Parahyangan Catholic University

Faculty of Social and Political Science

Department of International Relations

Accredited A

SK BAN-PT NO: 3095/SK/BAN-PT/Akred/S/VIII/2019

Japan's Nation Branding towards International Market through Cultural Tourism Campaign

Undergraduate Thesis

By

Adinda Hadiarto

6091801079

Bandung

2022

Parahyangan Catholic University

Faculty of Social and Political Science

Department of International Relations

Accredited A

SK BAN-PT NO: 3095/SK/BAN-PT/Akred/S/VIII/2019

Japan's Nation Branding towards International Market through Cultural Tourism Campaign

Undergraduate Thesis

By

Adinda Hadiarto

6091801079

Supervisor

Prof. Sukawarsini Djelantik, Dra, M.Int.S., Ph.D.

Bandung

2022

Faculty of Social and Political Science
International Relations Department

Undergraduate Thesis Validation

Name   : Adinda Hadiarto
Student ID   : 6091801079
Title   : Japan's Nation Branding towards International Market
                                         through Cultural Tourism Campaign

Has been examined in the Undergraduate Thesis Defense
On Tuesday, January 11th, 2022
And thereby declared **GRADUATED**

The Board of Examiners
Chairperson and member
Jessica Martha, S.IP., M.I.Pol.   :

Secretary
Prof. Sukawarsini Djelantik, Dra, M.Int.S., Ph.D.   :

Member
Anggia Valerisha, S.IP., M.Si.   :

Verified by,

Dean for Faculty of Social and Political Science

Dr. Pius Sugeng Prasetyo, M.Si

Statement of Originality

I, who signed below:

Name : Adinda Hadiarto

Student ID : 6091801079

Department : International Relations

Title : Japan Nation Branding towards International Market through Cultural Tourism Campaign

Hereby declare that this thesis is the product of my own scientific writing and is not a work that has previously been submitted or published for an academic degree of other parties. Works and opinions from other parties are cited and written in accordance with scientific writing method.

I declare this statement with full responsibility and am willing to accept any consequences in accordance to applicable prevailing rules if it is later discovered that this statement is not true.

Bandung, January 3rd, 2022,

Adinda Hadiarto

6091801079

Abstract

Name   : Adinda Hadiarto

Student ID   : 6091801079

Title   : Japan's Nation Branding towards International Market through Cultural Tourism Campaign

Tourism is significantly relevant in terms of how a country's reputation may be constructed on an international scale. On the other hand, tourism is also a very complex field that requires synergy between a country's economy, domestic and international relations. This research has the objective to understand and explore strategies towards the international tourism market on how Japan brand themselves into a leading tourism nation, as Japan realizes its technology and culture as soft power components. Evidently, in the process of making Japan known as a tourism nation, Japan faced some problems and challenges where the global economic crisis and several big natural disasters hit Japan's vulnerable areas. How Japan rises back from the 'slump' issued a question of, "What are Japan's nation branding strategies towards the international tourism market?". This research uses the soft power theory which identifies Japan's nation branding concept and components – in efforts to project Japan on an international scale – are implemented by various local, national, and international governmental and non-governmental actors using the power of culture. To sum up, Japan achieves their internationally known reputation of tourism nation with cultural richness as pulling factor, through nation branding efforts by their cultural tourism campaign, "*Visit Japan*".

Keywords: Japan, tourism nation, cultural tourism, International Tourism Market, campaign, nation branding

Abstrak

Nama   : Adinda Hadiarto

NPM   : 6091801079

Judul   : *Nation Branding* Jepang terhadap Pasar Internasional melalui Kampanye Pariwisata Budaya

Turisme adalah sektor yang sangat relevan dalam bagaimana reputasi suatu negara dapat dibangun pada skala internasional. Di sisi lainnya, turisme sendiri juga merupakan bidang yang sangat kompleks, membutuhkan sinergi dari perekonomian, hubungan domestik dan internasional suatu negara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami dan mengeksplorasi strategi yang ditujukan ke pasar pariwisata internasional mengenai bagaimana Jepang menjadi negara pariwisata terdepan, karena Jepang menyadari kekuatan budaya dan teknologi yang dimilikinya sebagai komponen *soft power*. Dalam proses menjadikan negara pariwisata, Jepang dihadapi beberapa masalah dan tantangan seperti krisis ekonomi global dan bencana alam besar yang melanda wilayah rentan mereka. Bagaimana Jepang bangkit dari keterpurukan memunculkan pertanyaan akan, *"Apa strategi-strrategi nation branding Jepang terhadap pasar pariwisata internasional?"*. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori *soft power* yang mengidentifikasi nation branding Jepang – dalam memproyeksikan Jepang pada skala internasional – diterapkan oleh berbagai aktor pemerintahan dan non-pemerintahan dalam taraf lokal, nasional, dan internasional menggunakan kekuatan budaya. Secara singkat, Jepang mencapai reputasi negara pariwisata dengan kekayaan budaya sebagai faktor penarik melalui upaya nation branding melalui kampanye pariwisata budayanya, *"Visit Japan"*.

Kata kunci: *Jepang, negara pariwisata, pariwisata budaya, Pasar Pariwisata Internasional, kampanye,* nation branding

Preface

The concept of tourism has developed in a complex manner with an increasingly significant role in international relations. As significant as it gets, countries with distinct cultures are especially advantaged with opportunities to develop their socio-economy as well as to achieve desired reputation, or *nation-brand*. Japan is noticeably advanced in technology and culture, known as one of the most popular travel destinations in the world. Japan's reputation is certainly achieved through a very complex process of strategy-design and implementation involving multi-stakeholders, making Japan's international tourism strategies an interesting point to explore. Thus, this research studied around the topic of Japan's Nation Branding towards International Market through Cultural Tourism Campaign, specifically through three efforts carried out throughout Japan's massive progress during 2010-2015.

Through this research, I hope to contribute in discovery and explanation of Japan's nation branding efforts through their tourism sector. On the other hand, I am aware of my limited competence in this field as a student, therefore I would like to also apologize for possible loop holes, and is welcoming constructive critics and feedback.

Bandung, January 3rd, 2022

Adinda Hadiarto

Acknowledgements

With all honesty and gratitude, I would like to express how I wouldn't have gotten to this point and able to finish this process without everyone who has helped and encouraged me through completing every steps of my undergraduate thesis up to this point. Personally, the process I went through to finish this research was undeniably perplexing and was a 'thunderous' eye-opener. It was definitely not easy and I went through a lot of self-doubts and star losts, yet I am able to finish for the support I constantly get from the people around me.

First, I would like to thank my family for trusting and not giving up their hopes on me. Second, I would like to thank my supervisor Mba Suke for leading me throughout the process. Third, I would like to give my utmost appreciation to those who constantly support me; to Vianny and Halim for helping me through my self-doubts; to Jovita and Michelle for also helpfully making my process constantly endurable; let's graduate together!

I am also utterly grateful for William, Raphael, Matthew, Tristan, Jade, and Danesh for the trust and help for every operations and/or challenges I encountered. I would also like to thank Marvella, Lienny, Michael, Ryuko, Livia, Raras, Steffi, Regine, Fiona, and Mulan for the support and encouragement which brightened my process. Of course I am not forgetting Maharani, Sheila, and Rania for always accompanying and giving constant laughters unknowing time and distance throughout my progress, thank you.

Lastly, a big thank you also specifically to you who I designation sky and sun, by virtue of always encouraging, reminding me through words and melodies, to trust myself, furthermore that I can stay to finish off what I start.

I would like to state that I am also here always for everyone mentioned, in response to the support I've received. Before I end this remark, I would like to give my admiration to every one of International Relations Batch 2018 colleagues, who worked hard through a long process together to reach this point. It has been a memorable journey to meet and be with everyone. Once again, thank you for the neverending support, and I hope this outcome does not disappoint anyone.

Adinda Hadiarto

Table of Contents

List of Figures

CHAPTER III

List of Abbreviations

ANA	: All Nippon Airways
APEC	: Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	: Association of Southeast Asian Nations
EJRCF	: East Japan Railway Culture Foundation
FY	: Financial/Fiscal Year
G7	: Group of Seven
G20	: Group of Twenty
ILO	: International Labour Organization
IR	: International Relations
ITE	: International Tourism Expo
JATA	: Japan Assosication of Travel Agents
JET	: Japan Exchange and Teaching
JICS	: Japan International Cooperation System
JITR	: Japan Institute of Tourism Research
JNTO	: Japan National Tourism Organization
JR	: Japan Railway
JTA	: Japan Tourism Agency

MICE   : Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions

MLIT   : Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

MNCs   : Multi-National Companies

MoFA   : Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NGOs   : Non-Governmental Organizations

ODA   : Official Development Assistance

PR   : Public Relations

SDGs   : Sustainable Development Goals

SMEs   : Small and Medium Enterprises

UAE   : United Arab Emirates

UK   : United Kingdom

UN   : United Nations

UNESCO   : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNWTO   : United Nations World Tourism Organization

US/USA   : United States / United States of America

WHO   : World Health Organization

WTO   : World Trade Organization

WTTC   : World Travel & Tourism Council

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Ever since globalization along with technological and infrastructural development that supports world's economic growth, tourism sector has emerged as one of the important sectors which gives impact to countries' identity, politics, and economics. According to the World Trade Organization or WTO, tourism sector has become the main driving factor for the growth of global society's social-economics.[1] The concept of tourism allows global society to visit various places with different cultures in each location, and global society as consumers of tourism then contribute to local economy. Aside from that, tourism also offers variations of tourist attractions, entertainment spots, activities, cultures and experiences that can form a sense of satisfaction for global tourists.

Culture itself holds a very important key in the tourism sector, especially for countries with rich varieties of authentic cultures. Culture as an attracting factor in tourism holds a role as 'destination enhancer in place-making'. Destination enhancer means culture is an important component that is used and maximized in making a tourism destination more 'rich' and attractive.[2] Culture as a destination enhancer would be the focus of strategy implemented by all actors who are involved

---

[1] "Tourism – an economic and social phenomenon," The World Tourism Organization, https://www.unwto.org/why-tourism (accessed on March 23rd, 2021)

[2] Alok Kumar, "Cultural and Heritage Tourism: A Tool for Sustainable Development," *Global Journal of Commerce & Management Perspective* Vol 6, No.6 (November-December 2017): p.57 https://www.longdom.org/articles/cultural-and-heritage-tourism-a-tool-for-sustainable-development.pdf

in marketing and promotion of tourism spots, including government, certain private sectors, local communities and societies. Through these cultures every county has, a country will then have their national interest of economy, identity assurance, or other goals, based on the culture they have to promote towards global public or visiting tourists. This then creates a term called 'cultural tourism', where tourism of a country is based and promoted by offering the cultures that country owns. The existence of this new concept of 'cultural tourism' becomes a vessel for countries to promote their attractive factors to achieve their national interests. Cultural tourism can be the tool to accelerate a few sectors of a country, including social, economic, and identity aspects, as well as preserving cultural heritage and ensuring cultural consumption (to preserve it).

Tourism sector through cultural tourism can be used in a creative way and accessible towards a country's cultures through the support of technology. Technological development which has expanded the access towards tourism becomes an opportunity for many countries who wish to push their tourism sector through their rich cultures or such. Nowadays in this era, commercial or promotions are intensively carried out, therefore every country needs to be able to strategize and implement effective tourism marketing strategies, to then be able to attract tourists from various origins in the world. Not only attracting the attention of global society in a clear and easy way, but the strategy implemented also needs to be able to dodge or produce the least obstacles from both internal and/or external factors, in order to achieve effectiveness of the said strategy.

As an example, Japan as a country in the East Asian area is also one of the major economic power in the world, and they even rank third from hundreds of nations and countries across the world in Overall Rank scored by U.S. News and World Report.[3] Japan in a glance is known for their reputation as a very developed country in terms of technology, and high literacy in between their societies with the emerging globalization as well as modernization. Advanced technology in Japan also makes the country known in the world as one of the leading countries in terms of not only motor vehicles and electronics, but also entertainment and service industry which includes wide varieties of culture. Japan is also known for their wide range of traditional, modern, and mixed culture as globalization and modernization goes on, and those cultures are widely known in global public's eyes.

Being a country that holds wide variations and rich cultures, Japan has so many unique and one-of-a-kind cultural traditions, such as Japanese Tea Ceremony, calligraphy, *ikebana* or the art of arranging flowers (translated as "making flowers alive"), traditional clothing called *kimono*, and so on. Aside from authentic traditions, Japan is also known for their wide range of culinary food, one of the most popular ones being *sushi*, and so many other foods/dishes which are correlated to their cultural traditions. Not only cultural traditions and culinary, Japan is also a home to various traditional martial sports back from the eighth century, which is called *sumo*.[4] Aside from the traditional sport, other martial sports' origins are also

---

[3] "Japan Rankings," U.S. News, https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/japan#country-ranking-details (accessed on March 30th, 2021)

[4] "Overview of Japan," U.S. News, https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/japan#country-ranking-details (accessed on March 30th, 2021)

from Japan, such as *kendo*, *judo*, *aikido*, *karate*, and the *samurai* culture. The country's culture is of course not only limited to old traditions, but Japan as a developed country with developed technology also has a wide variety of modern cultures that we all know as Japan's pop culture. Pop culture also includes a wide range of modern arts, like *anime* and *manga* drawings, cosplay culture, idol music, and such.

Other than being a country full of both traditional and modern cultures, Japan also has a lot of – well-known or not – interesting tourist attraction spots that are attracting a lot of attention from tourists coming from different parts of the world. Many of the places or landmarks included by UNESCO as *World Heritage sites* are located in Japan, a few of them are such as historical monuments in Kyōto (1993) and Nara (1998) City, *Genbaku Dōmu* in Hiroshima (1996), silver mining area in Shimane Prefecture (West Honshu, 2007).[5] A lot of those locations in Japan are rich in thick and sure traditional values, in which Japan takes it as one of the tools they can work on to increase and escalate Japan's reputation as a country, moreover as a tourism country, in the global eyes. This opportunity they found may also become a chance to push the tourism sector that can further help Japan reach their national interests.

As country rich in cultures, heritage and legacy, Japan – since they rise as an economic power – have become an interesting spot of tourism appointed by a lot of people, yet their existence as a tourism country was not yet significant before the

---

[5] "Japan: Cultural institutions," Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/place/Japan/The-arts (accessed on March 30th, 2021)

2010s. Quoting data retrieved by *The World Folio*, Japan in their tourism sector since before 2010 has gotten around 16 to 18 million of US dollars every year through expenses made by tourists who came to their borders. On the other side, tourists contributors mostly came from People's Republic of China, Taiwan, and South Korea – which points out the fact that their tourists mostly came from countries within the same region – and data pointed out that 80% of tourists who visited Japan are from Asia and that they stayed fairly only for a short amount of time.[6] As a response to the data provided, Japanese government since then has started to intensify their promotion efforts as a tourism country towards more new tourists on a global scale, excelling beyond just the Asian region.

To support their tourism sector, *Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism of Japan* (shortened as *MLIT Japan*) established *Japan Tourism Agency* (shortened as *JTA*) which officially started operations on October 1st of 2008. The said agency especially functions to upgrade the tourism sector of Japan, as well as achieving a milestone of Japan's vision to be a globally-known tourism country in the coming years as their main goal. *Japan Tourism Agency* has been doing efforts on strengthening their tourism sector by expanding their spectrum of tourism exchange internationally, some of those efforts are such as: (1) creating and carrying on some tourism campaigns, (2) ensuring the readiness of all tourist attraction spots in Japan, (3) adjusting the country with tourists' needs towards available facilities and infrastructures throughout the whole excursion/tour

---

[6] "Japan Endless Discovery," The World Folio, http://www.theworldfolio.com/files/file/report-58876fe5daa53.pdf (accessed on April 22nd, 2021)

experience, (4) promoting Japan's tourism through various medias and methods, as well as (5) mobilizing and encouraging their own citizens to also travel overseas as an exchange, but also ensuring their safety overseas.[7]

1.2 Research Problem Identification

One of the tourism campaigns carried by Japan in the past to promote their tourism sector is the "*Yokoso*! Japan" as a part of the long-term Visit Japan campaign in 2009. This tourism marketing campaign is supported by inviting various overseas media to Japan so those invited media parties could make coverages, advertisements, and information in various TV stations overseas, websites, as well as making tourism exhibitions while also cooperating and negotiating businesses with many of overseas tourism agencies, as well as offering educational trips to Japan for young people from overseas.[8] All of these efforts were hoped to help the Japanese government to mainly multiply the amount of tourists that come to Japan, as well as providing support towards local products and businesses that can prop up Japanese societies' economic situation.

MLIT Japan through the *Japan Tourism Agency* as a part of Japanese government has been intensifying those promotions of Japan as a tourism country along with their Visit Japan campaign, through publishing Japan tourism's very own logo and slogan that covers their whole campaign projects. The logo and slogan

---

[7] "About the JTA," Japan Tourism Agency, https://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/en/about/index.html (accessed on March 30th, 2021)

[8] Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism, White Paper on Tourism in Japan, 2010, p.31-32, https://www.mlit.go.jp/common/000221175.pdf (accessed on March 23rd, 2021)

campaign is called the "*Yokoso*! Japan", which involves collaborations between the Japanese government and Japanese citizens. The said campaign, although carried in a well manner, still has a few loopholes about branding efforts and one of them is how they emphasized their Japanese word "*Yokoso*".[9] This slogan has created different opinions and arguments because the whole campaign should be carried based on their campaign name and meaning. Experts in nation brandings thought that the use of Japanese in the slogan is considered as unique and one of a kind, on the other side, they evaluated that using a less familiar language and non-international language will make it hard to be understood and remembered by the public, requiring some effort to find out the meaning and remember. Though having some split arguments regarding the campaign itself, it still managed to achieve a positive outcome in the form of a burst of 3 million increase in number of overseas tourists in 2008, earning a total of around 8 million tourists, nevertheless a better outcome than their 2003 record of 5.21 million tourists.[10]

Visit Japan campaign through the implementation of "*Yokoso*! Japan" have been carried on since 2003 and intensified in 2008, but the campaign was not effectively carried out as they had external obstacles that hit them. Japan when strategizing *Visit Japan* campaign through "*Yokoso*! Japan" apparently did not calculate enough regarding what happened in the international economy market, nor did Japan planned a way out of the economic crisis. With that being said, those

---

[9] Keith Dinnie, "Japan's Nation Branding: A Stakeholder's Approach," *Japan Spotlight*, Special Articles 3 (July-August 2010): p.37, accessed on March 30th, 2021, https://www.jef.or.jp/journal/pdf/172th_special_article03.pdf

[10] MLIT, *White Paper on Tourism in Japan*, p.31-32

obstacles were the global economic crisis, followed by a decline in exchange rate of yen as Japan's currency, added with the spread of new influenza virus outbreak in 2009.[11] With all those obstacles and addition of how Japan is vulnerable towards natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis, number of overseas tourist arrivals dropped by a lot. This had made Japan's tourism sector 'fall' and lost attention for quite a while.

Simultaneously happened with the "*Yokoso*! Japan" campaign that was carried out intensively, global economic contraction occurred around 2007 to 2009 which left a very big impact towards all sectors of countries, naturally including the tourism sector. All individuals and community groups in surviving the economic turmoil canceled or postponed their originally planned travel arrangements. According to a report made by WHO until October 2009, the crisis had affected the tourism sector massively for around 15 months or two years, resulting in recession in the sector. Peak of the crisis towards the tourism sector was seen in around March 2009, where tourism was severely regressive with index downfall by 12% from the previous year, before finally reviving slowly in the following year.[12]

This global economic turmoil and crisis towards the tourism sector affected countries who offer a big tourism market severely. As a result, Japan got the effect of the crisis as Japan is of course listed as one of the destination countries for so many tourists, for having a lot of tourism cooperation with a lot of countries. As

---

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] "Economic Crisis, International Tourism Decline and Its Impact on The Poor," UNWTO and ILO,
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08ac040f0b652dd0008a0/UNWTO_29Nov11.pdf

reported by the *UN World Tourism Organization* (UNWTO), Japan before the crisis itself has approximately 25 million of US dollars for tourism expenditure purposes,[13] yet to be added with the amount of damage after the crisis. Apart from the damage received, there was of course a big and drastic downfall of demand towards tourism from overseas to Japan, which resulted in losing momentum that could help them reach consumer confidence in tourism, and needing more time to revive the trust.[14]

Entering the year of 2010 after the global economic crisis has passed, tourism sectors become a very important instrument to be re-intensified. Tourism sector has the ability to support every countries' agenda of 'replanting' their country's certain or wanted image, as well as re-pushing the economic sector through lots of job opportunities for societies. The significance of tourism sector in re-establishing the world and countries' economic condition could be seen from how the UNWTO reports that tourism industry has compensated the costs made by a growth of 7% overseas tourists arrivals, and 7% is counted as a big number coming from one sector.[15]

1.2.1 Research Problem Description and Scope

The passing of global economic crisis was responded to by the Japan government by remodeling their tourism campaign to revive their tourism sector

---

[13] "Japan crisis has major impact on regional travel and tourism flows," CAPA - Centre for Aviation, March 25th, 2011, https://centreforaviation.com/analysis/reports/japan-crisis-has-major-impact-on-regional-travel-and-tourism-flows-48553 (accessed on March 30th, 2021)

[14] *Ibid*.

[15] UNWTO and ILO, "Economic Crisis"

which was heavily impacted. From January to March 2010, Japan had organized and executed a big survey regarding 'holiday taking', and conducted a discussion forum named "Vacation Symposium".[16] Throughout their preparation time, Japan has taken the research steps they need to plan out in depth their tourism campaign, as well as having a better comprehension of 'tourism' concept from all sides, including economy, industry, jobs and education, etc. Based on that research, Japan created a brand new tourism campaign in 2010 by upgrading their hospitality, ensuring overseas tourists' convenience, giving security guarantees for everyone and every party, opening a new tourism sphere (by expanding tourism to all cultural aspects), and keeping the natural environment preserved. This then was expected to develop the numbers of Japan tourism, as well as to restore Japan's image of a country rich in culture to visit.

To fully restore the trust of overseas consumers for Japan tourism, as well as to restore familiar and usual life and tourism patterns for tourists, Japan has started their new tourism campaign ever since 2010 by underlining their culture aspects, which are planned for a longer term than the previous campaign. This research therefore focuses on **implementation of a newly strategized Visit Japan cultural tourism campaign** as the subject of study, specifically in **2010-2015** based on complete data and documents released, with an in-depth breakdown of contributions made by the **Japanese government together with media, private sectors, and also Japan civil societies** as the actors.

---

[16] MLIT, *White Paper on Tourism in Japan*, 35

This research focuses on **implementation of a newly strategized Visit Japan cultural tourism campaign** as it is one interesting issue to breakdown due to how Japan has been attracting the attention of foreign tourism. Hiroshi Mizohata as the commissioner of the *Japan Tourism Agency* mentioned how Japanese government enacted their "New Strategy for Growth" as an initiative for growth and development to make Japan a tourist destination. This then is also highlighted with how the Guardian Travel Awards 2010 annouonced that Tokyo was voted as No. 1 in favorite city for travel with 97.4% high satisfaction rating, and Japan as No. 2 in the favorite long-haul country category.[17]

This research limits the study to events in **2010-2015** due to Japan tourism's rapid growth after five years of tourism campaign that started at the end of 2015. As reported by The World Folio, overseas residents' visit numbers in Japan made a high jump from 12+ millions of visits to almost 20 million visits only in 2015.[18] The World Folio, as a worldwide renowned dynamic economic information provider, released a report regarding the implementation of tourism campaign to record the development of Japan tourism and image in global eyes. Japan's effo rtsthrough 2010-2015 are seen as remarkable for their rapid growth after overcoming the economic crisis.

This research also seeked the attractiveness of actors included in Japan's tourism campaign implementation. From the start of the implementation, Japan has been mobilizing and assembling different actors involved such as divisions within

---

[17] Government of Japan through The Cabinet Office, *Highlighting JAPAN*, Vol. 4 No. 9, Japan: January 2011, https://www.gov-online.go.jp/pdf/hlj/20110101/20110101all.pdf (accessed on October 28th, 2021)

[18] The World Folio, *Japan Endless Discovery*

Japan **governmental** bureaucracy, involvement of local and transnational **private business sectors** that are based on tourism and cruising business, as well as the cooperative participation from **local communities and societies** in Japan.[19] The diverse culture Japan owns and holds has deservedly become a power source of attraction for tourism towards overseas tourists, therefore Japan has designed a new **cultural tourism campaign** to rebuild their way to reach their prestige of culture and tourism.

1.2.2 Research Question

From the research problem scope written above, this research questions, **"What are Japan's nation branding strategies towards the international tourism market?"**

1.3 Purpose and Contribution of Research

This research is aimed to explain efforts made by Japan towards global audience of international tourism market from their cultural tourism sector as soft power diplomacy, to earn certain nation-brands. This research features Japan's cultural tourism sector main effort which is the *Visit Japan* campaign. For contribution purposes, this research is done to help give insights towards its readers regarding how crucial tourism is as one of Japan's significant and notable sectors in promoting the country globally. Aside from that, this research is also intended to explain nation branding as one of the concepts of diplomacy which Japan used as a

---

[19] *Ibid.*

strategy. Then, this research also has the objective to be able to become material for further research.

1.4 Literature Review

A few published and available research journals have studied nation branding efforts Japan has been pushing. These journals and articles then have become basis for this research. There are four articles from different research and academic journals used as research basis, and each of them gives insights towards the importance of Japanese culture elements as a tool for diplomacy, the importance of both traditional and modern cultures, and the importance of the existing rural heritage and even areas beyond metropolises.

The first article is written by Keith Dinnie with the title "*Japan's Nation Branding: Recent Evolution and Potential Future Paths*".[20] This article argues that Japan becomes a country with nation branding strategies that we all can expect to keep developing better and stronger, helping the country to reach its goals on a global level. This argument begins from a view that various countries including Japan have started to realize the importance and urgency of nation branding as a part of public diplomacy strategy, as soft power and public involvement matters. Japan in the beginning was criticized as a country that was still lacking in soft power due to a few main reasons, such as lack of readiness in international languages (English) as the easiest way to bridge communication with overseas public, and

---

[20] Keith Dinnie, "Japan's Nation Branding: Recent Evolution and Potential Future Paths," *Journal of Current Japanese Affairs* (February 2008), https://www.brandhorizons.com/papers/Dinnie_JapanNB.pdf

remaining slight xenophobia in between Japan citizens that has created what they call 'national isolation', or lack of openness to external parties. This then was responded to by Japan through intensification of their nation branding which includes efforts like 'local brands' (in this context, is culture) promotion towards foreign countries, and generally a better public diplomacy strategy. From this point onwards, Japan is now seen as a country which steps forward from having economic power to becoming a cultural superpower with their culture elements such as architecture, fashion, animation, as well as food and beverages.

The second article is by Koichi Iwabuchi, titled "Pop-culture diplomacy in Japan: soft power, nation branding and the question of 'international cultural exchange'.[21] Iwabuchi emphasized Japan's public diplomacy projection through culture has yet to reflect their aspiration to do cultural exchange. Japan is acknowledged to have started their cultural diplomacy in the beginning to change global perception of 'anti-Japan', especially from Southeast Asian countries right at the start of post-colonialism era. This article then pointed out that Japan had carried a one-way projection for their public diplomacy; from Japan to overseas public. On the other hand, the said projection created two implications; (1) conflict towards variations of internal and traditional cultures that are yet to be empowered, and (2) lack of projection towards domestic or internal audience itself. This article considers that nation branding must be projected to both internal audience (domestic citizens) and external audience (overseas public) to give one mutual and

---

[21] Koichi Iwabuchi, "Pop-culture diplomacy in Japan: soft power, nation branding and the question of 'international cultural exchange'," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, 4 (2015): 419-432), doi: 10.1080/10286632.2015.1042469

same understanding of the image its country wants to achieve, as well as giving their citizens a sense of nationalism ownership. In this case, Japan was given advice to open a diplomacy that can neutralize and empower both traditional and modern culture, to both its citizens and overseas public.

The third article is written by Desideria Cempaka Wijaya Murti and titled "Performing rural heritage for nation branding: a comparative study of Japan and Indonesia".[22] Although this article is comparative, this article also specifically described nation branding efforts made by Japan that can be a basis to further research. This article emphasizes on how brand or image of Japan (and Indonesia in its comparison) are represented mainly in a big portion by what they call as rural heritage culture, local societies' legitimation of Japan's collective identity which they want to pursue for. Research from this article stated that Japan has been building their image through three points; discourse of space, discourse of people movements, and discourse of nation branding. This then is carried out specifically through their tourism sector that is promoted globally by Japan themselves (and Indonesia in the article's comparative section). This article lifts two important points that become the key to realizing a certain wanted image through global tourism implementations, which are local principles and commitments to conserve existing cultural heritage spaces.

The fourth article with the title "Prefectural branding in Japan – Tourism, National Parks and the Shinshu brand" which is written by Thomas Jones, Shin

---

[22] Desideria Cempaka Wijaya, "Performing rural heritage for nation branding: a comparative study of Japan and Indonesia," *Journal of Heritage Tourism* (2019), doi: 10.1080/1743873X.2019.1617720

Nagata, Monta Nakajima, and Kenichiro Masuyama.[23] This article focused more on regional branding as a part of Japan's public diplomacy through the tourism sector. Rural areas or suburbs outside the modern cities in Japan after the post-war era were left a lot and those places had experienced depopulation due to urbanization trends, which then created a lack of effective management for tourism sites in rural areas. This then was rated to give a negative implication towards Japan's public diplomacy efforts to promote those places, and this resulted in Japan implementing a more detailed tourism strategy in describing and emphasizing each area. The strategy was carried out under various jurisdiction of central government to supervise and do a centralized and controlled management. This article in general argues that to do branding in two ways to harmonize their brand identity with image they are pursuing, Japan would need to include active cooperation between both central and regional governments, also all other parties related, to maximize their tourism sector.

From what these few articles have studied, the discussions made have a few similar and different assumptions or perspectives towards the role of culture in nation branding as a strategy of Japan's public diplomacy. Based on their perspectives to those things, these four articles have mentioned the importance of culture Japan owns for their tourism sector.

Compiling studies from said articles, Japan's practice of diplomacy through nation branding strategies have yet to include both traditional and modern cultures

---

[23] Thomas Jones, Shin Nagata, Monta Nakajima, and Kenichiro Masuyama, "Prefectural branding in Japan – Tourism, National Parks and the Shinshu brand," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 5, 3 (2009): 192-201, doi: 10.1057/pb.2009.13

to the fullest, as well as well-planned deep details, and yet to involve all actors from various or multiple levels. This is seen as a loophole because the study case they took as a study for research was valued as not enough to justify the concept of nation branding Japan wants to pursue. Responding to the said loophole, this research would like to fill those research gaps by exhibiting a new study case of Japan's new *Visit Japan* campaign strategy starting from 2010, as an exemplary implementation that may explain the concept of nation branding as a part of public diplomacy. The cultural tourism campaign carried out by Japan is also taken specifically to fill the research gaps because complete data is available and Japan has been improving rapidly ever since.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This research views and studies the case through a concept called nation branding, in efforts of diplomacy through a country's soft powers from various levels of actors. This train of concepts is a part of the soft power theory which is viewed under the **neoliberal institutionalism perspective** in the international relations study. One of the scholars for neoliberal institutionalism in IR study includes Joseph Nye, and Robert Keohane who mentioned that every country has a sense of interdependence which then creates a mutually beneficial situation. The existing complex international system with interdependence between countries creates a few important elements in international relations, and one of them being

multiple channels or multiple actors and ways.[24] This would mean that in neoliberal institutionalism, interdependence is created mutually between countries but also with the contributions of other actors such as organizations, companies and institutions, transnational societies and existing bureaucracies in every level; local, national, and/or global.

Another important element that underlines how neoliberal institutionalism views IR is multiple issues, where international relations is viewed as very diverse and overlapping, therefore the interdependence and policy coordination to maintain world order and stability.[25] Independence that stimulates policy coordination for orderliness is what underlies the commence of diplomacy. Diplomacy itself can be defined as a practice of interactions between various different actors to achieve their own goals as well as their shared goals through certain strategies. Referring to international relations, diplomacy is associated as a negotiation practice that is commenced by two or more countries and/or other actors in international level, to discuss various aspects including peace, trade, war, economy, culture, environments, human rights, and other global issues.[26]

One of the theories that study the contribution of various actors not only states in diplomacy was introduced by Joseph Nye, with what we call as **soft power**. This theory gives a view that a state is likely to achieve their wanted goals through diverse efforts, to make other states 'admire' the values they have which has helped

---

[24] Bob Sugeng Hadiwinata, *Studi dan Teori Hubungan Internasional: Arus Utama, Alternatif, dan Reflektivis* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2017), p.98
[25] Hadiwinata, op.cit.
[26] Kishore Chakraborty, *Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary* (Berlin: Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, 2013), p.38

them into a successful diplomacy. Efforts made through soft power for diplomacy are more to agenda-setting and/or other non-military and non-economic sanctions plans that attract other countries naturally.[27] Interest and attention from external parties to the associated country holds a big role towards politics and international relations, and this is long realized by all political leaders.

Nye argues that soft power embraces more than just 'persuasion' and ability to influence societies, although such influence is also a main point of soft power goal. On the other hand, soft power has become a resource owned by the associated country through their own unique values.[28] Attractiveness and appeal earned through soft power of a country are sourced from values the said country owns through their culture, policy practice in domestic and foreign/international scope, as well as how the said country executes their international relations with various countries and/or actors.

In short, the explanation above implies that soft power depends on three main resources, which are culture, political values, and foreign policies implemented by the country.[29] Foreign policy itself is defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as 'the policy of a sovereign state in its interaction with other sovereign states.'[30] From this explanation, foreign policy has become, in a sense, a country's strategized or planned certain behaviors towards other states, whether it

---

[27] Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), p.5

[28] Nye, op.cit, p.6

[29] Nye, op.cit, p.11

[30] *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "foreign policy," accessed October 28th, 2021, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/foreign%20policy

is about any of a country's emerging sectors; politics, security, socio-economic, cultural, etc.

Thus, soft power is increasingly becoming more important especially in this era of modernization and globalization of information, as an effect of the rapid social-economy growth happening globally. This growth has made the significant emergence and cruciality of non-state actors, in comparison to just or only governmental or official acts known as hard power. Nowadays, soft power is done by so many non-governmental organizations and institutions from diverse levels, from local to global, as well as from commercial companies that take advantage of popular culture to help governments in achieving national goals as they also pursue more profit.[31]

This then implies that diplomacy that is carried out through soft power includes active contributions and roles from non-state actors starting from the private sector and local to multinational companies (MNCs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil societies, etc. Following the importance of soft power, there comes the concept or theory of multi-track diplomacy. **Multi-track diplomacy** was first founded by scholars Louise Diamond and John McDonald, which expanded a distinction of diplomacy from track one (governmental action) and track two (non-governmental action) that was introduced by Joseph Montville back in 1982. This theory explains that there are several tracks or ways of approach towards conflict resolution in the international world. There are nine tracks, and those include government, professionals, business, private citizens, research /

---

[31] Nye, op.cit, p.32

training / education, activism, religion, funding, as well as public opinion / communications.[32] In this theory, the government acts as official actors of policy making and peacebuilding through formal processes. Business, on the other hand, provides peace and development activities through economic opportunities. Citizens and other personal involvements are another track where diplomacy is made through exchange process or from organizations and special-interests groups. Research, training, and education is another track where it relates to diplomacy through researching and training from educational institutions towards certain international issues. In addition, communications or the media is yet another track of diplomacy where public opinion is given facility to be expressed and gets shaped.

As multi-track diplomacy gets carried out through soft power, a country surely has their own goals to achieve, and one of the main goal is known as **nation branding**. The term 'nation-brand' itself is defined by a scholar named Keith Dinnie as a combination of multidimensional elements that make up and differentiate a country from other countries, based on its own cultures, towards a specific targeted audience.[33] From said definition, nation branding may be interpreted as an effort made by a country to build their own 'mark' or brand distinctive to them through long term strategies, to give a long-lasting and impactful effect, towards their audience who are targeted societies of other countries. The importance of nation branding in creating the image of a country in the international's eyes is something that is increasingly realized by a lot of countries

---

[32] John W. McDonald, ret., "The Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy," *Journal of Conflictology* Volume 3 No 2 (2012): 67-68, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.7238/joc.v3i2.1629

[33] Keith Dinnie, *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice* (Oxford: Elsevier, 2008), p.15

nowadays, moreover because the concept of nation branding also encourage various good impacts such as: (1) attracting tourists, (2) attracting foreign investors to invest in their country, (3) attracting higher education students to come as well as more skilled workforce, (4) increasing export, (5) increasing currency stability, (6) restoring international credibility and investors' trust, (7) increasing the country's rank and influence in the international field, (8) increasing international partnership, and (9) jacking up national development.[34]

In particular, Dinnie mentioned that majority of the tourist attractions and destinations in tourism sector hold a big influence in creating a unique country identity in the international eyes for a good nation branding.[35] The existence of tourism as a tool that gives access to cultural experience for its' consumers – tourists – makes a strong correlation between tourism and culture with what we know as cultural tourism. Quoting from Dutch National Tourist Office's words which was reported on a publication by the UNWTO:

> "Cultural tourism can be defined as traveling outside the usual environment for the supply of cultural or cultural life, in order to visit or participate in cultural activities. For example a visit to a museum, a concert, a historic landscape or monument but also active participation to/in folklore or a cooking course."[36]

Cultural tourism itself is also defined as the arrival of societies to a location because of their sense of interest in historical attractions or cultural spots

---

[34] Dinnie, op.cit, p.17

[35] *Ibid*.

[36] United Nations World Tourism Organization, 978-92-844-1896-1, p.16, "Tourism and Culture Synergies," 2018, https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284418978

available in those certain locations.[37] Culture is an invaluable and precious component that gives a sense of authenticity, and also functions as the local identity of a certain part of a country that is increasingly recognizable in an increasingly globalized world.[38] To promote, publicly accessible informational sites / vessels that are offered by the tourism sector always propose such diverse culture offerings starting from the aesthetics and natural beauty of the destinations, openness and friendliness of locals and workers towards their clients, and so many others yet to be mentioned. From all those things mentioned, a country is able to construct and build their own unique and distinct image from other countries to what they want to be known by others.[39] A country's identity will always refer to what the associated country has as an essential, and is then used to maximum effort to create a perception that the country would like to achieve.

In the study of nation branding, the image of a country covers the entire 'flavor' of the said country as a whole, which includes the political, economic, historical, cultural and other dimensions. Public society, as the target audience of nation branding, has external factors in the form of personal preferences and thoughts that may not fully guarantee the success of nation branding in forming certain perceptions of a country towards them. Referring to that statement, every individual – important to be realized – has the possibility to either like/agree with the idea of what they receive, or not to, with various reasons that may influence

---

[37] Kishore Chakraborty, Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary (Berlin: Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, 2013), http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/culturaldiplomacynews/content/pdf/Cultural_Diplomacy_Dictionary.pdf

[38] UNWTO, "Tourism and Culture Synergies", p.13

[39] UNWTO, op.cit, p.42

their decision. Nevertheless, the image of a country – as a product offered by them through their promotions – of course still has a big and direct effect, and may influence people's thoughts of the country effectively.[40]

A few key components that are included as parts of nation branding to achieve what a country is manifesting regarding their image, brand, or perception towards them – as mentioned in Dinnie's book of nation branding – are; brand vision, brand scope, name of the brand, codes of expression, everyday behavior, what makes the brand different, narrative identity, and advocation of ideology.[41] **Brand vision** means that every actor who plays a role, whether it be the state, institutions, private sector, or communities, should have only one and the same understanding of what the ultimate goal of their nation branding is. **Brand scope** talks about limiting sectors that are included or used, as a means to carry out nation branding strategy effectively through a well-planned strategy. **Name of the brand** means that each country would have their own name or other designation that characterizes them, and is maintainable and usable in promotional strategies. **Codes of expression** include symbols that can be concrete ways to express or describe the country, such as flags, languages, and other real or tangible points. **Everyday behavior** refers to activities or events carried out by the country as a form of implementing their strategy, which include diplomatic initiatives and international relations. **What makes the brand different** in nation branding means the one-of-a-kind culture, history, and society of the country. **Narrative identity** means that

---

[40] Ying Fan, "Branding the nation: What is being branded?" *Journal of Vacation Marketing* Vol 12, No. 1 (2005): p.8, accessed April 13th, 2021, doi: 10.1177/1356766706056633
[41] Dinnie, *Nation Branding*, p.44

all the myths, traditions, and history of the country, as well as their independence are also included as attraction points for nation branding. Finally, **advocacy of ideology** has the means of ideologies or other goals that can be achieved while doing nation branding, such as promotion of human rights, growth and development in certain aspects, sustainable development, and other specific issues or goals.

The implementation of diplomacy for the sake of nation branding through a country's soft powers itself can be described through a conceptual model as follows: nation-brand image is constructed from several identity components that the state and other actors would like to highlight, through communicators of nation brand identity. These communicators are then defined as, namely, the activities that are carried out as a means of implementing the country's nation branding strategy.[42]

1.6 Research Method and Data Collection

This research thesis will be using the qualitative research method. This certain method was chosen as this research focuses towards the meanings from cultural tourism itself as well as the new 2010 version of Visit Japan campaign as policy implementations from Japan, and understanding towards their motives of plannings and implementations as well as goal to be achieved. Qualitative research is defined as a research where one studies about actors and phenomenons on natural settings[43], and in this case it is the cultural tourism campaign as a phenomenon with Japan as a country for the main actor, towards external parties. This qualitative

---

[42] Dinnie, op.cit, p.49

[43] Sugiyono, Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013), p.62

research towards Japan and the said campaign is to understand the detailed process Japan's campaign marketing as an international relations strategy. Aside from that, the methodology used will be narrative. In this research, the author will be describing Japan's strategic cultural tourism campaign called Visit Japan which will be narratively explained with a theoretical framework attached to the previous sub-chapter.

Data collection technique used for this research is based on document study in the form of texts and internet. Regarding data retrieved from the internet, this research uses data from factual, objective, and credible new websites, as well as official governmental or international organizations websites for official data.[44] Retrieved data are then used to prove said theoretical approach which will explain the whole study case of this research. Qualitative data analysis technique in this research will then be carried out using what is called discourse analysis. Discourse analysis itself is defined as political language analysis of actors who are to explore world perceptions of a reality, and to know the process behind its reality.[45] From that definition of discourse analysis, this research is going to review Japan as the said actor who 'produces' or designs a reality in a form of global public view towards Japan's image through certain strategies, which are the said cultural tourism campaign.

---

[44] Sugiyono, op.cit, p.71-72

[45] Sugitono, op.cit, p.74

1.7 Research Structure

This research is divided into a few parts of structure to create a coherent explanation. In **chapter 1**, author defines the background, research problem identifications, research purposes and contributions, literature review, theoretical framework, research methods and data collection technique, as well as research structures. In **chapter 2**, the case is divided into three parts or sub-chapters, in which each illustrate actors and institutions involved in Japan's tourism sector, the new strategy of *Visit Japan* as a cultural tourism campaign itself, and global marketing efforts Japan does to enliven its campaign. In **chapter 3**, Japan's nation branding efforts through cultural tourism is studied using soft power theory, to answer the research question. Chapter 3 is divided into three parts, each explaining how Japan is imposing nation branding effectiveness, developing cultural awareness, and involving multitrack presence that includes especially media. To sum up, **chapter 4** is the conclusion of the research.