at the destination. Stopover programs not only increase familiarity of Finland, but also bring economic benefit to otherwise overlooked destinations by generating tourism revenue through hotel booking, transportation, shopping, dining, and activities.

When considering stopover programs for visitors going to another country other than Finland, cross-border destination marketing can be considered. Cross-border destination marketing is a collaboration of two or more destinations to develop economic and political bridges. Cross-border marketing can increase customer experience and provide a bigger variety of attractions and activities. However, Cross-border marketing often can be challenging in a way that cross-border destinations may have limited financial resources, or their resources are unequally distributed between the destinations (Kozak & Buhalis 2019, 6-7). For instance, South Koreans traveling to Norway via Finnair can stay overnight in Helsinki as an extended leg of their trip, in this case, collaboration among DMOs in Finland and Norway may be beneficial.

#### **5.2.4 Increasing technical visits combined with incentive travel to promote Finland a 'healing' destination**

A technical visit is a type of niche tourism. A 'healing' tour to Finland to an average income earner in South Korea might feel like an expensive trip. When targeting technical visits group in incentive travels forms can attract more tourism to Finland's healing tours, as companies are funding the trips rather than individual travelers paying for the trips themselves.

For instance, as Finland is well-known in South Korea for its education system, Finnish DMOs can promote and arrange technical visits for teachers groups to schools, companies, and governmental organizations. A technical visit is an effective way to promote a destination as it often involves groups of individuals traveling to a destination to learn insights of a particular industry. Then the visitors can experience Finnish sauna, nature, cuisine, and local culture. These visitors not only bring economic benefits to a destination, but they also bring on future collaboration and enhance reputation of the destination and attract more visitors in the long run.

Digital marketing is an effective way to promote technical visits and incentive travel to Finland. Utilizing Finnish DMOs well-built website, DMOs can promote technical visits with high quality contents such as blogs, expert interviews, or videos. Email marketing is also a useful method to target industry in South Korean outbound tourism.

Continually engaging with target audience through digital marketing channels and responding to any inquiries promptly while providing relevant information and contents are key to successful digital marketing in promoting healing tourism in Finland.

Once waves of technical and incentive groups pave the way to healing tourism in Finland, encouraging them to leave testimonials and reviews on each customer journey, soon Finnish DMOs can change the marketing target customer groups to individuals and families.



## 6 Discussion

The objective of the thesis is to develop the digital destination marketing of Finland in South Korean outbound tourism to increase outbound travelers from South Korea to Finland. The results and analysis from this investigation provide valuable understandings of the various aspects of tourism marketing in South Korea and propose recommendations for enhancing the efforts by Finnish DMOs.

By having insights about the target customer groups, utilizing digital market channels that are specifically chosen for the target customers groups and experiment with marketing, Finnish DMOs can enhance their marketing effectiveness and attract more tourist. The findings in the thesis can serve as a guideline for destination marketing in formulating their marketing strategies and promoting sustainable tourism.

### 6.1 Conclusion

The thesis aimed to answer the following research questions: RQ1 What is the tourism destination image the Finnish travel industry wants to present in the South Korean outbound tourism market? RQ2 What is the tourism destination image of Finland to South Korean travel intermediaries? RQ3 What kind of destination marketing could close the gap? The following table presents summarized marketing development suggestions.

Table 5. Summary of suggestions to research questions.

	Research Question	Summary of development suggestions
1	What is the tourism destination image the Finnish travel industry wants to present in the South Korean outbound tourism market?	<p>Business Finland's vision for South Korean outbound tourism market is to become the most desired sustainable travel destination in the Nordic region by 2023. (Business Finland 2022)</p> <p>By year 2024, Business Finland aims to become the most desired sustainable development tourism destination for South Koreans, as well as the top destination for northern lights and healing travel destination. (Business Finland 2022) while maintaining</p>

		<p>clean and safe image, as well as top destination for aurora sightseeing.</p> <p>The most trending European destination for nature and healing travel. (Business Finland 2021)</p>
2	What is the destination image of Finland of South Korean travel intermediaries?	<p>Unfamiliar &amp; Unknown</p> <p>No famous landmarks</p> <p>Not unique enough</p> <p>Cold climate</p> <p>Expensive</p> <p>Too far of distance</p> <p>Clean nature</p> <p>Finnair</p> <p>Aurora (the northern lights)</p> <p>Education system</p> <p>Welfare system</p> <p>Healing (well-being)</p>
3	What kind of destination marketing could close the gap?	<p>Finnish DMOs can focus on promoting sustainable tourism, empathizing environmental conservation to minimize the negative environmental impacts of tourism activities.</p> <p>Finnish DMOs can empathize the aspects of cultural preservation supporting traditional practices, and economic benefits for local communities in Finland.</p> <p>Through collaboration and partnerships with South Korean tour intermediaries, sustainable tourism starts from South Korea and continues throughout the stay in Finland.</p>

		<p>DMOs can collaborate with Finnish people who can communicate in Korean language to promote Finland and provide authentic perspectives and stories of Finland. Also, encouraging South Koreans who are visiting Finland to share their positive experiences on social media platforms may be beneficial.</p> <p>Partnering with South Korean tour intermediaries about northern lights tourism.</p> <p>Stopover programs to increase familiarity of Finland, and bring economic benefit to otherwise overlooked destinations by generating tourism revenue through hotel booking, transportation, shopping, dining, and activities.</p> <p>Promoting technical visits and incentive travel which includes 'healing' elements. Promoting high quality contents such as blogs, expert interviews, or videos. Email marketing is also a useful method to target industry.</p>
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Overall, creating a positive and attractive tourism destination image (TDI) requires a combination of well-researched marketing strategies, engaging contents that are tailored to the local demographics, and collaboration between DMOs and travel intermediaries. By doing so, DMOs in Finland can help visitors overcome unfamiliarity and develop curiosity towards traveling to Finland, ultimately leading to increase of tourism from South Korean outbound market resulting in economic growth in Finland.

By embracing sustainable tourism principles and practices, Finnish DMOs can create more balanced approaches of marketing in South Korea that benefits not only conservation of natural environment of Finland but also local culture and thriving local communities while keeping visitors satisfied on their decision to visit Finland.

## 6.2 Limitations of the research

There were four limitations in this thesis research. First, sample size was limited to 6 expert interviews, which was relatively small number of participants due to physical distance and time limitations. This sample size might not provide a comprehensive representation of South Korean outbound tourism market. Also, the interview samples might be bias and subjective to interviewees' own experiences and preferences. Therefore, reliability of interview data is a concern.

Secondly, marketing suggestion was limited to digital content marketing suggestions. When focusing on narrow scope of digital content marketing strategies, other important aspects of marketing strategies may have been overlooked. With more time and resources, broader marketing strategies could be planned while entailing content marketing within the overall strategy.

While the thesis is limited to digital marketing, another marketing research could involve newspaper and magazine marketing for certain groups of target market. Although newspaper and magazines subscriptions have declined in recent years due to digital media, there are groups of people who appreciate traditional marketing channels. Such groups might be elderly travelers, niche market travel magazine subscribers, and opinion leaders.

Thirdly, influencer marketing was excluded due to research time limits. DMOs collaborate with influential individuals or social media personalities to promote destinations. Promoting Finland in Korean television shows are not covered in this thesis, although it is a popular way to promote a destination in South Korea.

Lastly, Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine may have significant impact on research results. Some of the expert interviewees started dealing with South Korean outbound tourism again since spring 2022 after a long break during Covid restriction. During the Covid-19 outbreak, many of the tour operators in South Korea halted their operation, therefore their information might not be up to date. Also, war in Ukraine increased the flight time and changed flight route of Finnair between Seoul and Helsinki. Therefore, there is slight discrepancy, when interviewees brought up Finnair connection between Seoul and Helsinki as one of the positives of travelling to Finland.

## 6.3 Reflections

Writing of the thesis was a transformative process for the author, as she improved upon analytic and critical thinking skills as well as systematic thinking skills. The author deepened her understanding of tourism marketing in general by doing various literature review during the research. She realized that researching what the outbound tourism market would like to experience

and expect, and adapting to the local needs are critical parts of enhancing positive tourism destination image marketing.

From designing the research to interviewing and analyzing the results was an enlightening journey as it was both intellectually stimulating and challenging at the same time. Having a comprehensive view of the tourism topic was the key to a successful thesis, although the author acknowledges the limitations in time and sample size of interviewees. Overall, writing the thesis not only developed essential academic skills, but also gave author practical subject knowledge that can expand the career paths in the future.

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## Appendix

Introduction - explaining of the thesis topic and purpose for the interview.

- 1) What are some images you, as a tour intermediary, have about Finland in general?
- 2) What are some images you, as a tour intermediary have about Finland as a tour destination on the following specific topics?
  - a. Sustainability
  - b. Nature travel
  - c. Healing travel
  - d. Culture
  - e. Friendliness
- 3) What are some images, stereotypes, or perceptions of Finland that you observed from potential South Korean outbound tourists?
- 4) What are the challenges as a tour intermediary to sell individual or package tours to Finland?
  - a. If you don't have a tour package to Finland only, how about the challenges to sell products for the Nordic countries including Finland?
  - b. How important are images that South Korean outbound tourists have about a destination when deciding on a tour destination?
- 5) What kind of tours are available to Finland from your agency? What are the reasons that travel agency exclude Finland as sole destination from your service range?
- 6) What are some destinations (countries or cities) where their destination images are similar to Finland for South Korean outbound tourists?
  - a. What are the novelty factors of Finland over the other destinations with similar images for South Koreans?
  - b. Why South Korean outbound tourists might choose the other destination over Finland?
- 7) Are you actively following Visit Finland's social media accounts? Or are you familiar with destination marketing activities from Finland in some other ways?
  - a. Are you familiar with the following images?
  - b. What are your thoughts and impressions of the images about Finland?



Figure 13. The Roihuvuori cherry orchard (Visit Finland. s.a.)



Figure 14. Moomin world, summer activity (Visit Finland. s.a.)



Figure 15. Fall foliage in Lapland's fells (Visit Finland. s.a.)



Figure 16. Santa's hotels (Visit Finland. s.a.)

- 8) What kind of support in marketing activities from Finland would be beneficial for your business to increase visibility and popularity that can increase sales of tour products for Finland?
- 9) What are your developmental suggestions for improving tourism destination image of Finland for South Korean outbound tourism market?