# Vietnam's Image as a Tourism Destination in Japan: an Analysis of Japanese Travel Guidebooks and Brochures, and Attribute Importance-Performance

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**Summary**

This research explores the image of Vietnam as a tourism destination for Japanese travelers by analyzing various Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures, and doing an importance-performance analysis based on a set of attributes. The analysis of Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures shows that the image of Vietnam is not very clear in Japan, and the physical descriptions of Vietnam are similar to those of many other destinations, covering natural landscapes, historical places, typical architectural monuments, cultural activities, and local life. The importance-performance analysis reveals that Vietnam is an attractive destination for Japanese travelers, with strengths in most of the important attributes, such as low prices, delicious cuisine, new experiences, and rich culture. Nevertheless, those who haven't been to Vietnam are likely to think that Vietnam is not a safe destination to visit. Moreover, cleanliness and service quality are the important areas in which Vietnam needs improvements.

## The Research Issue and its Background

This research attempts to explore the image of Vietnam as a tourism destination for Japanese travelers by (1) analyzing various Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures, and (2) doing an importance-performance analysis based on a set of tourism destination attributes.

In Vietnam, Japanese tourists are regarded one of the target markets (Vietnam, 2001), and Vietnam's tourism industry has achieved initial success in attracting Japanese travelers. According to the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT), the number of Japanese tourists to Vietnam rapidly increased in 2000, 2001, and 2002, hitting a peak of nearly 280,000 in 2002, then declined to 210,000 in 2003 due to SARS and Avian Flu. However, it immediately increased again by 20 % in 2004 and 2005 to reach new records of 320,605 and 383,896 in 2005 and 2006 respectively. Once more, it achieved a new record of 411,557 in 2007, increasing 7.20% compared with 2006 (VNAT, 2008).

Also according to VNAT, Japan has been for a long time been listed among the five countries and territories that contribute the highest number of foreign travelers to Vietnam, together with China, the U.S, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan. In 2007, the number of Japanese tourists to Vietnam accounted for 9.87 % (411,557/4,171,564) of the total volume of foreign tourists. However, the number of Japanese travelers to Vietnam is still very small in comparison with the total number of Japanese outbound tourists (411,557 out of 17,298,000 million in 2007, or 2.38 % of the total number) (VNAT, 2008).

**Tourism Destination**

*Image Formation and concepts.*

Firstly, regarding the process of forming a destination image, Gunn (1988) holds that destination image is formed in three phases:

*Phase 1 - Organic image*: The image is based primarily on information assimilated from non-touristic and non-commercial sources, such as the general media (news reports, magazines, books, and movies), education (school courses) and the opinions of family/ friends.

*Phase 2 – Induced image*: More commercial sources of information, such as travel brochures, travel agents and travel guidebooks, are used. As a result of accessing these additional sources of information, the organic image (Phase 1) may be altered.

*Phase 3 – Modified image*: Actual experience modifies the destination image formed by the previous phases. Much research indicates that as a result of visiting the destination, images tend to be more realistic, complex, and differentiated (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003).

Secondly, referring to the concept of destination image, Echtner & Ritchie (2003) present a comprehensive survey of the definitions provided in the major destination image studies, and introduce the most common definitions of destination image. These include: perceptions held by potential visitors about an area; organized representations of a destination in a cognitive system; the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination; perceptions or impressions of a place; how a country is perceived relative to others; impressions that a person holds about a place in which they do not reside; perceptions of vacation attributes; a complex combination of various products and associated attributes; perceptions of potential tourist destinations; and the total impression an entity makes. Furthermore, Echtner and Ritchie (2003) provide a comprehensive definition as follows:

> [Tourism] destination image is defined as not only the perceptions of individual destination attributes but also the holistic impression made by the destination. Destination images consist of functional characteristics, concerning the more tangible aspects of the destination, and psychological characteristics, concerning the more intangible aspects. Furthermore, destination images can be arranged on a continuum ranging from traits which can be commonly used to compare all destinations to those which are unique to very few destinations (pp. 43-44).

The components of destination image as mentioned in Echtner & Ritchie (2003)'s recommended concept can be illustrated in three dimensions as in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. The components of destination image**



Figure 1.    PSYCHOLOGICAL    destination image
             CHARACTERISTICS
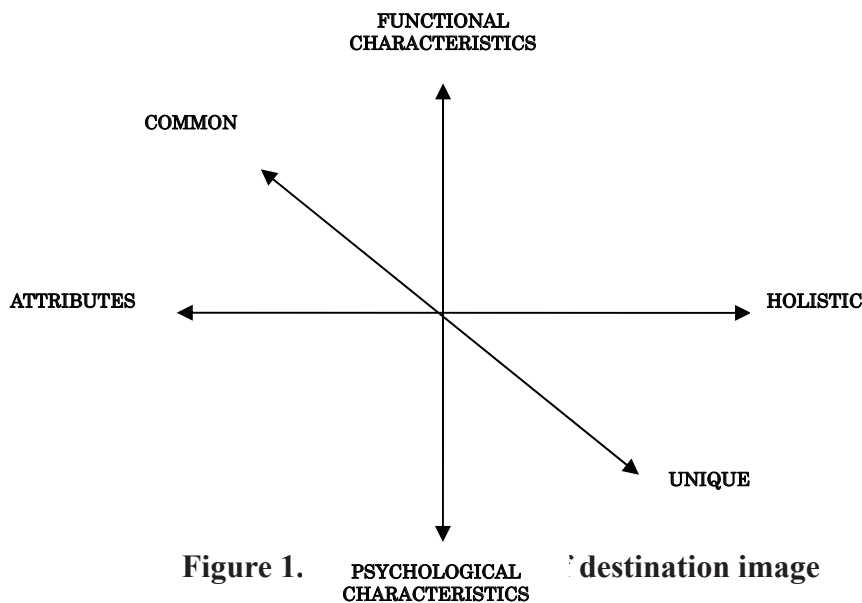
Source: Echtner & Ritchie (2003, p. 43)

*Role of destination image*

Understanding the image of a destination is essentially important for a destination wishing to influence travelers' decision-making and choice. Researchers and marketers tend to be in consensus about the importance of image for a destination's viability and success in tourism (Tasci & Gartner, 2007). The perception of destination image relates to decision-making and sales of tourist products and services (Jenkins, 1999). Understanding the differing images that visitors and non-visitors have of a destination is invaluable, enabling the salient attributes of the naïve image and the re-evaluated image to be incorporated into tourism marketing planning (Selby and Morgan, 1996). Batchelor (1999) considers destination image "a key element of the situational analysis, which destination marketing agencies need to undertake," and that it "relates to the market's image or perception of the destination" (p. 187). Gertner & Kotler (2004) hold that since a destination's image is identifiable and changes over time, the marketer must be able to track and influence the image held by different target groups. Referring to the role of tourism marketing organizations, "as custodian of the destination's image, the marketing body must evaluate how this is perceived in the marketplace and determine how and by what means it can be enhanced" (Batchelor, 1999, p. 187). Furthermore, it is very useful to monitor changes in the image that the market has of the destination, because monitoring can enable the destination manager to assess the effectiveness of a specific advertising/promotional campaign in a specific target market, or to determine the impact that the hosting of a particular mega-event has had on market awareness of the host destination (Batchelor, 1999).

*Measurement of destination image*

To begin with, Lew (1994) asserts that most studies of tourist attractions and the

attractiveness of places to tourists can be classified into one or other of three general perspectives: ideographic listing, organization, and tourist cognition of attractions. Each of these perspectives raises a distinct set of questions concerning the nature of the attractions, as expressed through the typologies used in their evaluation. At the same time, all three perspectives make comparisons based on the historical, locational, and various valuational aspects of attractions. More specifically, Echtner & Ritchie (1991 & 1993) recommend a framework to measure destination image comprehensively. In this framework, components that must be captured include attribute-based images, holistic impressions, and functional, psychological, unique and common characteristics. They hold that a combination of structured and unstructured methodologies is necessary to measure destination image. A series of open-ended questions and scale items need to be developed to successfully capture all of the components of destination image.

In more detail, Jenkins (1999) reviews different techniques for measurement of tourism destination image after Echtner & Ritchie (1991), compares the advantages and disadvantages of structured and unstructured methods as in Table 1, and highlights the dominance of a structured, word-based approach. He argues that to achieve valid image research, a preliminary phase of qualitative research is important in order to distil the constructs relevant to the population being studied. The frequently used techniques of construct elicitation include free-elicitation, interactive interviewing, focus group interviewing, and photo elicitation.

In recognition of the fact that consumer satisfaction is a function of both expectations related to certain important attributes and judgments of attribute performance, O'Leary & Deegan (2005) have introduced importance-performance analysis (IPA) as a technique for evaluating the elements of a marketing program. They hold that even though marketers strive to determine the correct image positioning, they rarely query whether the attributes captured by the marketing messages are actually important to visitors. IPA uses a three-step process either to develop a new marketing strategy or to evaluate an existing strategy: First, a set of product attributes or features is identified through techniques such as literature review, focus group interviews, and so on. Second, consumers are asked two questions about each attribute: "How important is it?" and "How well did the product or service perform?" Third, importance and performance scores for each attribute are calculated. The values provide x and y coordinates that are then placed on a two-dimensional plot called an IPA grid as in Figure 2. The importance and performance scores are plotted on the vertical and horizontal axes respectively.
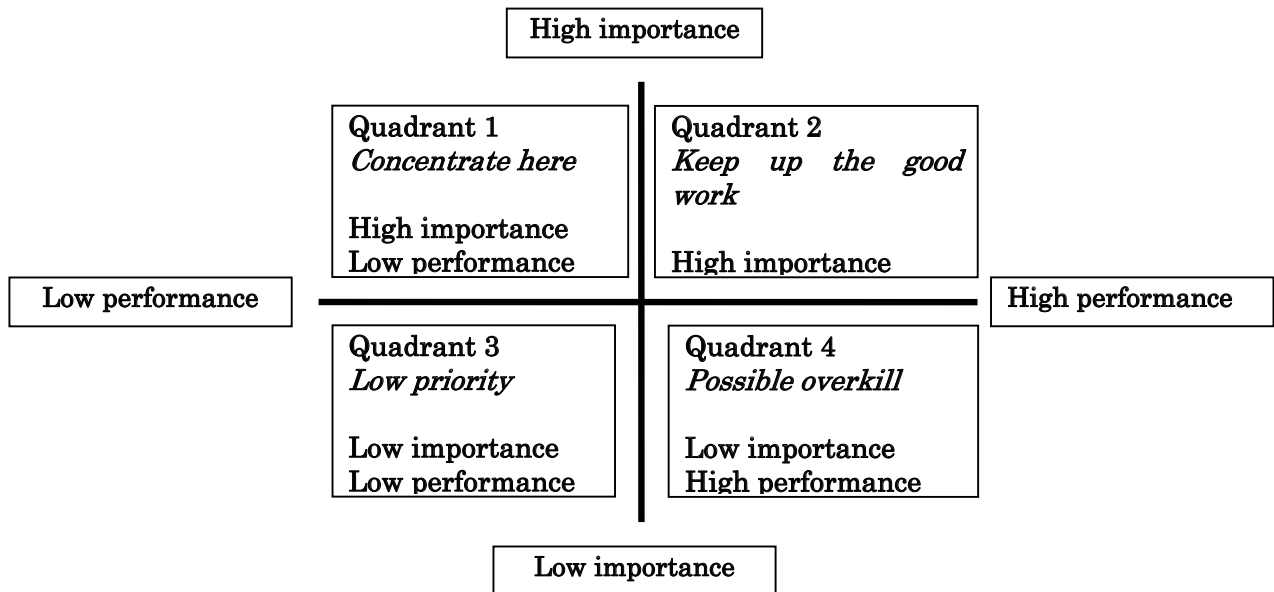
**Table 1.** Methods used in destination image research: structure versus unstructured (after Echtner & Ritchie, 1991)

|  | Structured | Unstructured |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | Various common image attributes are specified and incorporated into a standardized instrument and the respondent rates each destination on each of the attributes, resulting in an "image profile" | The respondent is allowed to freely describe his or her impressions of the destination. Data are gathered from a number of respondents. Sorting and categorization techniques are then used to determine the "image dimensions" |
| **Techniques** | Usually a set of semantic differential or Likert type scales | Focus group, open-ended survey questions, content analysis, repertory grid. |
| **Advantages** | • Easy to administer<br>• Simple to code<br>• Results easy to analyze using sophisticated statistical techniques<br>• Facilitates comparisons between destinations | • Conducive to measuring the holistic components of destination image<br>• Reduces interviewer bias<br>• Reduces likelihood of missing important image dimensions or components |
| **Disadvantages** | • Does not incorporate holistic aspects of image<br>• Attribute focused – that is, it forces the respondent to think about the product image in terms of the attributes specified<br>• The completeness of structured methods can be variable – it is possible to miss dimensions. | • Level of detail provided by respondents is highly variable<br>• Statistical analyses of the results are limited<br>• Comparative analyses are not facilitated. |

Source: Jenkins (1999, p. 6)

By plotting the numerical results in this way, the components are effectively sorted into a 4-cell typology. This typology categorizes importance and performance on a scale of high or low, so four combinations are possible. The IPA method has been used by various authors researching tourism destination images, such as Joppe, Martin, & Waalen (2001) on Toronto's image by origin of visitor, O'Leary & Deegan (2005) on Ireland's image in France, and Okata (n.d.) on Hawaii's image and Japanese senior travelers.

**Figure 2. Importance – performance analysis grid**

High importance

| Quadrant 1<br>*Concentrate here*<br><br>High importance<br>Low performance | Quadrant 2<br>*Keep up the good work*<br><br>High importance |
|---|---|
| Quadrant 3<br>*Low priority*<br><br>Low importance<br>Low performance | Quadrant 4<br>*Possible overkill*<br><br>Low importance<br>High performance |

Low performance ← → High performance

Low importance

Source: O'Leary & Deegan (2005, p. 250)

## Methodology

Firstly, this research began by capturing the image of Vietnam from Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures about Vietnam from major Japanese travel agencies, such as JTB, Kinki Nippon Tourist (KNT), H.I.S, ANA Hallo Tour, Nippon Travel Agency, JALPAK, Rainbow Tours, and TABIX World. This image was then supplemented by the statements about Vietnam by some Japanese tourism experts.

Secondly, based on the image captured from Japanese travel agencies' guidebooks and brochures, and experts' opinions, a set of destination attributes most relevant for Vietnam was established as an empirical basis for the importance-performance analysis. In the empirical phase, to identify the importance of the attributes, Japanese respondents were asked about the importance of each attribute when they consider traveling abroad. The answer were ranked on a Likert scale from one (1) to five (5) representing the levels from "very unimportant" to "very important." To identify the performance of Vietnam in relation to the attributes, Japanese respondents were asked to express their reactions to the statements about the attributes by choosing Likert scale numbers, from one (1), "strongly disagreem" to five (5), "strongly agree".

Once the answers had been obtained, the method of importance-performance analysis (IPA) recommended by O'Leary & Deegan (2005) was used. In the implementation, paper and online questionnaires were used to obtain the answers from a sample of 415 Japanese people during 2008. This sample included 57 % female, 43 % male; ages from 18 – 75 years old (mean = 34.39); 48 % students, 34 % public and company employees (mostly company employees), 6 % housewives, 5 % researchers/teachers, and 7 % others. Among the respondents, 53 % had been to Vietnam at least once. Comparisons could also be made between those who had been to Vietnam and those who had not.

**Results**

*The image of Vietnam from Japanese guidebooks and brochures*

Geographically, Vietnam as a tourism destination is introduced in three ways by travel organizations: (1) Vietnam in connection with Cambodia (Angkor Wat) (by JTB, ANA, and TABIX World); (2) Vietnam in connections with other Asian destinations such as Cambodia (Angkor Wat), India, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc. (by NTA and KNT); and (3) a focus on Vietnam alone (by travel guidebooks about Vietnam and some brochures of H.I.S). The first and second patterns are more popular than the their. The southern regions (Ho Chi Minh City, MeKong Delta) and central regions (the former capital of Hue, Da Nang, and the ancient town of Hoi An) of Vietnam are offered to Japanese travelers more often than the northern regions.

Regarding the physical images of Vietnam, the most frequently presented attractions include: Ha Long Bay, French architectural buildings (opera houses and churches in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City Hall, and Ben Thanh Market in Ho Chi Minh City), the three world cultural heritages (Hoi An, Hue, and My Son Sanctuary), and the old residential quarter in Hanoi.

Although not so often highlighted as the places mentioned above, some other historical places are also rather frequently presented. These include Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum in Hanoi, Reunification Hall in Ho Chi Minh City, and the Cu Chi Tunnels. Beaches and seaside resorts are not commonly highlighted by the travel agencies, except for H.I.S which presents all the most beautiful seaside resorts in Vietnam, including those in Da Nang, Hoi An, Hue, Nha Trang, Phan Thiet, and Phu Quoc.

Many of the brochures present images of the traditional culture of Vietnam, such as pictures of Vietnamese girls wearing traditional "Ao dai" (Vietnamese long dress) against a traditional background such as the ancient town of Hoi An Town (by KNT and H.I.S) or the French architectural quarters in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City (by ANA Hallo Tour and H.I.S). Food is also very frequently highlighted. The most popular dishes are "Pho" (Vietnamese noodles), "Goi cuon" (Vietnamese fresh spring rolls), "Cha gio" (Vietnamese fried spring rolls), and different kinds of fruits. Vietnamese coffee is also introduced as a speciality by H.I.S. Moreover, pictures of everyday life in the Mekong delta area, Ho Chi Minh City, and Hanoi are frequently presented. It is also seen that water puppet shows are the most popular traditional performances introduced by the travel guidebooks and brochures.

As for other traditional handicraft products, including bags, purses, small boxes, laces, small ornaments, etc., items made from silk and ceramics are most presented. Some traditional shopping corners in the ancient quarter of Hanoi or Ben Thanh Market in Ho Chi Minh City are also introduced, but without focusing on specific products. As for accommodation, luxury four or five star standard hotels are usually offered to Japanese travelers.

Similar descriptions of Vietnam are also presented by many Japanese travel experts. For instance, according to Ms. Hiroko Kawano, JTB's Marketing Officer (Asian market), Vietnam is an attractive destination for Japanese travelers. She holds that Vietnam has the advantages of a short flight time from Japan, many authentic world heritage sites, delicious cuisine, and good places for shopping (Ha, 2008). Referring to the uniqueness of Vietnam, Mr. Masato Takamatsu, Director and Vice President of the Japan Tourism Marketing Co. (JTM) points out that Japanese visitors are especially attracted by walking along the streets and shopping for handicrafts at ordinary local shops in Vietnam (Takamatsu, 2007). Regarding Vietnam's cuisine

and shops, Mr. Hiromi Tanaka, a tour leader of Sinh Cafe Tours in Vietnam, says that Vietnam for many Japanese has become a country of fresh spring rolls and variety stores, rather than a country with painful war memories (Hasegawa, 2002).

**Importance-Analysis of Vietnam's Performance as a Destination for Japanese Travelers**

According to the image of Vietnam from Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures, and the opinions of tourism experts, a set of positive statements about Vietnam as a tourism destination was created for empirical testing (see Appendix 2). A set of tourism destination attributes was also created (Appendix 1), based on the set of statements about Vietnam to identify their importance when Japanese respondents consider traveling abroad.

In the empirical phase of the research, the importance of tourism destination attributes was first measured as in Appendix 1, and some major findings were as follows:

- The most important attributes (mean $\geq$ 4.00) include: beautiful natural landscapes, personal safety, new experience, delicious cuisine, and low prices;
- The second group of important attributes (4.00 > mean $\geq$ 3.50) consists of: rich culture, relaxing atmosphere, political stability, cleanliness, beautiful architectural buildings, good quality of service, famous and interesting history, good traditional fine arts, friendliness toward Japanese people, and interesting local ways of life;
- The attributes that are less important or neutral (3.50 > mean $\geq$ 3.00) include: beautiful beaches, good infrastructure, exciting traditional performances, beautiful seaside resorts, good places for shopping, many tourist attractions, and many unique souvenir products.
- Less important still (3.00 > mean) are: many world heritage sites; and crafts/attractive small items.

Secondly, the performance of Vietnam in relation to these attributes is indicated in Appendix 2. The followings are the major findings:

- Statements about Vietnam that received the strongest agreement (mean $\geq$ 4.00) related to low prices, delicious cuisine, rich culture, and new experiences;
- Statements about Vietnam that received a lower level of agreement (4.00 > mean $\geq$ 3.50) included: friendly people, famous and interesting history, beautiful natural landscapes, many crafts/small lovely items, relaxing atmosphere, many unique souvenir products, interesting local ways of life, good traditional fine arts, many tourist attractions, exciting traditional performance, and good places for shopping;
- Statements about Vietnam that produced a neutral reaction (3.50 > mean $\geq$ 3.00) included: beautiful architectural buildings, beautiful beaches, being politically stable, beautiful sea resorts, being personally safe, and many world heritage sites.
- The statements/attributes of Vietnam that received the strongest disagreement (3.00 > mean) included: cleanliness and hygiene, good infrastructure, and good service quality

Thirdly, the importance-performance analysis of Vietnam as a tourism destination for Japanese travelers is presented in Figure 3. If the value 3.50 is chosen as the point differentiating low and high importance and performance, there are four groups of attributes as follows:

*Group 1 – Concentrate here (high importance – low performance)*: personal safety, political stability, cleanliness, architectural buildings, and quality of service;

*Group 2 - Keep up the good work (high importance – high performance)*: low prices, delicious cuisine, rich culture, new experience, beautiful natural landscapes, friendliness toward Japanese people, famous and interesting history, relaxing atmosphere, interesting local ways of life, and good traditional fine arts;
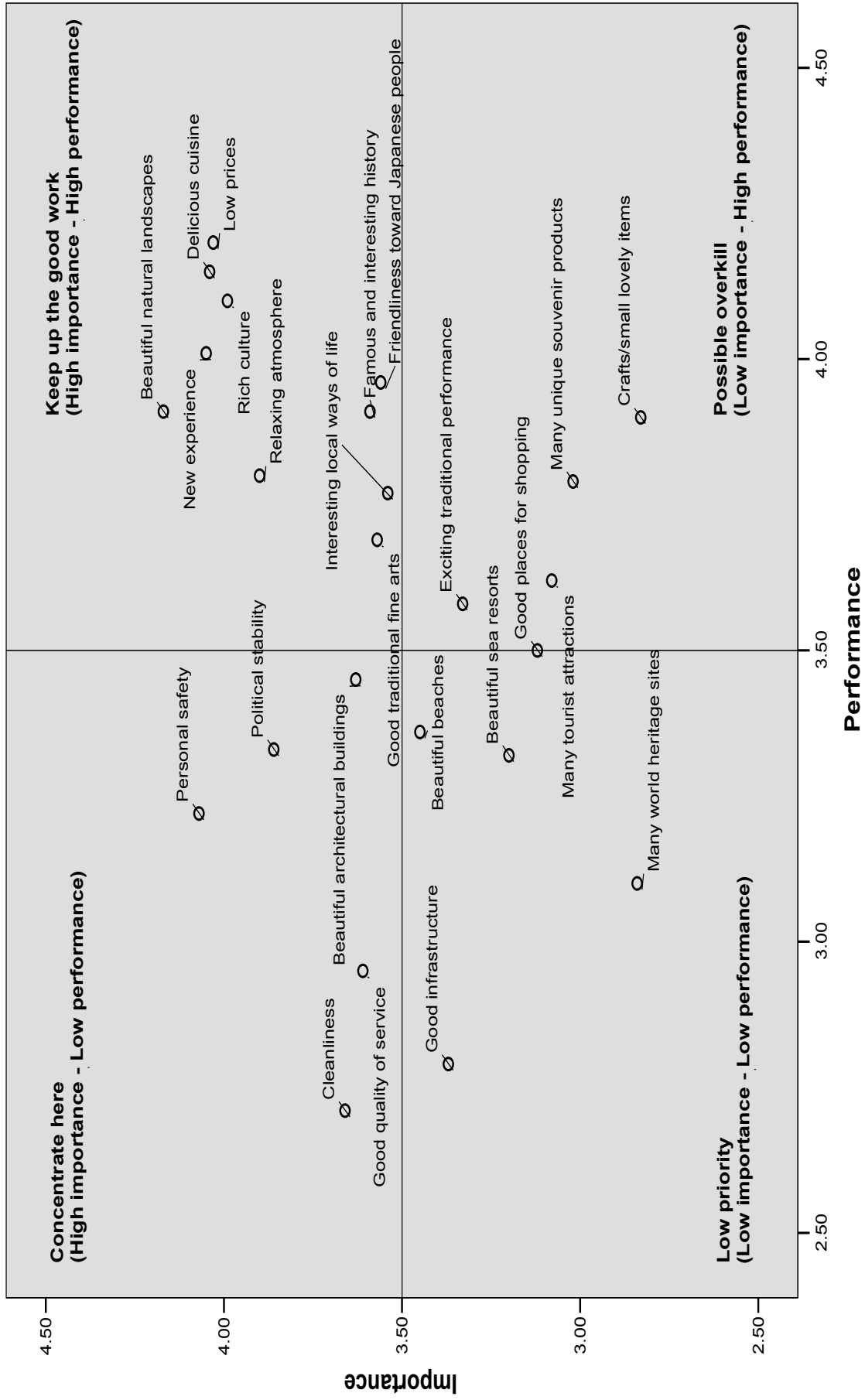
*Group 3 - Possible overkill (low importance – high performance)*: crafts/small attractive items, many unique souvenir products, many tourist attractions, exciting traditional performance, and good places for shopping; and

*Group 4 – Low priority (low importance – low performance)*: many world heritage sites, beautiful sea resorts, beautiful beaches, and good infrastructure.

Moreover, Chi-square tests of the differences between the perceptions of those who had been to Vietnam and those who had not concerning the attributes in the group of necessary concentration (group 1) showed the following:

- Regarding personal safety, Japanese travelers who have been to Vietnam are *more likely to agree* that they are safe in Vietnam than those who have not (Appendix 3a&b);

- Referring to political stability, Japanese travelers who have been to Vietnam are *more likely to agree* with the statement that Vietnam is politically stable than those who have not (Appendix 4a&b);

- As for cleanliness, Japanese travelers who have been to Vietnam are *more likely to disagree* with the statement that Vietnam is clean/hygienic in than those who have not (Appendix 5a&b); and

- Concerning service quality, Japanese travelers who have been to Vietnam are *more likely to disagree* with the statement that service quality is good in Vietnam than those who have not (Appendix 6a&b).

# Figure 3. Importance – Analysis of Vietnam's Performance as a Tourism Destination for Japanese Travelers

**Concentrate here
(High importance - Low performance)**

**Keep up the good work
(High importance - High performance)**

Personal safety

Cleanliness

Beautiful architectural buildings

Political stability

Good quality of service

Good traditional fine arts

Good infrastructure

Beautiful beaches

Beautiful sea resorts

Good places for shopping

Many tourist attractions

Many world heritage sites

New experience

Rich culture

Relaxing atmosphere

Interesting local ways of life

Exciting traditional performance

Many unique souvenir products

Crafts/small lovely items

Beautiful natural landscapes

Delicious cuisine

Low prices

Famous and interesting history

Friendliness toward Japanese people

**Low priority
(Low importance - Low performance)**

**Possible overkill
(Low importance - High performance)**

Importance

**Performance**

2.50  3.00  3.50  4.00  4.50

2.50  3.00  3.50  4.00  4.50

– 46 –

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Firstly, the analysis of Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures shows that the image of Vietnam is not very clear in Japan. Vietnam is mostly introduced in connection with Cambodia (Angkor Wat) and other Asian destinations, which indicates that Vietnam has not had sufficiently strong attractions or favorable conditions to attract Japanese travelers as a distinct destination. The fact that the southern and central regions of Vietnam are discussed more than the north in the guidebooks and brochures may be explained by the more open and dynamic economic environment and the density of tourism attractions in these regions.

Also, it is recognized that the physical descriptions of Vietnam in Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures are similar to those of almost any other destinations, covering natural landscapes, historical places, typical architectural monuments, cultural activities, and local life. Perhaps, the most unique images representing Vietnam are Vietnamese women wearing coconut hats and traditional "Ao dai" (Vietnamese long dress), and some traditional dishes such as "Pho" (Vietnamese noodle), "Nem cuon" (Vietnamese fresh spring rolls), and "Cha gio" (Vietnamese fried spring rolls).

Secondly, the importance-performance analysis reveals the strong attraction of Vietnam as a tourism destination for Japanese travelers, which is indicated in their appreciation of Vietnam's performance in most of the important attributes, such as low prices, delicious cuisine, new experience, and rich culture. Generally, Vietnam is perceived to be rich in culture. More specifically, the cultural elements explaining the overall cultural attraction include interesting local ways of life, famous and interesting history, friendliness toward Japanese people, and good traditional fine arts. Moreover, the findings show the strong points of Vietnam in terms of beautiful natural landscapes and relaxing atmosphere.

However, Vietnam should take action to change the perceptions of Japanese travelers about the situation of personal safety and political stability, which are the most important conditions for Japanese travelers. The fact that Japanese travelers who have been to Vietnam are more likely to agree that they are safe in Vietnam and Vietnam is politically stable than those who haven't been to Vietnam suggests that Vietnam is safer and more politically stable than many Japanese travelers have thought. This is also a surprise, because in recent years Vietnam has been thought to be "a haven of stability in a turbulent region" (The EIU, 2006).

Also, it is extremely important for Vietnam to improve the situation of cleanliness and service quality. The fact that Japanese travelers who have been to Vietnam are more likely to disagree with the statements that Vietnam is clean/hygienic and service that quality is good in Vietnam than those who haven't been to Vietnam indicates that Vietnam is, in fact, performing badly in terms of cleanliness and service quality. These two weaknesses may spoil other positive images of Vietnam.

In addition, Vietnam may pride itself on beautiful beaches, sea resorts, many tourist attractions, many world heritage sites, and exciting traditional performances. However, these attributes are not important for Japanese travelers when they consider traveling abroad. Also, it may be surprising that Japanese travelers seem to be uninterested in places for shopping, souvenir products, and attractive small items, in which Vietnam has advantages. Possibly, these elements are an integral part of their trip, because of the "omiage" (souvenir) culture; however, souvenirs are not a driving force in choosing a

destination. This confirms the idea that Japanese travelers are motivated by beautiful natural landscapes, new experience, delicious cuisine, low prices, and rich culture rather than shopping, even though shopping is an integral part of their trip. In addition, it may be not effective if Vietnam focuses its marketing programs on their strengths of its beautiful beaches, beautiful sea resorts, world heritage sites, and exciting traditional performance, because these elements also seem not to be particularly important for Japanese travelers.

Finally, we realize that the analysis of Japanese travel guidebooks and brochures is not enough to capture all dimensions of Vietnam's image in Japan. While the importance-performance analysis provides insights, further research is needed to fully explain the results. Therefore, it is recommended that further research use other methods, such as expert consultation, media analysis, and focused interviews, to explore the presentation of Vietnam's image and discover the underlying reasons for the importance-performance analysis results. Moreover, it would be better if pre- and post-visit perceptions of the same group of travelers could be compared to explore changes in the perceptions of Vietnam, rather than relying on samples of those who have been to Vietnam and those who haven't. In addition, the effects of gender, age and occupation on perceptions of Vietnam should also be examined.

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# Appendices

**Appendix 1.** The importance of tourism destination attributes to Japanese travelers

| Attribute | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beautiful natural landscapes | 413 | 4.17 | .990 |
| Personal safety | 413 | 4.07 | 1.077 |
| New experience | 413 | 4.05 | .999 |
| Delicious cuisine | 413 | 4.04 | 1.062 |
| Low prices | 413 | 4.03 | .962 |
| Rich culture | 413 | 3.99 | 1.102 |
| Relaxing atmosphere | 408 | 3.90 | .942 |
| Political stability | 413 | 3.86 | 1.069 |
| Cleanliness | 411 | 3.66 | 1.156 |
| Beautiful architectural buildings | 413 | 3.63 | 1.097 |
| Good quality of service | 409 | 3.61 | 1.111 |
| Famous and interesting history | 411 | 3.59 | 1.123 |
| Good traditional fine arts | 413 | 3.57 | 1.169 |
| Friendliness toward Japanese people | 413 | 3.56 | 1.049 |
| Interesting local ways of life | 413 | 3.54 | 1.156 |
| Beautiful beaches | 413 | 3.45 | 1.132 |
| Good infrastructure | 413 | 3.37 | 1.126 |
| Exciting traditional performance | 413 | 3.33 | 1.079 |
| Beautiful sea resorts | 413 | 3.20 | 1.217 |
| Good places for shopping | 408 | 3.12 | 1.120 |
| Many tourist attractions | 408 | 3.08 | 1.077 |
| Many unique souvenir products | 413 | 3.02 | 1.161 |
| Many world heritage sites | 409 | 2.84 | 1.049 |
| Crafts/attractive small items | 406 | 2.83 | 1.227 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 361 | | |

**Appendix 2. The performance of Vietnam in relation to tourism destination attributes**

| Statement | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Prices in Vietnam are low | 413 | 4.20 | .938 |
| Cuisine in Vietnam is delicious | 413 | 4.15 | 1.006 |
| Vietnam is rich in culture | 413 | 4.10 | .915 |
| You can have many new experiences in Vietnam | 409 | 4.01 | .931 |
| Vietnamese people are friendly | 411 | 3.96 | .922 |
| Vietnam has a famous and interesting history | 412 | 3.91 | 1.030 |
| Vietnam has many beautiful natural landscapes | 413 | 3.91 | .988 |
| There are many crafts/attractive small items in Vietnam | 411 | 3.90 | .990 |
| There is a relaxing atmosphere in Vietnam | 409 | 3.80 | .870 |
| There are many unique souvenir products in Vietnam | 411 | 3.79 | .989 |
| Vietnamese ways of life are interesting | 412 | 3.77 | .955 |
| Vietnam has good traditional fine arts | 413 | 3.69 | .979 |
| Vietnam has many tourist attractions | 413 | 3.62 | .975 |
| Vietnamese traditional performance is exciting | 410 | 3.58 | 1.028 |
| There are many good places for shopping in Vietnam | 407 | 3.50 | .923 |
| There are many beautiful architectural buildings in Vietnam | 413 | 3.45 | .935 |
| Vietnam has many beautiful beaches | 413 | 3.36 | 1.064 |
| Vietnam is politically stable | 410 | 3.33 | .984 |
| Vietnam has many beautiful sea resorts | 411 | 3.32 | .866 |
| You are safe in Vietnam | 411 | 3.22 | .901 |
| There are many world heritage sites in Vietnam | 406 | 3.10 | .924 |
| Service quality is good in Vietnam | 405 | 2.95 | .871 |
| Infrastructure is good in Vietnam | 411 | 2.79 | .864 |
| It is clean/hygienic in Vietnam | 412 | 2.71 | .873 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 378 | | |

### *Appendix 3a.* **Number of visits to Vietnam and evaluation of personal safety**

| | | | You are safe in Vietnam | | | | | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | |
| Visits to Vietnam | None | Count | 7 | 41 | 96 | 33 | 12 | 189 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 3.7% | 21.7% | 50.8% | 17.5% | 6.3% | 100.0% |
| | One or more | Count | 4 | 24 | 94 | 79 | 20 | 221 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 1.8% | 10.9% | 42.5% | 35.7% | 9.0% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 11 | 65 | 190 | 112 | 32 | 410 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 2.7% | 15.9% | 46.3% | 27.3% | 7.8% | 100.0% |

### *Appendix 3b.* **Chi-Square tests of visits to Vietnam and evaluation of personal safety**

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 23.826(a) | 4 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 24.333 | 4 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 18.548 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 410 | | |

a  0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.07.

### *Appendix 4a.* **Visits to Vietnam and evaluation of political stability**

| | | | Vietnam is politically stable | | | | | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | |
| Visits to Vietnam | None | Count | 12 | 23 | 93 | 45 | 15 | 188 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 6.4% | 12.2% | 49.5% | 23.9% | 8.0% | 100.0% |
| | One or more | Count | 4 | 29 | 84 | 67 | 37 | 221 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 1.8% | 13.1% | 38.0% | 30.3% | 16.7% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 16 | 52 | 177 | 112 | 52 | 409 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 3.9% | 12.7% | 43.3% | 27.4% | 12.7% | 100.0% |

***Appendix 4b.* Chi-Square tests of visits to Vietnam
and evaluation of political stability**

|  | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 16.222(a) | 4 | .003 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 16.629 | 4 | .002 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 10.900 | 1 | .001 |
| N of Valid Cases | 409 |  |  |

a  0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.35.

***Appendix 5a*. Visits to Vietnam and evaluation of cleanliness**

|  |  |  | It is clean/hygienic in Vietnam | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |  |
| Visits to Vietnam | None | Count | 5 | 56 | 99 | 23 | 7 | 190 |
|  |  | % within Times to Vietnam | 2.6% | 29.5% | 52.1% | 12.1% | 3.7% | 100.0% |
|  | One or more | Count | 28 | 69 | 95 | 25 | 4 | 221 |
|  |  | % within Times to Vietnam | 12.7% | 31.2% | 43.0% | 11.3% | 1.8% | 100.0% |
| Total |  | Count | 33 | 125 | 194 | 48 | 11 | 411 |
|  |  | % within Times to Vietnam | 8.0% | 30.4% | 47.2% | 11.7% | 2.7% | 100.0% |

***Appendix 5b*. Chi-Square tests of visits to Vietnam and evaluation of cleanliness**

|  | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 16.120(a) | 4 | .003 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 17.685 | 4 | .001 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 9.292 | 1 | .002 |
| N of Valid Cases | 411 |  |  |

a  0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.09.

## *Appendix 6a.* Visits to Vietnam and evaluation of service quality

| | | | Service quality is good in Vietnam | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | |
| Visits to Vietnam | None | Count | 0 | 45 | 106 | 26 | 6 | 183 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | .0% | 24.6% | 57.9% | 14.2% | 3.3% | 100.0% |
| | One or more | Count | 11 | 67 | 81 | 49 | 13 | 221 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 5.0% | 30.3% | 36.7% | 22.2% | 5.9% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 11 | 112 | 187 | 75 | 19 | 404 |
| | | % within Times to Vietnam | 2.7% | 27.7% | 46.3% | 18.6% | 4.7% | 100.0% |

## *Appendix 6b.* Chi-Square tests of visits to Vietnam and evaluation of service quality

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 24.942(a) | 4 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 29.181 | 4 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .083 | 1 | .773 |
| N of Valid Cases | 404 | | |

a  1 cells (10.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.98.