The Effect of Confirmation of Nation Brand Image in International Tourism Advertisement on Travel Intention of Foreign Tourists: The Case of Korean ITA for Chinese Tourists

Un-Kon Lee*

Abstract
With the rapid growth of the international tourism industry, governments and tourism promotion agencies in various countries challenge to make more attractive international tourism advertisement (ITA) for foreign tourists to visit their countries. However, there may be difference in the degree to which each travel advertisement reflects the nation brand image. In some ITA cases, foreign tourists could not vividly highlight the unique images of the destination countries. Few studies have empirically validated the impact of confirmation of nation brand image in ITA on the tourist’s responses. This study challenged to empirically examine how the fit between the ITA contents and nation brand image affects the travel intentions of foreign tourists. I developed my research model based on the literature of country image, brand advertisement fit model, and expectation confirmation theory. I conducted the quasi-experiment by using 4 examples of ITA which reflect 4 unique images of Korea (i.e. K-Food, Korean wave, shopping, hot place) compared with other countries. Totally 276 valid data were collected and analyzed using the partial least squares (PLS) algorithm. The results indicate that confirmation of nation brand image in ITA significantly increase perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment. These changes could increase tourist’s satisfaction, ITA adoption intention, destination visit intention, and E-word of mouth intention. The findings of this study could contribute to identify the impacts on the nation brand image in ITA and could provide practical lessons on how to make more persuasive ITA.

Keywords
country image, brand-advertisement fit, expectation confirmation theory, social media, tourist reactions

Introduction
International tourism industry is considered to the key industry to make sustainable economic development, because of its rapid growth, environmental friendliness and the ripple effect on other industries (World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2019). The number of international tourists would exceed to 1.8 billion by over 3% annual increase from 2010 to 2030, and the market size would reach at 9% of the total global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2030 (UNWTO, 2014). In 2018, international tourist arrivals grew 5% to reach the 1.4 billion and total international tourism exports grew 4% to reach 1.7 trillion USD (UNWTO, 2019). Its ripple effect to make the sustainable socio-economic structure has been emphasized and selected as the key part of tourism policy by 101 UNWTO states (UNWTO, 2019). In all, 57% of total international tourists are expected to visit the developing countries in 2030, and they could become one of sources for the sustainable economic development (UNWTO, 2014, 2019). Tourism could additionally create 11 jobs per a tourist, 29% of service exports, and 6% of worldwide exports (UNWTO, 2014).

Contrary to this positive market situation, the tourism industry is facing the Covid-19 Pandemic crisis in the first half of 2020 (UNWTO, 2020). UNWTO announced that international tourist numbers could fall 60% to 80% in 2020 (UNWTO, 2020). Ironically, countries are challenging to revitalize their economies especially through the resumption of tourism, and they want to attract tourists by emphasizing their strengths, such as safety from disease. For example, European countries such as Spain and Italy
have implemented tourism promotion policies, allowing tourists to enter the country from the summer of 2020 to revitalize the economy despite the crisis caused by the Covid-19 (CNN travel). Japan is trying to revive its economy by boosting domestic travel by launching the Go-to-travel campaign that subsidizes some of its travel costs (The Japan Times News). As the resumption of tourism progresses, countries challenged to attract the international tourists to visit their countries by exposing the international tourism advertisement (ITA).

ITAs are the various forms of tourism-related advertisements and marketing activities which are targeting the potential tourists and which are made by private or public tourism promotion agencies (UNWTO, 2014). The most common and widely used method for attracting international tourists is to produce and broadcast ITAs. Governments and tourism promotion agencies try to give a positive impression of the destination country (below “destination”) to potential foreign tourists through various ITAs. However, there may be differences in the degree to which each travel advertisement reflects the nation brand image (Korea Tourism Organization [KTO]). Some ITAs don’t emphasize nation brand image, they just list photos of landmarks. For example, one (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9Xe3rzZzPI) of the “Visit Osaka” ITAs in Japan did not portray the unique image of Japan. The other ITAs (i.e., “Where tradition meets the future,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLJv7HnZ_re) and the travel blog which contain unique images of traditional Japanese culture such as foods, tea, temples, yukata, and so on, but the contents of that ITA hardly reflect them. Too much dance and interpretation by idols prohibits providing salient nation brand image in that ITA. Other ads, on the other hand, highlight the nation brand image of the destination in their advertisements, so that tourists can understand the salient value of the destination and connect it with their needs for tourism. For example, there is an example of “Restaurant Australia” ITA (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLJ06LDNY) created by the Australian Tourism Organization. The ads have highlighted Australia’s vast, clean nature, and safe food as a nation brand image, and are appealing to foreign tourists, including what foreign tourists can actually experience, such as drinking wine at a landmark or fishing in the ocean in Australia. In the other case of the “My Ticket to Spain” ITA (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMgVpOztNOU), which was produced by Korean Air, the company tries to increase tourism by vividly expressing Spain’s unique nation brand image, including the architecture of famous Spanish architect Gaudi, the Mediterranean Sea and the passion for Soccer.

Many prior studies investigated the impact of the nation brand image on revisit intentions (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Ko & Park, 2000; Papadimitriou et al., 2018). However, most of the studies are focused on conceptual understanding of country image, recognition of differences between country image and destination image, and the impact of country image on the revisit intention (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Papadimitriou et al., 2018). Few empirical studies have shown why the nation brand image should be expressed in ITA, how to express foreign tourists’ expectation in tourism in ads, and how to motivate foreign tourists to choose a destination.

In practice, Korea is trying to set up a “Dynamic Korea” nation brand image and attract foreign tourists in four themes of Korean food (below “K-food”), Korean wave (below “K-wave, i.e., ‘Hallyu’), shopping, and hot place. Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) has also challenged to attract Chinese tourists. Especially, China continues to lead global outbound travel (UNWTO, 2019) and Chinese tourists’ influential power ranked 1st tier in terms of expenditure which reaches approximately at 26 billion USD (UNWTO, 2019). The number of Chinese tourists is more than 6 million each year, the largest number of foreign tourists visiting South Korea (KTO). While the number of Chinese group tourists, dubbed “Yooker” has decreased due to the Chinese government’s retaliation against THAAD, the number of individual tourists called “Sanker” has increased (KTO, 2017). It is important to make ITAs that can appeal directly to individuals.

It is important to create ITA content that can effectively persuade the potential tourists, because it is often uploaded to social media, which is widely watched, shared, spread out by so many people, and strongly influences the potential tourist’s choice of destinations (Hays et al., 2013; Minazzi, 2015). Social media users could widely and actively interact with the other peer users (Moon et al., 2010). Companies could communicate with their customers and could interact with consumers, and could implement more persuasive marketing practices by strategically using social media (J. P. Park & Son, 2012). The tourism promotion agencies are also reviewing how to use social media to attract tourists (Hays et al., 2013; Minazzi, 2015). I would basically assume that ITAs were offered on the social media in this study.

Therefore, this study wanted to empirically verify how ITAs that reflect the nation brand image affect the cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses of tourists. The prior studies simply compared the nation brand image as having a positive correlation on the revisit intention (Papadimitriou et al., 2018). According to whether the nation brand image has been well reflected in the ITA, this study has verified empirically how it forms the tourist’s perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment connected with the cognitive and affective destination image, and how it affects various attitudes and behavior intentions, including satisfaction and ITA adoption intention, destination visit intention, E-word of mouth intention. Through literature about the effects of country image, and study on brand-advertisement fit, I described how nation brand image shapes three types of the destination image. Through the expected-confirmation theory, I set up hypotheses of what kind of cognitive and affective reactions, attitudes could affect behavioral intentions of foreign tourists.
The differences between this study and the prior studies are as follows: First, they assume direct impact of country image on the revisit intention on the destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Papadimitriou et al., 2018). The causal relationship of the other variables between these two variables is not known. I adopt the concept of three aspects of destination images (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Gartner & Hunt, 1987; Phelps, 1986) to clearly explain how the nation brand image impact on the potential tourists reactions, to identify the causal relationships between three factors of destination image, and to suggest how they should be reflected in ITA. Second, I demonstrated the causal relationship between the nation brand image and the cognitive and affective response of advertising (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997) and how the overall attitude affects the behavioral intent of foreign tourists (Bhattacharyee, 2001; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Kim & Son, 2009; Knight & Calantone, 2000; Sussman & Siegal, 2003; Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010). In addition to the re-visit intention (Papadimitriou et al., 2018) set as the only dependent variable in the prior study, a variety of reactions were described, including how to be persuaded by advertising messages, how to visit the destination country, and how to disseminate this positive response to other tourists (Bhattacharyee, 2001; Kim & Son, 2009; Sussman & Siegal, 2003). This study explains how the nation brand image should be expressed in pre-tourism advertising, and how to motivate foreign tourists to choose the destination.

To conduct my study logically and rigorously, the structure of this study was constructed as follows. In the theoretical background part, prior studies on what the nation brand image is and what the effect of brand-advertisement fit is were reviewed, and the expectation-confirmation theory was introduced and reviewed to understand how ITA, which reflects the nation brand image well, creates positive cognitive, affective perceptions, satisfaction and behavior intentions of the potential tourists. In the hypothesis development and research model part, the theories reviewed above were applied to the situation of ITA, which is our research situation, to set the hypothesis. In the methodology part, I described the specific procedures and methods of quasi-experiment in my study. The analysis part showed the results of the statistical analysis. In the discussion and conclusion section, the theoretical and practical values and limitations of my research were explained.

### Theoretical Background

#### Nation Brand Image

A country image is a comprehensive impression or belief that people feel about a particular country or people (Hall, 1986; Martin & Eroglu, 1993). The country image is the overall perception of consumers, such as scheme, stereotypes, beliefs, reputations, prejudices, and so on given to a particular country’s products or services, and is shaped by a number of factors, such as representative goods, economics, politics, history, and traditions (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Nagashima, 1970; Papadopoulos, 1993). A country image is defined as a belief in a nation’s character or characteristic behavior, as a total image reflected in the country’s history, politics, culture, diplomacy, economy, society, art, sports, and so on (Kleppe et al., 2002; Martin & Eroglu, 1993; Passow et al., 2005; Roth & Eroglu, 1992). The nation brand is a symbol system designed to deliberately instill in natives and foreigners by utilizing tangible and intangible information and experience, such as a country’s history, tradition, culture, natural environment, and political system, economic level, social stability, and products of companies and companies (Yoo, 2008). The brand image is the overall association, perception, recognition, emotion, attitude, and impression that consumers have formed by analyzing various information and cues about the brand (Keller, 1998). The country image is an unintended and naturally shaped recognition and belief, but the nation brand differs in that it is a collection of perceptions and attitudes formed through the sophisticated planning, unified and consistent management of the country (Kim, 2002). Despite the conceptual differences, in practice, nation brands are used mixed with country images and nation brand images. Whether it is a naturally created country image or a systematically managed nation brand, it is equally used in terms of being used to attract foreign tourists. This study uses the term uniformly as a nation brand image.

Nation brand image especially affects the formation of perception and attitude toward goods. Nation brand image affects the valuation of goods, perceived risks, attitudes, and purchasing intentions (Han, 1989; S. T. Hong & Wyer, 1990; Tse & Gorn, 1993). If the nation brand image matches the product category, the country image as being the country of origin image, greatly affects the evaluation of products by consumers. Examples include French wine, German cars, and Danish dairy products. When consumers are not familiar with the product, the nation brand image can act as a halo effect, affecting consumers’ attitudes and purchase intention (Han, 1989; Knight & Calantone, 2000). This effect also occurs in the tourism industry.

The nation brand image elicits a cognitive and affective response and causes the behavioral changes from foreign tourists by influencing the formation of the destination image (Lindblom et al., 2018). The destination image is defined as the sum of impressions (Crompton, 1979), perceptions (Murphy, 1985), beliefs, expectations, and emotions (Lawson & Bovy, 1977) of the tourist about the destination. The destination, like other goods, can be considered a kind of commodity. The reason why country images can affect destination images is that nation brand image as a country of origin is reflected in the formation of the product image (country-of-origin effects). They say that tourist sites can be thought of as a single commodity or service provided by tourism countries, and the image of tourist countries affects the formation of their image (i.e., attitude) of tourist destinations.
The destination can be thought of as a kind of commodity provided by the country, and the nation brand image affects the formation of tourist’s image (i.e., attitude) on the attractions or destinations (Knight & Calantone, 2000).

The destination image consists of three concepts: “cognition” (Phelps, 1986), “affection” (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997), and “global image” (Gartner & Hunt, 1987) that individual tourists have on the destinations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Ko & Park, 2000). The destination image is a collective impression created as a result of the interaction between cognitive and affective factors (Dichter, 1985). Cognitive images are the assessment, evaluation, and belief about the various characteristics of destinations such as tourism resources, environment, cost, convenience, climate, safety, and so on (Wang & Hsu, 2010). Affective images are feelings about destination, and feelings of pleasure, excitement, comfort, and so on (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Gartner, 1993). The overall image is a favorable attitude, formed by interaction at the cognitive and affective aspects of destination image (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). With the impact of the destination image, most prior studies are focusing on the only behavioral intention: re-visit intention (Papadimitriou et al., 2018). Tourists will do a variety of things through preparatory and post-tourism experiences, but research on them is very scarce.

In summary, the nation brand image is a comprehensive image of a particular country, which will affect the formation of the destination image. The destination image consists of a cognitive evaluation of the various attributes of the destination, as well as an affective assessment of the attractions, and an overall attitude reflecting the results of these evaluations. The nation brand image will affect these cognitive and affective responses and attitudes, creating a variety of behavioral intentions. The next chapter will explain how the nation brand image can be put into ITA to facilitate this process.

**Brand-Advertisement Fit**

ITA is information that foreign tourists consume to choose a destination. According to Cognitive fit theory, when information characteristics and task characteristics are consistent, information users gain a better understanding of tasks, make quick and accurate decisions (W. Y. Hong et al., 2005), and increase task performance (Goodhue & Thompson, 1995). ITA should be made to allow foreign tourists to choose destinations more quickly and accurately, so that the nation brand image can effectively affect the destination image. The nation brand image should be well reflected in the advertisement, so that the image and the content of the advertisement must match.

I identified two causal relationship between brand and advertisement summarizing the prior studies (Batra & Ray, 1985; Berens et al., 2005; Edell & Burke, 1986; Gardner, 1985; Holbrook & O’Shaughnessy, 1984; Machleit & Wilson, 1988; MacKenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986): one that claims that advertising affects the brand and the other argues that the brand influences the advertising. A stream of studies claiming that advertising affects a brand argue that when consumers sympathize with a product or service advertisement of a company and form a positive attitude, consumers tend to generalize this attitude and evaluate the company’s brand positively (Batra & Ray, 1985; Edell & Burke, 1986; Gardner, 1985; Holbrook & O’Shaughnessy, 1984; MacKenzie et al., 1986). The other stream of studies claiming that the brand affects advertising argue that when consumers are repeatedly exposed to the company’s brand and that if they feel familiar with the brand, they positively respond to the advertising which reflect the brand image from both a cognitive and affective aspect (Holbrook & O’Shaughnessy, 1984; Machleit & Wilson, 1988). Brand represents what value a company can offer to consumers, provides a deductive basis for reinforcing the content of advertising, and increases consumers’ positive perception and attitude toward advertising (Berens et al., 2005).

Therefore, the results of prior studies (Batra & Ray, 1985; Berens et al., 2005; Edell & Burke, 1986; Gardner, 1985; Holbrook & O’Shaughnessy, 1984; Machleit & Wilson, 1988; MacKenzie et al., 1986) should be understood that brands and advertisements interact with each other, not that one affect the other in one direction. Rather than directly eliciting cognitive and emotional responses from consumers by either brand or ad, it can elicit these responses when the brand and advertisement match. The perceived convergence of advertising and brand elicits a positive response from consumers (Berens et al., 2005). The fit between advertising and brand make consumers easily remind function-based similarity, feature similarity, image consistency, when consumers understand and diagnose the products. Thus, it effectively make consumers understand the value of product, concentrate on the contents of advertising, and form a positive attitude toward the product (Gwinner, 1997; C. W. Park et al., 1991). If there is an image similarity between the brand and the advertising content and the core value of the product, it elicits positive cognitive and affective responses from consumers (Beneza, 1996).

**Expectation Confirmation Theory and Tourist Reactions**

The study applies the expectation confirmation theory (Oliver, 1980, 1993) to explain how the ITA which reflects the nation brand image could form the destination image which is the positive cognitive, affective response and overall attitude to the destinations, and could impact on the behavioral intent of foreign tourists. The expectation confirmation theory explains in detail the cognitive and affective changes of consumers (Oliver, 1980, 1993), not only in the pre-shopping stage ranging from assessment, selection, to purchase, but also in post-shopping stage, including satisfaction and...
loyalty (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Kim & Son, 2009; Oliver, 1980, 1993). Expectation is the general market experience or pre-exposure belief that consumers have about products (Oliver, 1980; Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010). Confirmation is the extent to which consumers’ pre-expectations have actually been met through the post-consumption experience (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Oliver, 1980, 1993; Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010). Consumers expect the value of a product before purchasing it based on a variety of information or personal judgments, such as market response, prior experience and advice from fellow groups. When these expectations are met after consumption of goods (i.e. performance, Oliver, 1980), consumers can experience positive cognitive and affective emotions, form positive attitudes such as satisfaction (Oliver, 1993), and lead to behavioral changes, such as purchase intentions. ITA is also a product for selecting destinations. Foreign tourists form prior expectations for destinations, which are already sketchy nation brand images and destination images, before exposure to advertisements. Foreign tourists recognize that the destination image and the content of the advertisement match after the exposure of the advertisement, confirm that their prior expectations have been met, and form a more positive destination image.

I introduced perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment and satisfaction by reflecting three aspects of destination image in response to foreign tourists. The destination image in cognitive aspect is an evaluation or belief about the characteristics of a destination. Foreign tourists feel that ITA is useful if they can understand the characteristics of destination vividly and effectively (Wang & Hsu, 2010). The destination image in affective aspect is a feeling foreign tourists have about the destination. This sentiment leads to a positive affective response to the destination if the ITA feels interesting (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). Finally, the overall image is a favorable attitude aggregated through the interaction of cognitive and affective responses (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). If advertisements are useful and fun to choose, the destination, foreign tourists will be satisfied with the ITAs (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010; Wang & Hsu, 2010). When consumers are satisfied with the service (Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010), they continue to use the service (Bhattacherjee, 2001), try to purchase goods or services (Kim & Son, 2009), show behavioral changes based on information and advice (Sussman & Siegal, 2003), or spread a positive E-word-of-mouth (Kim & Son, 2009) about the destination to other foreign tourists.

Potential tourists can see ITAs through social media, share ITAs, and actively exchange opinions on ITAs (Hays et al., 2013; Minazzi, 2015). The more active people are on social media, the more information was widely exchanged through social media (Sussman & Siegal, 2003) and form a positive attitude toward the services provided by social media (Steward, 2003). Therefore, the satisfaction of the study and the various behaviors will be measured in situations provided through social media.

Hypotheses Development and Research Model

The nation brand image is a country image intentionally created at various dimensions, including the country’s history, tradition, culture, natural environment and political system, economic level, social stability, products, and companies (Yoo, 2008). The nation brand image elicits a cognitive and affective response from foreign tourists by influencing the formation of the destination image. In order for a nation brand image to smoothly form a destination image, the nation brand image must be well reflected in the ITA, so that the salient image and the content of the advertisement must match (Beneza, 1996; Berens et al., 2005; Gwinner, 1997; Park et al., 1991).

On the cognitive aspect of the destination image, if the nation brand image is well reflected in the ITA, foreign tourists will be able to make assessments of the various features the destination has—for example, tourism resources, environment, cost, convenience, climate and safety—more easily and quickly. When an information user performs a task effectively by referring information, the information user feels useful. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is as follows.

**Hypothesis 1:** Conformation of nation brand image in ITA could positively affect perceived usefulness.

On the affective aspect of the destination image, if the nation brand image is well reflected in the ITA, foreign tourists can easily form positive feelings by vividly confirming the advance expectations of the destination before the tour through advertisement contents. Positive affective reactions are pleasure, excitement, and comfort (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Gartner, 1993). Therefore, H2 is as follows.

**Hypothesis 2:** Conformation of nation brand image in ITA could positively affect perceived enjoyment.

On the overall aspect of destination image, the interaction of cognitive and affective responses creates a combined favorable attitude. According to the expectation confirmation theory, consumers form a positive attitude toward the service when prior expectations of the product are confirmed after consumption of the product. According to the theory of planned behavior, consumers form the perception on a product or service, and form an attitude, and it lead their behavioral changes (Ajzen, 1991). Among the positive attitudes of consumers, a most widely used concept is service satisfaction (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010; Wang & Hsu, 2010). Therefore, H3 and H4 are as follows.

**Hypothesis 3:** Perceived usefulness could positively affect satisfaction.
Hypothesis 4: Perceived enjoyment could positively affect satisfaction.

When consumers are satisfied with the product and service, they act a positive reciprocal behaviors for the service or service provider (Oliver, 1980). These positive reciprocal actions include the intention to purchase goods, the intention to adopt information, and the intention of positive E-word of mouth diffusions. Since destination is also a commodity, purchasing behavior appears as a destination visiting behavior. Foreign tourists who are satisfied with the ITA (Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010), they will form the reciprocal behaviors including understanding the destination country by described in ITA (Sussman & Siegal, 2003), visiting destination country (Kim & Son, 2009), and spreading the positive E-word of mouth about the ITA (Kim & Son, 2009) and destination to the other potential tourists. Therefore, H5~7 are as follows.

Hypothesis 5: Satisfaction could positively affect the ITA adoption intention.
Hypothesis 6: Satisfaction could positively affect the destination visit intention.
Hypothesis 7: Satisfaction could positively affect the E-word of mouth intention

ITA is also a form of information. Information quality and media richness of ITA should be controlled in order to clearly examine the causal relationship between the confirmation of the nation brand image in ITA, which is the independent variable of this study, on the perception, attitude and behavioral intentions. According to the Elaboration likelihood model, information quality and trust on information sources increases the usefulness of information, thus increase the information adoption intention (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). According to Media relations theory, the media richness of how rich the media can provide cues affects task performance (Kahai & Cooper, 2003). Thus, perceived information quality and media richness were exogenous variables, which were subsequently controlled in this study. The study collected data from a questionnaire, which could show the common method bias. This study used marker variable techniques to identify common method bias, using the privacy concert as a variable that is not theoretically relevant. My research model is shown as Figure 1.

Methodology

Operationalization of Constructs

This study adopted measurement items of each construct that were used in prior studies to generalize the results of this study and to guarantee validity (Stone, 1978). The measurement items used in the prior studies were translated into Chinese. Words were modified to match the situation of ITA evaluation, and easy vocabulary was used to make it easier for respondents to grasp the meaning. Because all constructs consisted of at least three questions to express the concept, I performed the validation process in two stages (Churchill, 1979). To ensure the face validity of the measurement items, the description was adjusted with the help of two experts in Chinese, including nuance. I also recruited ten graduate students as the pilot test participants to access easy understandability and clarity of meanings of the measurement items. They were answered that all of the questions were easily understandable and answerable without difficulty. Measurement items of each construct are shown in Table 1.

Data Collection

The population is the potential foreign tourist, and the sample frame is the potential Chinese tourist who will visit in Korea. The purchasing power of Chinese tourists is growing...
in the international tourism market. Chinese tourists are the largest number of foreign visitors to South Korea. I recruit the unspecified number of voluntary student participants by advertising at the university located in Shandong Province, China. A total of 280 quasi experiment participants were recruited. One of them was not present due to personal reasons, and the three were excluded from the analysis because all responses were considered insincere (all responses were 1 or 7). Thus, 276 responses were gathered for analysis. The demographic data of participants is shown in Table 2.

I performed the scenario survey method of quasi-experiment to verify my hypotheses (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). Laboratory experiment method has the advantage to guarantee the internal validity by controlling exogenous variables, but it cannot reflect the practical application (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). Survey method has the weakness to be hard to get the agreement with the company which have the consumers (Koufaris, 2002). Through prior study, K-food, K-wave, shopping, and hot-place were selected, which are four of the most important objectives among total 14 non-commercial tourism objectives of potential Chinese tourists (Lee et al., 2019). The KTO has produced about 3 min of ITA on these four topics (KTO). 276 participants were allocated about 70 each to the four groups. Each group was exposed to one of the advertisements: K-food (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7G0SSn0GQ), K-wave (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oU2gRr6MU0o), shopping (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSMByZuPLOY), and Hot Place (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3cJj2NHi0YA). All ITAs had been made by same director and producers. The quality of ITA had been controlled to be same with each other. Participants were asked how the destination image changed when they plan a trip to Korea after watching the ITA. To encourage a sincere response, participants were paid $10 per person. Recruitment and implication of scenario survey method (i.e., explain the situation to the participant in Table 2. Measurement Items of Each Construct.

| Constructs                        | Measurement items                                                                 | Sources                                      |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Confirmation of nation brand image (CF) | In this ITA . . . (CR1) The nation brand image of Korea was better described than I expected. (CR2) The level of nation brand image description was more detail than I expected. (CR3) Overall, most of my expectations about the nation brand image were confirmed. | Bhattacherjee (2001) |
| Perceived usefulness (PU)         | This ITA is . . . (PU1) valuable. (PU2) informative. (PU3) helpful.              | Sussman and Siegal (2003)                   |
| Perceived enjoyment (PE)          | This ITA is . . . (PE1) enjoyable. (PE2) exciting. (PE3) pleasant.              | Parboteeah et al. (2009)                     |
| Satisfaction (SAT)                | (SAT1) I am contented to see this ITA in social media. (SAT2) I am satisfied with this ITA in social media. (SAT3) This ITA in social media meets what I expect for this type of service. | Kim and Son (2009) |
| Information adoption intention (IAD) | After being shown this ITA . . . (IAD1) I intend to understand the destination following this ITA without any modification. (IAD2) This ITA makes me highly motivated to understand the destination in the ITA. (IAD3) I completely agree with the description about the destination in this ITA | Sussman and Siegal (2003) |
| Destination visit intention (VI)  | When I would visit some destination . . . (VI1) The probability of visit the destination in this ITA would be probable. (VI 2) The likelihood that I would visit the destination is highly likely. (VI 3) My willingness to visit the destination is highly willing. (VI 4) The probability that I would consider visiting the destination is highly probable. | Song and Zahedi (2005) |
| E-word of mouth intention (WM)    | (WM1) I will say positive things about this ITA in social media to other people. (WM2) I will recommend this ITA in social media to anyone who seeks my advice. (WM3) I will refer my acquaintances to this ITA in social media. | Kim and Son (2009) |
| Privacy concern (MK)              | (PC1) I am concerned that the information I submit to the Internet could be misused. (PC2) I am concerned that a person can find private information about me on the Internet. (PC3) I am concerned about providing personal information to the Internet, because of what others might do with it. (PC4) I am concerned about providing personal information to the Internet, because it could be used in a way I did not foresee. | Son and Kim (2008) |

Note. ITA = international tourism advertisement; MK = marker variable for detecting common method bias.
Chinese) was helped by a Chinese professor. Partial least squares (PLS) algorithm has been adopted to verify my hypothesis, clarify the causal relationship between variables and induce the implications.

Analysis and Results

To ensure that the manipulation is valid, I performed one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the confirmation of nation brand image by 4 ITAs. I could find that there is significant difference between groups \( p < .001 \), and the mean of group C (K-food) was significantly highest than the other groups by the ANOVA results. Upper bounding and lower bounding of mean of group C do not meet with those of the other groups. As significant differences were found among the groups, I was confirmed that the manipulation is valid. So, I performed PLS analysis to validate my hypothesis (Chin, 1998; Wold, 1982).

### Measurement Model

Convergent validity and reliability of each construct had been checked by assessing the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) (Werts et al., 1973). When the AVE values of the construct exceed the 0.50 cut-off criteria, and it means that the majority of the variance covered by each variable. When CR values of a construct exceed 0.70 cut-off criteria, and it means that those indicators are internally consistent (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). AVE and CR values of the constructs are expressed on the left side of Table 4. One method to access the discriminant validity is to compare the square root values of the AVE (i.e., value darkened in the diagonal cell) of a variable with the remaining correlations of the other variables. I could confirm the discriminant validity to be acquired when this condition has been accessed because discriminant means that a construct should be different from the others (Barclay et al., 1995; Chin, 1998).

The other methods accessing convergent and discriminant validity of each construct is to check the factor loadings of a construct to be higher than those of the other constructs. Factor loadings should be higher in its own construct than between any other constructs (Chin, 1998). Factor loadings are shown in Table 5. Based on all assessments of the criteria, I confirmed the reliability to be acquired and the convergent, and discriminant validity of the measurement model in this study to be acceptable.

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### Table 2. Demographic Data.

| G   | Num. | %    | F   | Num. | %    | D   | Num. | %    |
|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|
| Male| 174  | 63.04| 1   | 64   | 23.19| Under 1 | 10 | 3.62 |
| Female| 102 | 36.96| 2   | 122  | 44.20| 1-2 | 56  | 20.29|
| M   | Num. | %    | 3   | 68   | 24.64| 2-3 | 105 | 38.04|
| Humanities| 2 | 0.72 | 4   | 21   | 7.61 | 3-5 | 90  | 32.61|
| Business| 217| 78.62| 5-6 | 1    | 0.36 | 5-7 | 2   | 0.72 |
| Engineering| 56 | 20.29| 7-9 | 0    | 0.00 | 7-10| 1   | 0.36 |
| Art  | 1    | 0.36 | Over 10 times-| 0    | 0.00 | Over 10 | 12 | 4.35 |

Note. G = gender; M = major; F = frequency of international travel per a year; D = average days of international travel per a year; Num. = frequency.

### Table 3. ANOVA Results.

| Index | III | Df | MS | F   | p   | Group | Num. | M    | SD   | 95% Lower | 95% Upper |
|-------|-----|----|----|-----|-----|-------|------|------|------|-----------|-----------|
| CF    | 50.928 | 3  | 16.976 | 10.207 | .000 | A     | 69   | 2.241 | 1.147 | 1.965 | 2.517 |
|       |      |    |     |     |     | B     | 69   | 2.371 | 1.259 | 2.069 | 2.674 |
|       |      |    |     |     |     | C     | 67   | 3.363*** | 1.30 | 3.045 | 3.680 |
|       |      |    |     |     |     | D     | 71   | 2.66  | 1.429 | 2.323 | 3.000 |
|       |      |    |     |     |     | Total | 276  | 2.654 | 1.352 | 2.49  | 2.814 |

Note. CF = confirmation of nation brand image; III = type III sum of square; df = degree of freedom; MS = mean squared; 95% = 95% significant interval; A = K-wave; B = shopping; C = K-food; D = hot place.
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All data had been collected by using the survey material. In this case, common method variance (CMV) could occur and could affect the results. I used the marker-variable technique to access CMV in this study. The marker variable technique is the method to calculate the average correlation coefficient between the construct and the theoretically unrelated variable to access CMV. I added a theoretically unrelated variable (i.e., privacy concern) as the marker variable. If the average correlation coefficient should be less than 0.10, I could confirm that CMV is not serious. CMV in this study is not substantial, because the average correlation coefficient was close to 0 (r = .059, n.s.).

**PLS Analysis Results**

Hypotheses in this study have been verified using 200 iterations of the bootstrapping technique in PLS algorithm (Chin & Dibbern, 2010; Chin & Frye, 1996). The standardized path-coefficient and p-values of each causal paths have been calculated. I statistically verified the hypothesis at the
significance level of 0.01 on the two-tails. The PLS results indicate that All hypotheses were significantly approved. PLS results with \( R^2 \) values which mean the explanatory power of each dependent variable are shown in Figure 2.

**Discussion**

This study has been empirically validate that ITA which reflects the nation brand image can make foreign tourist confirm the nation brand image in ITA, significantly increases perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, and satisfaction of ITA, and successfully induces ITA adoption intention, destination visit intention, and positive E-word of mouth intention. More specifically, I explain two meanings of the results.

First, the confirmation of nation brand image in ITA has been shown to increase the perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment, and to increase satisfaction. The confirmation of the nation brand image in the ITA allows foreign tourists to effectively link their tourism objectives with the unique image of the destination country. It makes it easy to recall what fun experiences the foreign tourists will have at the destination. It tells foreign tourists what differences the destination has compared to other destinations, and what strengths it has in particular. Therefore, it is useful for foreign tourists when they chooses destinations. The fun experience foreign tourists will experience in the destination is easily expected and linked to the ITA viewing experience, which makes they feel enjoyable. These results can also be found in additional interview results for quasi experiment participants. Especially, the ITA about K-food could be the example of how confirmation could affect perceived enjoyment, among the various ITAs that were exposed as experimental instruments. Participants said that ITA about K-food was an ITA that reflected the salient nation brand image of “Koreans enjoy spicy food,” which is compared with the other ITAs. By seeing the ITA, foreign tourists could easily link their tourism goals that they would enjoy the exotic and delicious food to the Korean food culture. They can easily understand the advantages of Korea over other destinations by comparing Chinese food’s “strongly spicy, aromatic, pungent” spicy taste with Korean food’s “sweet, smoky, clean and harmonious” spicy taste. Through this cognitive process, ITA about K-food was considered as useful information when comparing Korea as a destination with other destinations. ITA about K-food describe humorously the burning, spicy Korean food by comparing it to the situation in which the restaurant is on fire. These depictions made people feel pleasure in terms of humor. Participants in the quasi experiment said that they felt ITA about K-food was the most fun and that they also felt that they would have interesting experiences in Korea as a destination. Considering the recent popularity of food-themed Korean dramas around Southeast and Southwest Asian countries, ITA about K-food are expected to effectively attract the tourists from these countries. Responses to ITA about K-wave (i.e., hallyu), shopping and hot places were similar to responses to ITA about K-food. Through watching these ITAs, foreign tourists responded that they could easily associate the popularity of Korean dramas or movies, recognize the advantages of shopping for qualified products at a cheaper price in Korea, and recognize the attraction of the past and present as a co-existing destination. These advertisements were also useful information for considering Korea as a tourist destination and made it easy to recall what fun experiences foreign tourists will have in Korea. However, some said that the content of these ITAs reflected the tragic situation in Korea, where Koreans living in divided countries should always be nervous, reducing Korea’s attractiveness as a destination.
Second, the confirmation of the nation brand image in the ITAs significantly increases satisfaction, and satisfaction significantly increases ITA adoption intention, destination visit intention, and the positive E-word of mouth intention. When foreign tourists are satisfied with the ITAs, they could form the positive impression on the destination country adopting the contents of ITA. While prior studies have already shown that nation brand image can be improved through various means, the study has empirically demonstrated that ITAs can also create a positive image for the destination country. Governments and tourism promotion agencies will be able to manage nation brand image through various intentional promotional activities by controlling what kind of image they will emphasize about the destination country, how they will emphasize nation brand image and how much they will emphasize nation brand image. When foreign tourists become satisfied with the ITAs, the destination visit intention could increase. The results are consistent to the results of prior studies in international tourism. The three variables of perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment and satisfaction of ITA covered in this study are linked to three aspects of cognitive, emotional and overall attitude of destination image. ITA increases destination visit intention by emphasizing the attractiveness of destinations on various perspectives in selecting them. On the macro-economic level, tourism is considered a sustainable industry because it protects the environment but creates economic value added, while various economic values such as transportation and accommodation are created in the destination country. ITA can also be used as a strategic means on the sustainable economic development. Satisfaction increases the positive E-word of mouth intention for destination country. If any foreign tourist showed positive reactions and behavioral intention to the destination country after seeing ITA, this effect spreads. People share their thoughts with others through SNS. Those who are satisfied with the ITA will try to share their impressions and judgments with others and the positive nation brand image can spread more easily. The study argues that ITA is important because its effects do not only persuade one person but spread to others. This shows how tourism promotion agencies can strategically use social media to attract potential tourists, satisfy potential tourists, and create a virtuous circle of tourists revisit and spreading positive E-word of mouth using social media. By leveraging the characteristics of social media that the contents could synchronously deployed in global scale, and that lots of users interact with each other, can amplify the performances of ITA rather than simply advertising it. This formed positive attitude affects other social media users, strengthening the public’s positive impression of travel destinations. The use of social media will continue to strengthen the ripple effect of ITA as if it were the snowball effect.

In summary, we can effectively let foreign tourists grasp the advantages of destinations, enthral foreign tourist to destinations through ITAs that reflect the nation brand image well, and let foreign tourists choose a target country as a destination. ITA, which reflect the nation brand image, raise the overall image of the destination country. These effects do not stay in one person but spreads widely.

Conclusion

This study explains how the nation brand image should be expressed in ITAs and how to motivate foreign tourists to choose destinations. This study not only clarified the ambiguous causal relationships between the variables that were not revealed in prior studies, but also empirically validate the impact of ITA on various outcomes other than the revisit intention which is the only dependent variable in many prior studies, in the academic perspective. This study also offers practical implications on how to make, distribute, and spread ITAs. Contributions of this study in both academic and practical perspectives are described as follows:

There are two academic contributions from this study. First, this study explained how the nation brand image affects three aspects of the destination image of foreign tourists (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Gartner & Hunt, 1987; Phelps, 1986) through ITA. Prior studies simply viewed the nation brand image as being just highly correlated with the revisit intention (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Papadimitriou et al., 2018). They failed to clearly explain how the nation brand image affects the destination image (Lindblom et al., 2018) and also partially succeeded to clearly explain the role of ITA in this process (Crompton, 1979; Lawson & Bovy, 1977; Lindblom et al., 2018; Murphy, 1985). Some prior studies tried to identify the internal causal relationship between three aspects of destination image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Ko & Park, 2000). They argue that cognitive destination image directly affect the overall destination image (Wang & Hsu, 2010). At the same time, they argued that cognitive images also indirectly affect overall destination image through affective destination images (Gartner, 1993). They were not clear about causality (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). This study empirically validate the causality by demonstrating that the confirmation of nation brand images in ITA can affect the cognitive and affective response on ITA, which can affect the overall attitude toward ITA.

Second, the study described a variety of foreign tourists’ reactions, including how foreign tourists were persuaded by ITA messages (Sussman & Siegal, 2003), intended to visit the destination (Kim & Son, 2009), and propagated this positive response to other tourists (Kim & Son, 2009), along with the re-visit intention set as a dependent variable in the prior study (Papadimitriou et al., 2018). Foreign tourists who are satisfied with the ITA (Venkatesh & Goyal, 2010) positively modify the images they had about the destination country, depending on the content (Sussman & Siegal, 2003) of ITA. In the process, foreign tourists become more attracted to the country. It means ITA can contribute to creating a positive image for various
dimensions, including the politics, economy, and culture of destination countries. Thus, ITA is not just limited to the role of attracting foreign tourists, but serves to strengthen the nation brand. On another side, the attraction to a destination country formed through ITA become the motivation for the formation of friendly relations in terms of civilian diplomacy (Yun, 2014). Several studies in the Public diplomacy argue that study should be needed on how ITA promote the positive bilateral relations between two countries (Yun, 2014). The findings of the study provide cues as to how ITA can lead to enhanced relations between the two countries (Yun, 2014). The nation brand image allows foreign tourists to choose the country as a destination through ITA in social media. The results are in line with the prior study (Hays et al., 2013; Minazzi, 2015), and the results of this study emphasize the role of ITA in social media. Finally, positive cognitive, affective and overall destination image and nation brand image created through ITA spread to other potential tourists. ITA increases the nation brand image, and the increased nation brand image is vividly reflected in the ITA, it create an ever-increasing circular structure. This explains how important it is to reflect the nation brand image in ITA.

The practical contributions of this study are as follows: First, it offers practical implications on how to make ITA to reflect the nation brand image. Some ITA could effectively attract foreign tourists, while others could not do. The study introduces the concept of reflecting nation brand image, telling how ITA effectively forms a positive destination image. In particular, this study explain what factors of Korean ITA should be emphasized to attract Chinese tourists. Such themes of K-food, K-wave, shopping and hot-place chosen in the study are considered the most important topics among the total 14 tourism purposes. I found that ITA about Korean food was especially effective. Food is a subject that can appeal efficiently to Chinese tourists. Considering the effectiveness of resource allocation and investment efficiency, I suggest doing more diverse advertising and promotions on K-food. At the same time, in the case of a nation brand image, it create an ever-increasing circular structure. This explains how important it is to reflect the nation brand image in ITA.

Second, it offers implications on how advertising can be strategically used when the influential power of social media (i.e., YouTube) is growing. The role of ITA not only in attracting foreign tourists but also in contributing to improving the country’s nation brand image is maximized as it is broadcasted on a global social network. The value of ITA should be emphasized in that the scope and extent of the ripple effect of ITA is large. This study is meaningful in terms of the distribution of cultural content using information technology and its application to the tourism industry. I insist on creating and distributing qualified ITA on a global scale for creating a future growth engine by fostering the content industry.

Third, ITA can be used as a means of private diplomacy by allowing foreigners to understand and embrace the values and differences of countries. Especially considering the geopolitical position of the Korean Peninsula, political and economic changes occur frequently between Korea and other nations. Various promotions, including advertising could be needed for people of the two countries to understand and embrace each other.

Limitations and Future Study

Despite these contributions, there are some problems that have not been escapable in this study. First, sample frame of this study is a potential Chinese tourist who wants to visit Korea. In practice, this study recruited college students by a public notice at a university in Shandong province with the help of a Chinese professor, this study failed to look at the responses of various demographic groups. Second, I adopted the scenario survey method of quasi experiment in this study, after much consideration. But this method has limitations of internal validity comparing with the laboratory experiments and external validity comparing with the survey method. Third, it is regrettable that I have not been able to look more clearly at the differences by topics because four topics used in the study are all important topics among total 14 tourism purposes of Chinese tourists. Fourth, advertising can reflect a variety of factors except nation brand image. For example, the overstatement, antics, humor, or the affinity toward actors appearing in ITA would be the exogenous factors. The study could not all of these exogenous variables. Fifth, the 4 example of the ITA’s in the study were made in 2009, and quasi-experiment were held in 2018. There are 9 years gap in currency of ITA. The reason for choosing these four cases in the study was that they were created by the same producer, were of a nearly similar length, and were rare cases with a constant amount and quality of content. The choice was made because it is a good example to observe the impact of the nation brand fit. However, the social media usage environment and user characteristics of 2009, 2018, and 2020 were clearly different, and it was better to conduct research with more recent examples. This is one of the limitations of this study. Sixth, my paper seem to imply that there is a singular national brand image for each country. It is consistent with the prior studies (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Keller, 1998; Kлепpe et al., 2002; Nagashima, 1970; Papadopoulos, 1993; Roth & Romeo, 1992; Yoo, 2008) which define the country image or nation brand image as the total image of the country characteristics (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Kлепpe et al., 2002; Nagashima, 1970; Papadopoulos, 1993; Roth & Romeo, 1992) or as the overall image of the target nation as the symbolic system (Yoo, 2008; Keller, 1998). But that doesn’t mean that each country has a single nation brand image. The various nation brand images can be created by reflecting country characteristics as symbols even within a country. For example, I identified
Korean spicy food, Korean wave of Korean entertainment industry, and Shopping and Hot places by selecting them as four nation brand images symbolizing Korea and adopting these advertisements in my study. Also, the research unit of this study is the country level, but the other studies may be done at the various levels, such as national groups, regions, states, territories, and so on. Seventh, the study focused on the reactions of foreign tourists in the pre-tourism stage, and not challenged to investigate on the perception, attitude, and behavioral intentions after the travel.

Finally, this research is valuable as a few academic studies that have summarized the flow of prior studies, derived solutions to problems based on the theoretical basis, and empirically validate the effectiveness of the solutions. By providing the evidence of impact of nation brand image in ITA, this study triggered to evoke the other researchers to deeper investigate on how to make ITA and how to use ITA strategically. We expect that more reasonable and abundant results can be obtained from the follow-up study.

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